

Date String Convertor

A MapBasic application

Help file

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DateStringConvertor.MBX

DSC accepts dates presented as strings (not as a date variable) formed of substrings for each element of a date:

Day as dd (also d or 0d for first 9)

Month as mm (also m or 0m for first 9) or as one of the 2 alpha strings defined in the INI file (msg 51 to 74)

Year as yyyy, or yy (also y or 0y for first 9)

Digit-years are treated as 20xx for $xx \leq 2$ digit present year, 19xx otherwise.

These elements can be organized in different sequences (DMY, MDY, YMD) and joined by different separators (space, -, /, .) and a special sequence (space, comma) applicable only with the MDY sequence

DSC converts the dates into all-digit strings (dd for day, mm for month, yyyy for year, where d,m,y are integers 0-9) reassembled in the desired sequence using the chosen separator.

It can convert a date at the time or process an entire column of a MI table.

INSTALLATION

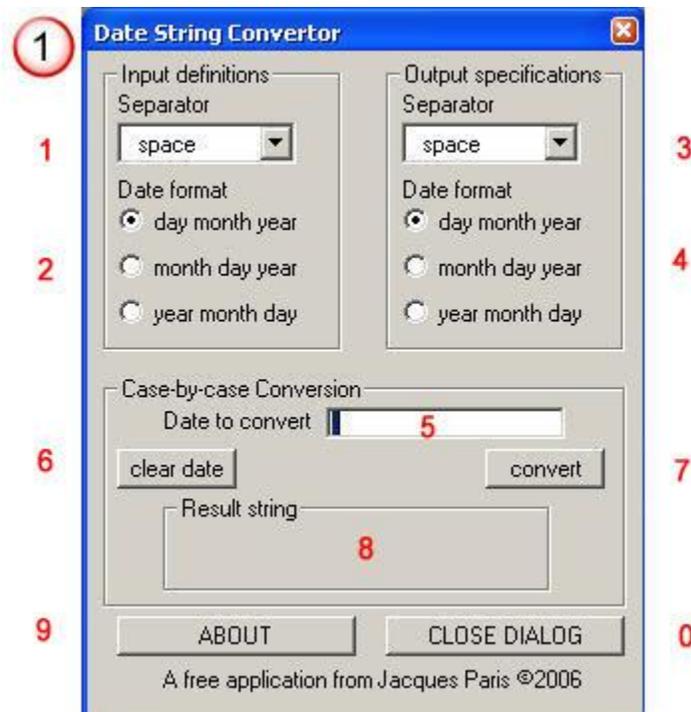
All the files in the archive ZIP file should be installed in the same directory

DateStringConvertor.MBX	the Mapbasic application
DateStringConvertor.INI	the language strings file (a)
DateStringConvertor_EN.PDF	help file in English (b)
DateStringConvertor_FR.PDF	help file in French

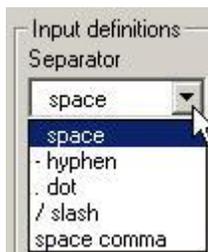
- (a) If the INI file is not in the same directory as the MBX, the application will generate an INI file in English only the first time it is run.
- (b) Any new file in a different language should also be placed in that directory

RUNNING DSC

DSC can be launched from its directory or via the "Tool manager" for a more permanent and direct accessibility. Once launched, a menu is added to the TOOLS menu of the MapInfo main menu bar.



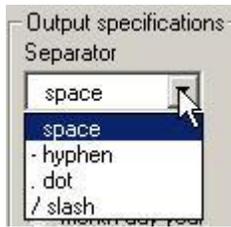
1 – Choose one among the separators offered for the input date string



The same separator is used in both positions, but for the “space comma” combination that corresponds to the US scripting of dates: Jan 23, 2002 (with or without a space after the comma). That choice is valid only if the MDY sequence is specified.

2 – Choose a date sequence
Available choices DMY, MDY, YMD

3 – Choose one among the separators offered for the output date string



The same separator is used in both positions.

4 – Choose a date sequence

Available choices DMY, MDY, YMD

5 – Enter the date string to convert

Do not include in the string extra "separators" defined or not (such as extra spaces)

6 – This button clears the date and result string boxes.

7 – Use this button when ready to have the string converted

8 – When the conversion is successful, the converted string is displayed in this box. If the conversion did not work, two lines are displayed; the first one "symbolizes" the error position in the string, the second explains the nature of the problem.

The symbolic string uses the same separator (except when separators are the problem) and the same sequence of date elements as in the input string; the elements are represented always with a standard "size/contents" that may be different from the original string. In the following examples, the separator (-) and the sequence (DMY) form one of the many possible combinations

```
??-xx-xxxx  
Day unacceptable
```

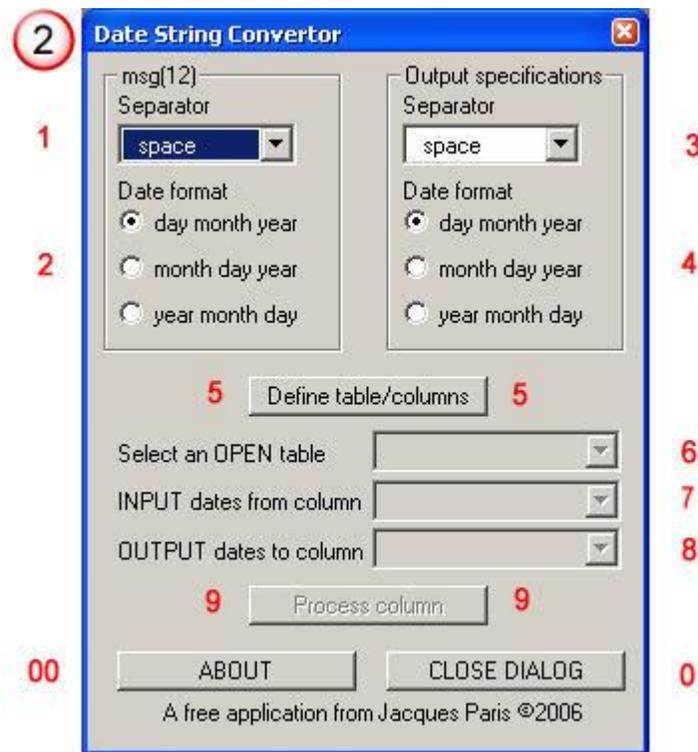
```
xx-??-xxxx  
Month not recognized
```

```
xx?xx?xxxx  
Input Separator not defined  
(or) Mixed up Input Separators
```

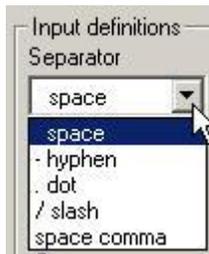
```
XX*XX*XXXX  
Undefined failure
```

9 – Does not say much about DSC. Use preferably the "Help Document" from the DSC menu (Item #4)

0 – Click on that button to close the dialog. DSC remains open and its menu accessible.



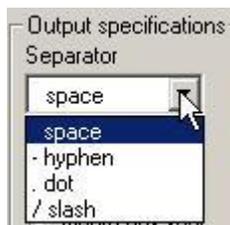
1 – Choose one among the separators offered for the input date string



The same separator is used in both positions, but for the “space comma” combination that corresponds to the US scripting of dates: Jan 23, 2002 (with or without a space after the comma). That choice is valid only if the MDY sequence is specified.

2 – Choose a date sequence
Available choices DMY, MDY, YMD

3 – Choose one among the separators offered for the output date string



The same separator is used in both positions.

4 – Choose a date sequence
Available choices DMY, MDY, YMD

5 – Click on this button to start the procedure of table and column definitions. The next item becomes active when the previous one is defined.

6 – List of OPEN tables; choose one. If the number of “char” columns in the selected table is less than 2, the choice is refused.

7 – List of “char” columns in the selected table; select one as the input column.

8 – List of “char” columns in the selected table and excluding the column previously selected. The width of that column is not verified by the program; the user must make sure that the converted date strings will hold in that column (recommended width of 12, required 10)

9 – When all definitions are set, clicking on that button starts date strings processing.

The result column is automatically updated with the converted strings as processing progresses.

At the normal end of the table, a message indicates that the user should save the results (they are not saved from within the application). In case of an abnormal end (processing interrupted by the cancel button of the progress bar), the user is advised to discard the results (close without saving, or revert).

Strings that create a problem are converted into symbolic strings and stored in the output column as such. The “ending” message will contain a warning giving the number of such errors.

The symbolic string uses the same separator (except when separators are the problem) and the same sequence of date elements as the input string; the elements are represented always with a standard “size/contents” that may be different from the original string. In the following examples, the separator (“-”) and the sequence (DMY) form one of the many possible combinations

Error string	Error cause
??-xx-xxxx	Day unacceptable
xx-??-xxxx	Month not recognized
xx?xx?xxxx	Input Separator not defined (or) Mixed up Input Separators
XX*XX*XXXX	Undefined failure

0 – Click on that button to close the dialog. DSC remains open and its menu accessible.

00 – Does not say much about DSC. Use preferably the “Help Document” from the DSC menu (Item #4)



This option allows switching between the languages defined in the INI file.

Each language contains 2 "string" definitions for each month; they can be modified if need arises or a new "dummy" language can be added to the INI file with two completely different string definitions. That solution can be useful when dates from an origin different from the displayed language must be processed and the user wants to keep the display language.

To add a language to the INI file, one must (using a word processing such as Notepad):

1 – copy a complete language set of lines and paste them at the end. A complete set is formed of two sections with headers [LanguageX] [MLCX] (X is the index of the language)

2 – update these headers to represent the new number of languages (X becomes Y=previous number of languages in the INI file+1)

3 – give a name to the "new" language in the first line of the new [LanguageY] section.
[LanguageY]
Name="Français-Espagnol"

4 – modify the string definitions of the months (msg 51 à 74)

5 – update the number of languages in the INI file
[General]
...
Languages="Y"

Once the INI file is saved, the new language becomes available (if the requester 3 was open during the changes, close it and reopen).

Call for cooperation: if you have translated an entire language, please send me your INI file so that I can include the new language in the distribution package for everyone's benefit



If one wants to add a PDF help file in a different language, he must simply modify 2 strings in each language definition of the existing ones, msg 49 and 50, that should read:

msg49= "English; Français; NuLang"

msg50= "EN;FR;NU"

NuLang and NU can be whatever is desired (within of course normal practice)

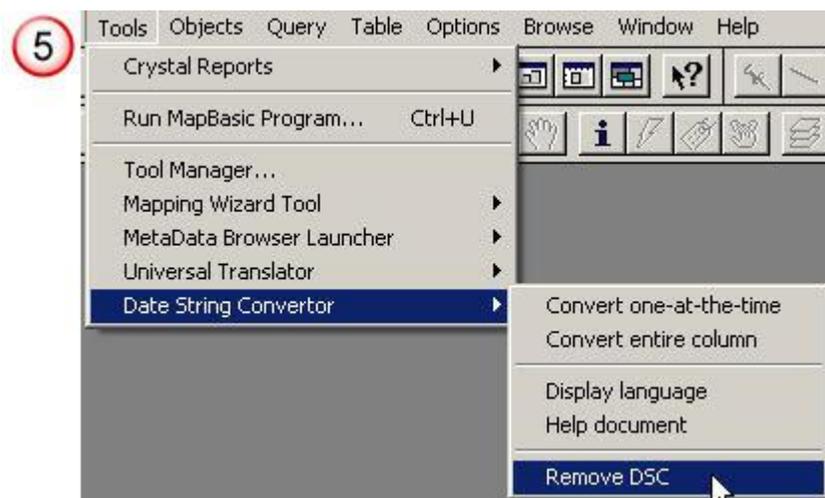
Beside, the PDF file should be named DateStringConvertor_NU.pdf

Warnings:

Respect the correspondence between elements in the 49 and 50 strings

Respect the required spelling of the PDF file name.

Call for cooperation: if you have translated the Help file to another language, please send me the file so that I can include it in the distribution package for everyone's benefit.



This will remove completely the DSC application from the "Tools" menu