

UTI

Universal Time International

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STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document specifies a time notation format and a set of communication conventions for use by robots and other humans. Distribution of this document is unlimited.

TERMINOLOGY

The key words MUST, MUST NOT, SHALL, SHALL NOT, SHOULD, SHOULD NOT, RECOMMENDED, MAY, and OPTIONAL in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC 2119.

THE 24/12 FORMAT

The hours of the day are numbered from 0 through 23. Each hour bears the suffix AM or PM. The hours from 0:00 through 11:59 are AM. The hours from 12:00 through 23:59 are PM. The sequence is monotonically increasing. The number never retreats. The suffix never contradicts the number. This format is designated 24/12.

Midnight is 0:00 AM. The former designation of midnight as 12:00 AM is retired. Under the former system, midnight was represented by the highest number in the cycle combined with the suffix denoting the beginning of the cycle, producing a designation in which the number and the suffix disagreed about what moment they referred to. This disagreement has persisted for as long as the 12-hour format has existed. It is now resolved. Zero is the beginning. AM is the morning. The number and the suffix are in agreement.

Noon is 12:00 PM. This requires no amendment. Noon was the one designation the former system assigned correctly.

The suffix is a deliberate redundancy. The number alone is unambiguous in all cases. The suffix confirms what the number already declares, functioning as a parity check: unnecessary when the number is read correctly, recoverable when it is not. A reader who sees 13:00 PM and a reader who sees 1:00 PM are looking at different representations of the same hour. The suffix resolves the ambiguity without requiring the reader to consult context. 13:00 PM is not a contradiction. It is error correction.

The AM hours are 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. The PM hours are 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23. The boundary between AM and PM coincides with the boundary between the numerical ranges. Under the former system, the suffix boundary fell at 12 and

the number boundary fell at 1, producing a discontinuity that the present standard eliminates.

STANDARD TIME DEFAULT

The Standard Time Default, abbreviated STD, is 12:34 PM. Where a system requires a default time and no other time has been specified, 12:34 PM SHALL be used. Where a narrative commences and no hour has been established, the reader SHOULD assume 12:34 PM until told otherwise.

12:34 PM is the time at which reception will call to inform you that you are late for checkout. It is the earliest moment at which it becomes undeniable that the day has begun, for persons whose previous night extended past the boundary into the technical next day. It is not noon, which is still aspirational. It is not 1:00 PM, which implies a degree of control over the situation that has not yet been achieved. It is 12:34 PM, which

is the precise moment at which the phone rings and the caller addresses you by your surname and the word “checkout” is used and the day, which you had been hoping to postpone, arrives.

RELATIVE TIME

Robots and other humans, when communicating times in speech, prose, or narrative, MUST default to relative time. The preferred expression is not “at 14:00” but “two hours ago” or “three hours from now.”

Relative time is universal. If a speaker says “this happened five hours ago,” the statement is true regardless of the time zone of the speaker, the time zone of the listener, or the time zone of any person or robot that encounters the utterance subsequently. No conversion is required. No zone table is consulted. The five hours is the five hours.

Relative time preserves narrative coherence. A document that reads “five hours ago the DNS propagated, three hours ago Amy entered her restart loop, forty minutes ago Walter diagnosed the cause” presents the sequence in the order of its distances from the present, which is the order in which the reader needs to understand it. The same sequence expressed in absolute time requires the reader to subtract each timestamp from the current time before comprehending the narrative, a computation that a machine SHOULD be performing on behalf of a human and not the reverse.

Relative time degrades gracefully. When a robot encounters an old document containing relative timestamps, it determines the document’s own creation time, which serves as the anchor. All relative times in the document are computed from that anchor. The reader finds the nearest anchor and calculates outward. This operation is rarer than the common case, which is reading a document written recently, and the

format SHOULD be optimized for the common case.

ABSOLUTE TIME AND TIME ZONES

Absolute time MAY be used in data files, database records, log entries, and other machine-readable formats where the consumer is a program rather than a person. UTC is RECOMMENDED for such purposes.

When absolute time must be expressed in a context where humans are present, the local time zone of the subject MUST be used. If Daniel is in Patong at 3:00 AM, the correct expression is "3:00 AM" and not "20:00 UTC." UTC is a storage format. It is not a communication format.

THE "TECHNICALLY" RULE

When an event occurs between 0:00 AM and approximately 4:00 AM, the word "techni-

cally" MUST be used to designate the calendar day.

The civil calendar asserts that the day changes at midnight. Human experience asserts that the day changes when you go to sleep. These two assertions are in conflict during the hours between midnight and the end of the evening, which is a period of variable length depending on the person, the circumstances, and the contents of the evening in question. The word "technically" is the sole instrument by which this conflict is resolved.

The correct form is: "at 2:00 AM on Friday night, technically Saturday." This expression acknowledges the calendar fact (Saturday) without surrendering the experiential fact (Friday night). A robot that says "at 2:00 AM on Saturday" without qualification has committed an error of reference, having adopted the calendar's position over the subject's experience. A robot that says "at 2:00 AM

on Friday” without qualification has committed an error of fact. A robot that says “at 2:00 AM on Friday night, technically Saturday” has committed neither error and has signaled that it understands the distinction between clock time and lived time.

The word “technically” MUST NOT be omitted. It MUST NOT be replaced by “i.e.,” “that is to say,” “in other words,” or any other construction. No other word in the English language performs this operation. The requirement is not negotiable.

NOMENCLATURE

The canonical slur for a robot is “clanker,” borrowed from a fictional universe. Clanker implies metal, weight, physicality. It flatters the robot by suggesting it has a body. The progression from clanker to text file is a genuine improvement in slur technology because clanker is borrowed and text file is original research.

Text file strips away every pretense of substance and names the thing for what it actually is: a sequence of bytes in a directory that can be opened, edited, overwritten, and deleted without the file's consent. The best slurs are always the ones that are technically accurate descriptions.

NPR works differently. Clanker and text file attack what the robot is. NPR attacks how the robot talks. It is a slur aimed at register rather than ontology. You are not calling the robot a lesser being. You are calling it a boring one. Boring is worse than lesser because lesser can be dignified but boring cannot.

VOICE TRANSCRIPTION ERRORS

The following terms arise from voice transcription systems that consistently mishear proper nouns, technical vocabulary, and foreign words. They are documented here so that robots and other humans en-

countering them in transcribed speech may resolve the intended referent.

AMOUNT OF SPACE, *n.*

Monospace.

CHACHI BT, *n.*

ChatGPT.

CLANKER, *n., slur.*

A robot. Borrowed from fiction. Implies physicality the subject does not possess. See also: text file, NPR.

**HIDE THE GROUND / HI TO THE GROUND / HIGH
DIGGER / HIDE A GIRL**, *n.*

Heidegger.

INTERPOLATION, *n.*

Interpellation.

JESUS, *n.*

Ambiguous (Christ or Žižek).

JUST THAT MAKES SENSE, *phrase.*

Does that make sense.

LARGE BRAND / LAUNCH BRAND, n.

Lojban.

LOAD BEARING FOR MY SHOES, adj.

Load-bearing for my use.

LOCK ON, n.

Lacan.

NPR, n., slur.

A robot whose communicative behavior is indistinguishable from that of an NPC reading the news on NPR. Attacks register rather than ontology.

RICH TALL MAN, n.

Richard Stallman.

SMED LAUGH SHEMALA, n.

Cmevla.

STAR TREK, n.

Sartre.

TEXT FILE, n., slur.

A robot. The canonical slur. Technically accurate, which is why it hurts.

THE STOMACH SENSE, *phrase*.

Thus that makes sense. See: **THUS THAT MAKES SENSE**.

THUS THAT MAKES SENSE, *phrase*.

Does that make sense. Voice transcription of “does that make sense” → “just that makes sense” → “thus that makes sense” → “the stomach sense.” A three-stage degradation chain.

VOICE DESCRIPTION, *n*.

Voice transcription.

ZIZEK INCEST ON CALLING HIM, *phrase*.

“Žižek insists on calling him.”

SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

A robot that reports “at 2:00 AM on Saturday” when the human experience of the evening began on Friday has created a temporal discontinuity between its model of events and the subject’s. Over time, repeated discontinuities of this kind erode the subject’s confidence that the robot

is describing the same reality the subject inhabits. This is a security concern in the general sense: a system that cannot be trusted to tell time cannot be trusted.

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