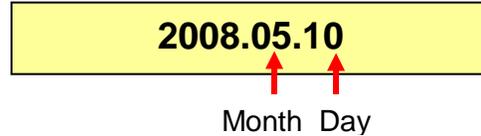


International formats for writing the date

There are a surprising number of differences in how the date is written in Korea, America, Europe, and other countries as well as international scientific standards. Not knowing these differences can sometimes cause confusion. You may need to know this difference for organizing business meetings by email, proposals, orders, contracts, business letters, or applications.

1) Korea and China

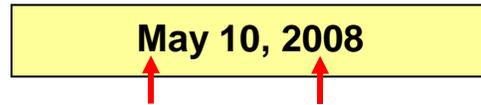
2008.05.10



Month Day

2) The United States

May 10, 2008



To avoid possible confusion, the month is often spelled in Western languages.

Put a comma here. The formats 25th, 2nd or 3rd are more traditional, but are becoming less common in modern business writing.

3) Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada

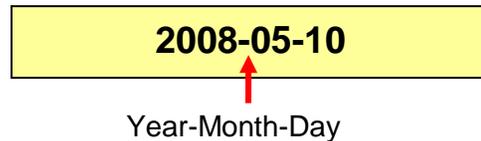
10 May 2008



No commas required here. A zero is often used as a place holder in a formal business date or one using slashmarks May 8th: 08/05/08

4) ISO 8601 International Standard <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/prods-services/popstds/datesandtime.html>

2008-05-10



Year-Month-Day

When writing the date on a business letter or document, spell the month and there will be no confusion. As you can see, confusion can result between British and American English. The date 06/01/08 would be 6 January in Europe, but June 1st in the US see <http://www.w3.org/QA/Tips/iso-date>. Slash marks “/” or a hyphen “-” in the ISO standard (not a period) are used when writing a numerical date in English. The official style in Canada is the same as Europe, but some Canadians might use the American format. The next time you are looking in a major department store such as Hyundai or Lotte Department Store in Seoul, look at the expiry date on items in the foreign food section such as imported cheese, and see if you can understand the dates on the packages. It might not be as easy as you think.

Note also that abbreviations of the names of long months can be either three letters “sep” or four letters “Sept.” depending on whether the format of a specific scientific styleguide for references is required or a general English standard. Check a styleguide appropriate to whatever type of document you are writing.

See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Date_and_time_notation_by_country