

# How can I convert a factor to a date in R using examples?

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=165536>

Converting a factor to a date in R allows for the transformation of categorical data into a chronological format, making it easier to analyze and interpret. This can be achieved by using the `as.Date()` function, which takes the factor as an argument and returns a date object. For example, if a factor "January 1st, 2021" is converted to a date, it will become "2021-01-01". This method can be useful for handling data in time series analysis, forecasting, and other statistical applications. Additionally, the `as.Date()` function allows for customization of the date format, making it adaptable to different data sets and purposes.

## Convert Factor to Date in R (With Examples)

You can use one of the following two methods to quickly convert a factor to a date in R:

### Method 1: Use Base R

```
as.Date(factor_variable, format = '%m/%d/%Y')
```

### Method 2: Use Lubridate

```
library(lubridate)
```

```
mdy(factor_variable)
```

The following examples show how to use each method with the following data frame:

```
#create data frame
```

```
df <- data.frame(day=factor(c('1/1/2020', '1/13/2020',
```

```
'1/15/2020')),  
sales=c(145, 190, 223))
```

```
#view data frame  
df
```

```
day sales
```

```
1 1/1/2020 145  
2 1/13/2020 190  
3 1/15/2020 223
```

```
#view class of 'day' variable  
class(df$day)
```

```
"factor"
```

Example 1: Convert Factor to Date Using Base R

The following code shows how to convert the 'day' variable in the data frame from a factor to a date using the `as.Date()` function from base R:

```
#convert 'day' column to date format  
df$day <- as.Date(df$day, format = '%m/%d/%Y')
```

```
#view updated data frame
```

```
df
```

```
day sales
```

```
1 2020-01-01 145
```

```
2 2020-01-13 190
```

```
3 2020-01-15 223
```

```
#view class of 'day' variable
```

```
class(df$day)
```

```
"Date"
```

Notice that the 'day' variable has been converted to a date format.

Example 2: Convert Factor to Date Using Lubridate

The following code shows how to convert the 'day' variable from a factor to a date using the `mdy()` function from the `lubridate` package:

```
library(lubridate)
```

```
#convert 'day' column to date format
```

```
df$day <- mdy(df$day)
```

```
#view updated data frame
```

**df**

**day sales**

**1 2020-01-01 145**

**2 2020-01-13 190**

**3 2020-01-15 223**

**#view class of 'day' variable**

**class(df\$day)**

**"Date"**

**The 'day' variable has been converted to a date format.**

**Note that mdy() indicates a month-day-year format.**

**Note: You can find the complete documentation for the lubridate package .**

**Additional Resources**

**The following tutorials explain how to perform other common conversions in R:**