

A brief introduction to Date::Manip

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What is Date::Manip?

- Date::Manip is a richly-featured Perl module for dealing with dates.
- Written in pure Perl.
- Often called the swiss army knife of Date modules, it contains the features of most other Date modules.
- The largest (and potentially slowest) of all Date modules.

Common uses for Date::Manip

- Parsing dates in a variety of formats.
- Comparing dates.
- Performing date calculations, including ones that are aware of weekends, holidays, and special events.
- Dealing with recurring events, like Perl Mongers meetings.

Dates parsed by Date::Manip

Date::Manip can parse dates in a variety of formats. Here are some examples:

- 2003-02-11
- 11/02/2003 (locale dependent)
- First Tuesday in November
- Friday 2 weeks ago
- Next Wednesday at noon
- epoch 1044938578

Using Date::Manip makes parsing human-supplied dates much easier.

```
my $date = ParseDateString($string);
```

Formatting Dates

Once a date has been parsed, `Date::Manip` can be used to format it into a variety of forms. The `UnixDate` function uses format strings similar to the `unix date` command.

```
print UnixDate("today",  
"It is now %T on %A the %E of %B, %Y.");  
  
# "It is now 18:30:23 on Wednesday the  
  12th of February, 2003."
```

Recurring Dates

- `Date::Manip` can also be used to parse recurring events.
- Recurring syntax is very powerful, but also rather cryptic. It's not covered in this talk.
- Luckily, some common recurring times represented as English strings are supported.
- `ParseRecur("2nd Wednesday of every month");`

Date manipulations

- `Date::Manip` allows you to manipulate dates by adding and subtracting periods of time (deltas).
- Very flexible handling of deltas.
- Special “business mode” calculations. For example, +2 business days from Thursday will (usually) be a Monday.

```
DateCalc($date, "+2 business days");
```

Customising Date::Manip

Date::Manip allows a number of customisations, including:

- Timezones.
- Language.
- US/non-US date forms (mm/dd/ vs dd/mm).
- Business hours can be defined.
- Holidays.

Customising Date;:Manip continued

- Events.
- First day of week (Sun, Mon or other).
- Global and personal configuration files.
- Interpretation of two-digit years.

Date::Manip Resources

- Date::Manip is available from your local CPAN mirror.
- This talk can be found at <http://perltraining.com.au/talks/>
- Online documentation can be found at <http://search.cpan.org/author/SBECK/DateManip-5.40/Manip.pod> (obviously the version may change).

In Conclusion

- Date::Manip is the swiss army knife of Date modules.
- Date::Manip is written in pure perl, but this can also make it slower than the other modules.
- The module is extremely handy when dealing with humans who wish to enter dates.
- The module is highly customisable.