



International Date Line



The International Date Line is an internationally accepted demarcation of the surface of Earth, running between the South and North Poles and serving as the boundary between one calendar day and the next.

Circumnavigating the globe [\[edit \]](#)

People traveling westward [around the world](#) must set their clocks:

- Back by one hour for every 15° of longitude crossed, and
- Forward by 24 hours upon crossing the International Date Line.

People traveling eastward must set their clocks:

- Forward by one hour for every 15° of longitude crossed, and
- Back by 24 hours upon crossing the International Date Line.

Failing to do this would make their time inaccurate to the local time.

The Arab geographer [Abulfeda](#) (1273–1331) predicted that circumnavigators would accumulate a one-day offset to the local date.^[1] This phenomenon was confirmed in 1522 at the end of the [Magellan–Elcano circumnavigation](#) (1519–1522), the first successful circumnavigation. After sailing westward around the world from Spain, the expedition called at [Cape Verde](#) for provisions on Wednesday, 9 July 1522 (ship's time). However, the locals told them that it was actually Thursday, 10 July 1522. The crew was surprised, as they had recorded each day of the three-year journey without omission.^[2] Cardinal [Gasparo Contarini](#), the Venetian ambassador to Spain, was the first European to give a correct explanation of the discrepancy.^[3]