WHAT IS ZULU TIME?

UTC/GMT CONVERSION

Since radio signals can cross multiple time zones and the international

date line, some worldwide standard for time and date is needed. This

standard is coordinated universal time, abbreviated UTC. This was

formerly known as Greenwich mean time (GMT). Other terms used to refer

to it include "Zulu time" (after the "Z" often used after UTC times),

"universal time," and "world time."

UTC is used by international shortwave broadcasters in their broadcast

and program schedules. Ham radio operators, shortwave listeners, the

military, and utility radio services are also big users of UTC. All of

the times and dates found here at DXing.com at UTC unless otherwise

indicated.

Greenwich mean time was based upon the time at the zero degree meridian

that crossed through Greenwich, England. GMT became a world time and

date standard because it was used by Britain's Royal Navy and merchant

fleet during the nineteenth century. Today, UTC uses precise atomic

clocks, shortwave time signals, and satellites to ensure that UTC

remains a reliable, accurate standard for scientific and navigational

purposes. Despite the improvements in accuracy, however, the same

principles used in GMT have been carried over into UTC.

UTC uses a 24-hour system of time notation. "1:00 a.m." in UTC is

expressed as 0100, pronounced "zero one hundred." Fifteen minutes after

0100 is expressed as 0115; thirty-eight minutes after 0100 is 0138

(usually pronounced "zero one thirty-eight"). The time one minute after

0159 is 0200. The time one minute after 1259 is 1300 (pronounced

"thirteen hundred"). This continues until 2359. One minute later is 0000

("zero hundred"), and the start of a new UTC day.

To convert UTC to local time, you have to add or subtract hours from it.

For persons west of the zero meridian to the international date line

(which includes all of North America), hours are subtracted from UTC to

convert to local time. Below is a table showing the number of hours to

subtract from local time zones in North America in order to convert UTC

to local time:

Local Time Subtract from UTC:

Atlantic Standard Four hours

Atlantic Daylight Three hours

Eastern Standard Five hours

Eastern Daylight Four hours

Central Standard Six hours

Central Daylight Five hours

Mountain Standard Seven hours

Mountain Daylight Six hours

Pacific Standard Eight hours

Pacific Daylight Seven hours

Alaskan Standard Nine hours

Alaskan Daylight Eight hours

Hawaiian Standard Ten hours

A major source of confusion when using UTC is that the date also follows

UTC. Suppose your local time zone is Central standard, and you want to

hear a shortwave program scheduled to be broadcast at 0400 UTC Saturday.

You do the math, and find that 0400 UTC is equal to 10:00 p.m. Central

standard time. If you tune in at 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, however, you

won't hear the program. Since the date is also UTC, you need to listen

at 10:00 p.m. Friday to hear the program.

To hear the latest time in UTC, you can tune to stations WWV, in Fort

Collins, Colorado, and WWVH, Kauai, Hawaii, on 2500, 5000, 10000, and

15000 kHz to hear the time announced in UTC each minute. WWV uses a

man's voice to give the time, while WWVH uses a female voice. If you're

like many radio hobbyists, you will soon add a second clock set to UTC

to your collection of radio gear.

------------------------------------------------------------------------

FROM DXING.COM CHECK IT OUT