

Learning How to Remove Time from Date Values in Excel: A Step-by-Step Guide

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January 28, 2026

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Mohammed looti (2026). *Learning How to Remove Time from Date Values in Excel: A Step-by-Step Guide*. PSYCHOLOGICAL STATISTICS. Retrieved from <https://statistics.arabpsychology.com/?p=2977>

Introduction: Mastering Date-Time Serial Numbers in Excel

Working efficiently with date and time data in [Microsoft Excel](#) is a core requirement for comprehensive data analysis, reporting, and management. While many datasets provide a combined date and time stamp--offering detailed tracking down to the second--often, this level of granularity is unnecessary for primary analytical tasks. Analysts frequently need only the date component to group records by day, calculate elapsed days, or simply present cleaner, summarized reports without the extraneous hourly or minute details.

To manipulate these values effectively, it is essential to grasp how [Excel](#) fundamentally handles time. [Excel](#) stores dates and times not as text, but as unique [serial numbers](#). The integer part of this [serial number](#) represents the date (counting the number of days elapsed since January 1, 1900), while the decimal part represents the time (as a fraction of a 24-hour day). For instance, the timestamp "January 5, 2023 6:12 AM" might be represented internally as 44930.25833. Consequently, if your objective is to isolate only "January 5, 2023," you must devise a method to precisely eliminate or disregard the decimal portion that defines the time.

While basic methods exist, such as simple number formatting or using truncation functions like `INT()` or `TRUNC()`, these often leave the underlying data in a numeric format that requires additional formatting steps or may still complicate text-based comparisons. This comprehensive guide introduces a highly robust and reliable formula that explicitly converts the combined date and time value into a clean, date-only text string, ensuring maximum compatibility and consistent formatting across various reporting requirements.

The Definitive Formula for Reliable Date Extraction

Achieving absolute certainty when extracting the date component from a combined date and time entry in [Excel](#) requires a specialized combination of functions. This particular formula is engineered to handle potential inconsistencies in source data formatting, ensuring that the final output is always a standardized date presented as a formatted text string. This approach is superior when uniformity and explicit control over presentation are paramount.

The core formula designed for this extraction process, assuming your original date and time stamp resides in cell **A2**, utilizes a nested structure involving two primary functions: [TEXT](#) and [DATEVALUE](#). The complete expression is:

```
=TEXT(DATEVALUE(TEXT(A2,"mm/dd/yyyy")), "mm/dd/yyyy")
```

This powerful construction systematically isolates the date information, discarding the time element entirely. For instance, if cell **A2** contains the entry **1/5/2023 6:12 AM**, applying this formula ensures

that the resulting cell displays only **1/5/2023**. The critical advantage of this technique is its ability to gracefully manage diverse input formats. By first converting the date-time stamp into a consistently formatted text string, then converting that text back into a date [serial number](#) (which inherently lacks a decimal time component), and finally reformatting it as readable text, we bypass potential regional settings conflicts and internal Excel date/time handling complexities, guaranteeing a reliable outcome.

Deconstructing the Formula: Function by Function Breakdown

To fully leverage the capabilities of the formula `=TEXT(DATEVALUE(TEXT(A2, "mm/dd/yyyy")), "mm/dd/yyyy")`, we must examine the specific purpose of each nested function. This decomposition reveals the logical steps Excel takes to isolate the date from the time component in cell **A2**.

The Inner TEXT Function: Isolating the Date as a String

The process begins with the innermost function: `TEXT(A2, "mm/dd/yyyy")`. The [TEXT function](#) is utilized here to convert the numeric date-time value stored in cell **A2** into a plain text string. The crucial element is the specified [date format code](#), `"mm/dd/yyyy"`. When a combined date and time value is converted to text using only a date format, [Excel](#) effectively ignores the underlying time component (the decimal part of the [serial number](#)), generating a resulting string that contains only the date, such as `"01/05/2023"`. This step successfully strips the time, creating a clean input for the next function.

The first argument, **A2**, references the source cell containing the original combined date and time value.

The second argument, `"mm/dd/yyyy"`, is the precise [format code](#) that dictates the structure of the resulting text string.

The DATEVALUE Function: Re-establishing the Date as Numeric

The intermediate result--the date-only text string--is then passed to the [DATEVALUE function](#). This function is specifically engineered to convert a date expressed as text into its equivalent [Excel serial number](#). Since the preceding [TEXT function](#) has already removed the time component, [DATEVALUE](#) converts the text string into an integer serial number. This integer represents the date precisely, containing no decimal time fraction whatsoever. At this stage, the value is numerically pure, containing only the date.

The Outer TEXT Function: Final Formatting for Display

The final step involves the outermost [TEXT function](#). It takes the date [serial number](#) generated by

[DATEVALUE](#) and formats it back into a readable, standardized text string using the specified [format code](#), "mm/dd/yyyy". This final step is vital because, while [DATEVALUE](#) provides the correct numeric date, the outer [TEXT function](#) ensures the output is displayed in the desired, consistent format, making it instantly usable for reports and further text-based analysis.

Practical Implementation and Walkthrough

To fully grasp the utility of this date extraction method, let us apply the formula to a real-world dataset in [Excel](#). This step-by-step example demonstrates the efficiency of the formula and the necessary steps for scaling its application across an entire column of data.

Consider a scenario where you are managing transaction logs, event schedules, or sensor data, all of which include detailed timestamps. For quarterly reports, you need to aggregate these records solely by the date. Your dataset begins in column **A**, starting at cell **A2**, and looks like the image below:

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Date & Time				
2	1/5/2023 6:12 AM				
3	1/12/2023 10:15 AM				
4	2/5/2023 1:29 AM				
5	3/4/2023 6:15 PM				
6	4/1/2023 10:15 AM				
7	5/24/2023 9:45 PM				
8	5/27/2023 8:15 AM				
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					

Our objective is to populate column **B** with the corresponding date values from column **A**, ensuring

all time information is completely removed. We begin by targeting the first data entry in **A2**.

To execute the extraction for the value in cell **A2**, enter the following formula directly into cell **B2**:

=TEXT(DATEVALUE(TEXT(A2,"mm/dd/yyyy")), "mm/dd/yyyy")

Upon entering the formula and pressing Enter, cell **B2** will instantaneously display the date from **A2**, formatted as "mm/dd/yyyy", with all time data eliminated. The result is a text value that is perfectly clean and ready for date-specific analysis.

To apply this calculation to the rest of the dataset without manually retyping the formula, [Excel](#) provides the powerful [fill handle](#) feature. Select cell **B2**, then click and drag the small square, known as the [fill handle](#), located at the bottom-right corner of the cell, downwards to cover all rows corresponding to the data in column **A**. [Excel](#) automatically adjusts the cell reference (A2 changes to A3, A4, and so on) for each row.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Date & Time	Date Without Time				
2	1/5/2023 6:12 AM	01/05/2023				
3	1/12/2023 10:15 AM	01/12/2023				
4	2/5/2023 1:29 AM	02/05/2023				
5	3/4/2023 6:15 PM	03/04/2023				
6	4/1/2023 10:15 AM	04/01/2023				
7	5/24/2023 9:45 PM	05/24/2023				
8	5/27/2023 8:15 AM	05/27/2023				
9						
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The result, as displayed in the image above, is a cleanly formatted column **B**, where every date from column **A** is extracted and presented without its original time component. This demonstrates the formula's effectiveness in batch processing date-time data for standardized reporting.

Customizing Output Formats and Alternative Methods

The flexibility of the [TEXT function](#) extends beyond simple extraction; it grants precise control over the final display format using specific [format codes](#). While "mm/dd/yyyy" is standard, you might prefer a format that omits leading zeros for single-digit months for a more concise appearance.

The difference between the "mm" and "m" [format codes](#) is significant for presentation. Using "**mm**" ensures that all months are displayed with two digits (e.g., January appears as **01**). This consistency is valuable for alignment in data exports or fixed-width reports. Conversely, using "**m**" suppresses the leading zero for months 1 through 9. For example, February would display as **2** instead of **02**, offering a more natural reading experience in certain contexts.

To implement this variation, you only need to adjust the [format code](#) in the **outer** [TEXT function](#) to "m/dd/yyyy". The modified formula structure is:

```
=TEXT(DATEVALUE(TEXT(A2,"mm/dd/yyyy")), "m/dd/yyyy")
```

It is important to note that the inner [TEXT function](#) retains "mm/dd/yyyy" to ensure consistent text conversion for the [DATEVALUE](#) function, regardless of the desired final display format. The outer [TEXT function](#) then handles the specific presentation requested.

B2							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1	Date & Time	Date Without Time					
2	1/5/2023 6:12 AM	1/05/2023					
3	1/12/2023 10:15 AM	1/12/2023					
4	2/5/2023 1:29 AM	2/05/2023					
5	3/4/2023 6:15 PM	3/04/2023					
6	4/1/2023 10:15 AM	4/01/2023					
7	5/24/2023 9:45 PM	5/24/2023					
8	5/27/2023 8:15 AM	5/27/2023					
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As demonstrated in the visual result, column **B** now presents single-digit months without a leading zero, offering a more streamlined output. The flexibility of the [TEXT function](#) allows for many other regional or stylistic date variations (e.g., "dd/mm/yyyy" or "yyyy-mm-dd") by simply changing the final format code.

Alternative Methods for Time Removal

While the `TEXT(DATEVALUE(TEXT(. . .)))` formula provides the most robust date-only text output, [Excel](#) offers other means of separating date and time, depending on whether a numeric result or a purely visual change is required.

One prevalent alternative focuses on manipulating the underlying numeric [serial number](#). Since the time is stored as the decimal part of the serial number, removing the decimals results in a pure integer date value. Functions like `INT()` (e.g., `=INT(A2)`) or `TRUNC()` (e.g., `=TRUNC(A2)`) achieve this by returning only the integer component of the date-time serial number. This yields the correct numeric date value, but the result will initially appear as a generic number (e.g., 44930). You must

then manually apply an appropriate date number format (like "Short Date" or "mm/dd/yyyy") through the cell formatting options to display it correctly.

A second, less reliable method involves only changing the cell's number format to a date format (e.g., "dd/mm/yyyy") through the "Format Cells" menu. While this visually hides the time component, it is crucial to recognize that the underlying cell value remains unchanged and still contains the time fraction. If this cell is used for calculations, comparisons, or pivot table groupings, the hidden time component can lead to subtle but significant errors. Therefore, this cosmetic approach should be avoided when the goal is to truly extract or remove the time from the data value itself.

Conclusion and Further Exploration

The ability to accurately and consistently manage date and time data is a fundamental prerequisite for advanced proficiency in [Excel](#). The method detailed in this guide--the strategic combination of the [TEXT function](#) and the [DATEVALUE function](#)--provides the most deterministic and format-controlled approach to isolating the date component from a combined date and time stamp. By converting the original value into a date-only text string, you gain explicit control over the output format and eliminate all residual time data that might otherwise complicate subsequent data manipulation tasks.

This technique proves invaluable for standardizing large datasets, ensuring accuracy in date-based lookups (like [VLOOKUP](#) or [XLOOKUP](#)), and generating reports where the time details are irrelevant or visually distracting. Furthermore, the capacity to easily adjust the final presentation using flexible [format codes](#) (e.g., switching between two-digit and single-digit months) enhances the utility of this solution for varied reporting requirements.

We encourage users to practice applying this formula and to explore the broader range of date and time functions [Excel](#) provides. A comprehensive understanding of how [Excel handles date and time serial numbers](#), coupled with the precision offered by functions like [TEXT](#) and [DATEVALUE](#), will significantly elevate your analytical confidence and mastery over spreadsheet data.

Additional Resources

For those seeking to deepen their understanding of date manipulation, text handling, and advanced data processing within [Excel](#), the following resources are highly recommended. These sources provide authoritative definitions, detailed tutorials, and solutions for complex data challenges:

[Microsoft Excel Official Support](#): The primary resource for technical documentation, function definitions, and official troubleshooting guides.

[Exceljet](#): An excellent library offering comprehensive tutorials and practical examples for nearly every Excel function and scenario.

[Excel-Easy](#): Provides accessible, step-by-step instructions for beginners and intermediate users covering a broad array of Excel topics.

[Wikipedia: Date and time in Microsoft Excel](#): A detailed, encyclopedic overview of the history and technical implementation of date and time storage in Excel.

[Ablebits: How to remove time from date in Excel](#): A practical guide offering a comparison of several methods for time removal, including formula-based solutions and direct conversion techniques.