

Why We Should All Start Using Military Time clock

Remember that time you had a very important meeting Monday morning, at 10 am and you, after partying with your friends all night Sunday, in your drunken carelessness set the alarm for 8 pm next day instead of 8 am, and then you ended up missing that meeting? Yeah, I wouldn't want to remember it either.

How about that time your friend told you that you had a flight at 4 and you showed up at the airport well in advance with a couple of hours in hand only to realize that the flight was actually scheduled for 4 am the night before?

We've all been there. But we don't need to be. Not if all of us collectively switched to [military time](#), that is the 24-hour clock instead of the 12-hour variant.

So why do we use a 12-hour clock in the first place?



Well, it is for the simple reason that a clock is of a circular shape, encompassing a total of 360 degrees when you go around it once from any particular digit and back to that same digit. With a total of 12 markings, this means each individual digit has a total span of 30 degrees, which means one hour spans 30 degrees. It is theoretically possible to put in 24 digits, but then the clock gets way too crowded and messy, with each hour having a span of a measly 15 degrees.

Analog clocks have been around long before digital clocks came into being and thus, the original 12-hour clock system still reigns supreme.

Let's take a quick look at the different clock systems prevalent around the world today.

Most countries in Europe except Great Britain have switched to military time clock in all forms of formal written communication but still stick to the traditional 12-hour system in verbal, informal communication. Thus, the 24-hour military time clock system is mostly used in a printed context, where there is absolutely no tolerance for ambiguity. In offices and businesses where punctuality and setting appointments are of utmost importance, you can't afford to have stupid mishaps involving an am/pm confusion. Most offices which do business worldwide also have to contend with several time zones, which is confusing in its own right without having to mention am or pm.

America, Canada, and most English-speaking countries are yet to catch up with Europe in this respect, which is actually the international standard, ISO 8601 to be precise, but then again, America has always done things a bit differently, not adopting the metric system for one.



The United States Navy first adopted the military time system in 1920 and subsequently the entire United States Army, during World War 2.

Aside from the Army, government organizations like public hospitals, the fire department, and the police force often use military time instead of the conventional 12-hour system. This is because in their field of work, people's lives are at stake and a few minutes often means the difference between life and death.

In a more personal context, however, the most you will have to deal with is some embarrassment and a little humiliation and worst-case scenario, your promotion gets a little delayed.

Let's look at a few other reasons why all of us should adopt military time in our personal daily lives.

1. You manage your time better.

There are 24 hours in a day, and it would do us good to be reminded of it every time we look at our watches. For example, if it's 10 am now, and you have a meeting scheduled at 4 pm, you'll think so that's two more hours till noon and then I have got four more hours to spare. You might be tempted to take it light for the next two hours and then start prepping for the meeting after noon. When using military time, however, you'll know right off the bat that you have 6 hours to go to the meeting, and you will plan your work accordingly. Also if you're the kind that makes daily planners detailing all your activities in a day, it's helpful to use a 24-hour clock system.

2. It's easier to calculate the duration of an event.

If you're informed an event runs from 1130 to 1630, you can quickly figure out that the event stretches for 5 hours, more so in comparison to being told that the event is from 11:30 am to 4:30 pm.

3. You simply save a lot more time and paper.

All that time you've spent saying or writing am/pm could have very easily been avoided if had you just used military time.

Of course, needless to say, the most important reason you should switch to military time is you simply do not need the unnecessary embarrassment caused by confusing am with pm or vice-versa.

Regardless of your personal preference, the world seems poised to switch to military time sooner or later. As businesses organizations become more and more globalized, they will be forced to shift to a universal, international standard, which is the military way of specifying the time.

Physical, circular clocks which are heavy and take up space are bound to become obsolete shortly with the overwhelming majority of people shifting to digital clocks or simply, a clock application on their smartphones. The only reason really, that wristwatches and wall clocks are still prevalent today is because of their aesthetic appeal and their use as status symbols.

So [how do you convert from standard 12-hour civilian time to 24-hour military time](#) and vice-versa?

It really isn't very hard once you get used to it.

1. We remove the colon from civilian time and write it as one figure in military time. So 11:35 am becomes 1135 in military lingo.

2. The Hours from 1 am to 12 noon are the same in both civilian and military time.

Just remember that for all hours under 10, you have to include a zero in military time. So 8 am becomes 0800.

3. For the hours from 1 pm to 11 pm, you just have to add 1200

to get the military time. So 7:30 pm becomes 1930 in military time.

4. If you wish to go from military to standard time, for any military time that is 1300 or more, all you have to do is subtract 1200, put in a colon and add a 'pm.' So 1745 becomes 5:45 pm.

5. You can refer to [midnight in military time](#) as both 2400 and 0000.

Alright soldier, so now you know of the benefits of using military time over the conventional 12-hour system and also how to use it. Without further ado, the first thing you would want to do is go into settings of your clock application in your smartphone and change it to the 24-hour format. If you have any separate applications for your alarm clock, make sure you make the necessary changes there too. If you own any digital clocks or radios, they should have a 24-hour format available too.