

The Date Format

There are two areas covered in this paper, an overview of the date output format and how to set/change the date format.

A Note about the Year 2000

Summation's internal date format handles all dates from 1800 to 3000, as well as having the ability to contain "fuzzy" dates. Any new cases created in Summation automatically default to a date display format of MM/DD/YYYY, so the appropriate century can be seen. Whatever display format you use, you can always enter the year component using 2 or 4 digits.

Summation can display dates in a multitude of formats. Depending on the display format used, you have quite a bit of latitude in the method in which you may enter dates. When a two-digit year is used in the display format, Summation issues a reminder when the case is first opened to switch to the preferred format of four-digit years. During date entry, two-digit years (except for "00") are interpreted to be in the 20th Century. For example, "1/1/90" will represent the year 1990, and "1/1/05" will represent the year 1905. (Four-digit years remain as entered.)

In versions 5.0 and higher, the two-digit year "00" is automatically assumed to be the year "2000." A single digit "0" is used for a fuzzy year, (as well as for fuzzy days and months in their respective positions). Summation provides a way to specify a range of years beyond "00" that default to the 21st Century when entered as a two-digit year. This is sometimes referred to as a pivot point.

The Date Output Format determines the appearance of dates within DATE fields in your database and notes. This setting is user-specific and can be changed from the Database tab of the Defaults dialog. Your current date format appears on the Defaults dialog for your reference. You can choose from a variety of formats to display your dates. Select a standard format or customize one to suit your needs.

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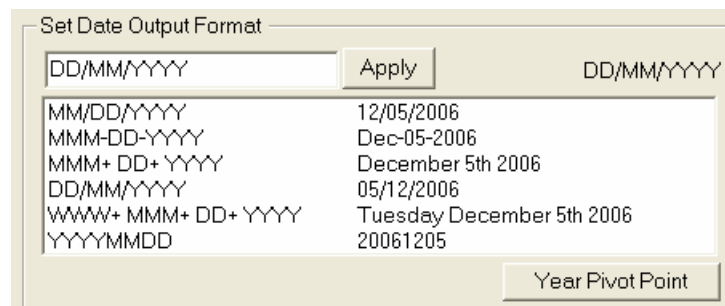
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The Date Output Format consists of "placeholder" characters that are translated into

dates. An example of a date in the common format of "MM/DD/YY" is "01/15/95." The number of characters in the month, day of the week and year portions determines how that date element is displayed. In other words, if you format the year as "YY" then the year is displayed like "95." Your other option is to display the entire year ("1995") by using the format "YYYY." If the "month" portion is followed by a plus sign (+), then that portion of the date appears as a complete word (e.g., "MMM+" becomes "January"). When the "day of the month" portion is followed by a plus sign, then dates appear in ordinal form (e.g., "DD+" becomes "15th"). If you use a plus-sign in a position that does not support it (for example, "WW+") then the plus-sign is treated as any other character and appears as-is in your dates.

To Set the Date Output Format:

The current Date Output Format is displayed on the Database Defaults dialog. A box below the caption "Set Date Output Format to" allows you to enter your new date format. Standard formats are provided in the list box below, with examples of how the current date is affected by each of the different formats.



Defaults Database Tab Set Date area

1. From the Options menu, choose Defaults.
2. Click on the Database tab to display your current setting.
3. To use one of the standard date formats, highlight it in the list box at the bottom of the dialog. It appears in the edit box at the top.
4. You may also create your own date format. To customize the date format, click in the edit box and make your changes.

Click OK to accept your changes and close the Defaults dialog.