



**NIST Interagency Report
NIST IR 8529-01**

NIST Time and Frequency Bulletin

Kelsey Rodriguez, Editor

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<https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.IR.8529-01>

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Physical Measurement Laboratory

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January 2024
No. 793



U.S. Department of Commerce
Gina M. Raimondo, Secretary

National Institute of Standards and Technology
Laurie E. Locascio, NIST Director and Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology

NIST IR 8529-01
January 2024

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Publication History

Approved by the NIST Editorial Review Board on 2024-06-24.

How to Cite this NIST Technical Series Publication

Rodriguez, K (2024) NIST Time and Frequency Bulletin. (National Institute of Standards and Technology, Boulder, CO), NIST Interagency Report (IR) NIST IR 8529-01. <https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.IR.8529-01>

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Abstract

The Time and Frequency Bulletin provides information on performance of time scales and a variety of broadcasts (and related information) to users of the NIST services.

Keywords

Clocks; dissemination; frequency; GPS; oscillators; time.

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1. Time Scale Information

The values listed in the table below are based on data from the IERS, the USNO, and NIST. The UTC(USNO, MC) – UTC(NIST) values are obtained from the BIPM. UTC – UTC(NIST) data are on page 3.

Table 1. Variation in UT1 – UTC(NIST) and UTC(USNO, MC) – UTC(NIST) Time Scales.

0000 HOURS COORDINATED UNIVERSAL TIME			
December 2023	MJD	UT1 – UTC(NIST) (± 1 ms)	UTC(USNO, MC) – UTC(NIST) (± 5 ns)
1	60279	+11.6 ms	-0.5 ns
6	60284	+12.3 ms	+0.9 ns
11	60289	+11.2 ms	+0.6 ns
16	60294	+12.7 ms	-0.4 ns
21	60299	+10.1 ms	-1.2 ns
26	60304	+8.5 ms	-0.6 ns

The clock pulses used by the WWV, WWVH, and WWVB time-code transmissions are referenced to the UTC (NIST) time scale. Occasionally, 1 s is added to the UTC time scale. This second is called a leap second. Its purpose is to keep the UTC time scale within ± 0.9 s of the UT1 astronomical time scale, which changes slightly due to variations in Earth's period of rotation.

Positive leap seconds, beginning at 23 h 59 min 60 s UTC and ending at 0 h 0 min 0 s UTC, were inserted in the UTC time scale on 30 June 1972, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1992-1994, 1997, 2012, 2015 and on 31 December 1972-1979, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2005, 2008, 2016.

NO leap second was introduced at the end of December 2023.

The insertion of leap seconds ensures that UT1 - UTC will always be held within ± 0.9 s. The current value of UT1 – UTC is called the DUT1 correction. DUT1 corrections are broadcast by WWV, WWVH, WWVB, and ACTS and are printed below. These corrections may be added to the received UTC time signals in order to obtain UT1.

Table 2. Corrections made to DUT1.

DUT1 = UT1 – UTC =	+0.0 s beginning 0000 UTC 28 July 2022
	-0.1 s beginning 0000 UTC 17 July 2021
	-0.2 s beginning 0000 UTC 02 May 2019
	-0.1 s beginning 0000 UTC 17 January 2019
	+0.0 s beginning 0000 UTC 21 September 2018
	+0.1 s beginning 0000 UTC 15 March 2018
	+0.2 s beginning 0000 UTC 30 November 2017
	+0.3 s beginning 0000 UTC 29 June 2017
	+0.4 s beginning 0000 UTC 30 March 2017
	+0.5 s beginning 0000 UTC 26 January 2017
	+0.6 s beginning 0000 UTC 01 January 2017
	-0.4 s beginning 0000 UTC 17 November 2016

The difference between UTC(NIST) and UTC has been within ± 100 ns since July 6, 1994. The table below shows values of UTC - UTC(NIST) as supplied by the BIPM in their *Circular T* publication for recent periods where data are available. Data are given at ten-day intervals. Five-day interval data are available in *Circular T*.

Table 3. UTC – UTC(NIST).

0000 Hours Coordinated Universal Time		
DATE	MJD	UTC-UTC(NIST), ns
Dec. 31, 2023	60309	-0.8
Dec. 21, 2023	60299	-1.0
Dec. 11, 2023	60289	1.2
Dec. 01, 2023	60279	0.0
Nov. 21, 2023	60269	-1.0
Nov. 11, 2023	60259	-0.6
Nov. 01, 2023	60249	0.2
Oct. 22, 2023	60239	1.6
Oct. 12, 2023	60229	1.9
Oct. 02, 2023	60219	1.7
Sep. 22, 2023	60209	0.5
Sep. 12, 2023	60199	0.1
Sep. 02, 2023	60189	0.0
Aug. 23, 2023	60179	-0.7
Aug. 13, 2023	60169	-0.7
Aug. 3, 2023	60159	0.8
Jul. 24, 2023	60149	0.8
Jul. 14, 2023	60139	0.8
Jul. 04, 2023	60129	-0.2
Jun. 24, 2023	60119	-0.8
Jun. 14, 2023	60109	-0.5
Jun. 4, 2023	60099	-0.6
May 25, 2023	60089	-2.0
May 15, 2023	60079	-2.2
May 5, 2023	60069	-0.8
Apr. 25, 2023	60059	0.9
Apr. 15, 2023	60049	1.8

2. Broadcast Outages Over Five Minutes and WWVB Phase Perturbations

Table 4. Broadcast Outages and Phase Perturbations.

OUTAGES OF 5 MINUTES OR MORE						PHASE PERTURBATIONS 2 ms			
Station	December 2023	MJD	Began UTC	Ended UTC	Freq.	December 2023	MJD	Began UTC	End UTC
WWVB	None					None			
WWV	None					None			
WWVH	None					None			

3. Notes on NIST Time Scales and Primary Standards

Primary frequency standards developed and operated by NIST are used to provide accuracy (rate) input to the BIPM and to provide the best possible realization of the SI second. Cold-atom cesium fountain frequency standards, currently NIST-F3 and NIST-F4, have served as the U.S. primary standards of time and frequency since 1999. The uncertainty of the primary standards is currently parts in 10^{16} .

The AT1 scale is run in real-time by use of data from an ensemble of cesium standards and hydrogen masers. It is a free-running scale whose frequency is maintained as nearly constant as possible by choosing the optimum weight for each clock that contributes to the computation.

UTC is generated at the BIPM by use of a post-processed time-scale algorithm and is not available in real-time. The parameters that we use to generate UTC(NIST) in real-time are therefore based on an extrapolation of UTC from the most recent available data.

UTC(NIST) is generated as an offset from our real-time scale AT1. Time steps are never used. Instead, the frequency is steered so that the time output remains close to UTC. This is accomplished by using data published by the BIPM in its *Circular T* and by weekly estimates of UTC, which are published by the BIPM as rapid UTC or UTCr. Changes in the frequency may be made as often as once per week and are limited to $\pm 2.3 \times 10^{-14}$. The frequency of UTC(NIST) is kept as stable as possible at other times.

4. UTC NIST – AT1 Parameters

Table 5 lists parameters that are used to define UTC(NIST) with respect to our real-time scale AT1. To find the value of UTC(NIST) – AT1 at any time T (expressed as a Modified Julian Date, including a fraction if needed), the appropriate equation to use is the one for which the desired T is greater than or equal to the entry in the T_0 column and less than the entry in the last column.

The values of x_{ls} , x , and y for that month are then used in the equation below to find the desired value. The parameters x and y represent the offsets in time and frequency, respectively,

between UTC(NIST) and AT1; the parameter x_{ls} is the number of leap seconds applied to both UTC(NIST) and UTC, as specified by the IERS. Leap seconds are not applied to AT1.

Table 5. UTC(NIST) - AT1.

UTC(NIST) - AT1 = $x_{ls} + x + y(T - T_0)$					
Month	x_{ls} (s)	x (ns)	y (ns/d)	T_0 (MJD)	Valid until 0000 on: (MJD)
Dec 23	-37	-534962.09	-38.38†	60299	60310*
Dec 23	-37	-534428.27	-38.13†	60285	60299
Dec 23	-37	-534197.69	-38.43	60279	60285
Nov 23	-37	-533890.25	-38.43†	60271	60279
Nov 23	-37	-533621.59	-38.38†	60264	60271
Nov 23	-37	-533086.37	-38.23†	60250	60264
Nov 23	-37	-533048.29	-38.08	60249	60250
Oct 23	-37	-532553.25	-38.08†	60236	60249
Oct 23	-37	-532285.99	-38.18†	60229	60236
Oct 23	-37	-532018.39	-38.23†	60222	60229
Oct 23	-37	-531864.67	-38.43	60218	60222
Sep 23	-37	-530711.77	-38.43	60188	60218
Aug 23	-37	-530673.34	-38.43†	60187	60188
Aug 23	-37	-530171.80	-38.58†	60174	60187
Aug 23	-37	-529519.34	-38.38	60157	60174
Jul 23	-37	-528329.56	-38.38	60126	60157
Jun 23	-37	-527252.8	-38.38†	60124	60126
Jun 23	-37	-527449.97	-38.23†	60103	60124
Jun 23	-37	-527181.31	-38.38	60096	60103
May 23	-37	-526912.65	-38.38†	60089	60096
May 23	-37	-526644.69	-38.28†	60082	60089
May 23	-37	-526415.61	-38.18†	60076	60082
May 23	-37	-525998.38	-37.93	60065	60076
Apr 23	-37	-525315.64	-37.93†	60047	60065
Apr 23	-37	-525049.08	-38.08†	60040	60047
Apr 23	-37	-524858.18	-38.18	60035	60040
Mar 23	-37	-524514.56	-38.18†	60026	60035
Mar 23	-37	-523714.88	-38.08†	60005	60026
Mar 23	-37	-523676.90	-37.98	60004	60005
Feb 23	-37	-523183.16	-37.98†	59991	60004
Feb 23	-37	-522617.21	-37.73	59976	59991
Jan 23	-37	-522390.83	-37.73†	59970	59976

† Rate change in mid-month

*Provisional value

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Appendix A. List of Symbols, Abbreviations, and Acronyms

ACTS

Automated Computer Time Service

BIPM

Bureau International des Poids et Mesures

GPS

Global Positioning System

IERS

International Earth Rotation Service

MC

Master Clock

min

minute

MJD

Modified Julian Date

ms

Millisecond

NIST

National Institute of Standards and Technology

ns

Nanosecond

SI

International System of Units

TA

Atomic Time

TAI

International Atomic Time

s

Second

USNO

United States Naval Observatory

UT1

Universal Time (Astronomical)

UTC

Coordinated Universal Time

μs

Microsecond