Insert Date/Time in Any Program Using Keyboard Hotkey
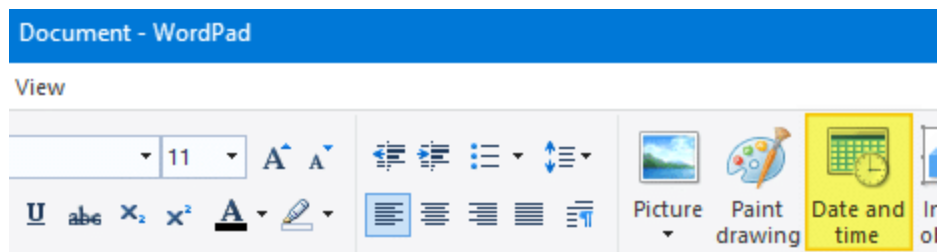
winhelponline.com/blog/insert-date-time-in-any-program-using-keyboard-hotkey

When you're writing content such as technical content, news articles, etc., you may sometimes want to insert the current date or timestamp in a program or editor you're using. In Notepad, you can add the timestamp by pressing the `F5` key.

Microsoft Office Word, OneNote allows the `Alt` + `Shift` + `D` and `Alt` + `Shift` + `T` hotkey combinations to insert the current date and current time respectively.

Similarly, WordPad has the **Date and time** toolbar button that lets you insert the date or timestamp in your preferred format from the list of 13 choices.

But, if you're using a program which doesn't have a built-in feature to insert current date and time, you may need a third-party macro or automation tool for that purpose. With automation tools, you also have the advantage of using a single hotkey combination to insert the date or timestamp in any program.

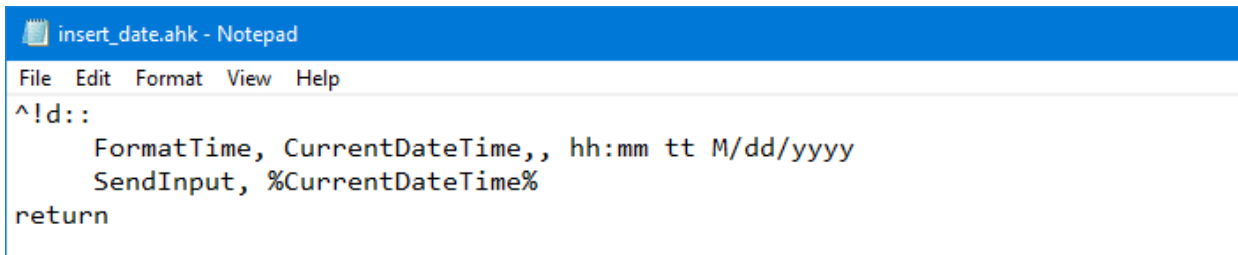## Insert date or time in any program using keyboard hotkey

AutoHotkey is a free, open-source scripting language for Windows that allows users to easily create small to complex scripts for all kinds of tasks such as form fillers, auto-clicking, macros, etc.

1. Download AutoHotkey and install it.
2. Right-click on the desktop, click New and select **AutoHotkey Script**.
3. Rename the script file `New AutoHotkey Script.ahk` to `insert_date.ahk`
4. Right-click the file and choose **Edit Script**

5. Remove all lines in the script and replace it with the following code:

```
^!d::
    FormatTime, CurrentDateTime,, hh:mm tt M/dd/yyyy
    SendInput, %CurrentDateTime%
return
```


6. Save the file `insert_date.ahk` and close the editor.
7. Double-click to run the script. It will show up in the notification area.
8. Now, switch to the program where you want to insert the date or timestamp.
9. Press `Ctrl` + `Alt` + `D` to insert the timestamp at the current cursor position.

Script Customization

You can change the keyboard hotkey in the (1st line of the) script if you need. Here are the modifiers.

- `!`   {Alt}
- `+`   {Shift}
- `^`   {Ctrl}
- `#`   {Winkey}

For example, for `Ctrl` + `Alt` + `Shift` + `D`, you'd use `^!+d` .

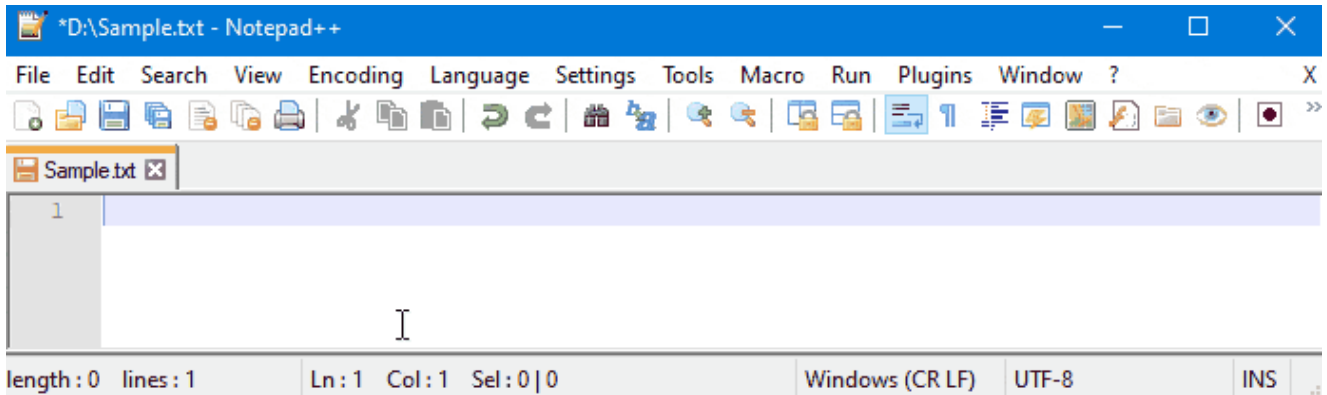*For the full list of keys you can send or intercept, see AutoHotkey [SendInput](underline) documentation*

Without using hotkeys

If you want to insert the timestamp by typing a specific word — e.g., `td` , then edit the .ahk script and replace its contents with the following:
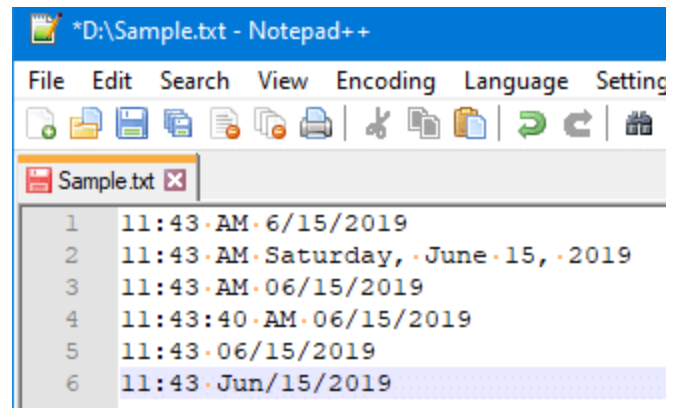
```
::td::
    FormatTime, CurrentDateTime,, hh:mm tt M/dd/yyyy
    SendInput, %CurrentDateTime%
return
```

Now, type `td` (and followed by a space) in any program. The words `td` will be replaced by the current date/timestamp. See this animation:

Similarly, you can customize the Date or timestamp format.

Date format	Result
hh:mm tt M/dd/yyyy	11:26 AM 6/15/2019
hh:mm tt MM/dd/yyyy	11:26 AM 06/15/2019
hh:mm:ss tt MM/dd/yyyy	11:26:22 AM 06/15/2019
HH:mm MM/dd/yyyy	11:26 06/15/2019
HH:mm MMM/dd/yyyy	11:26 Jun/15/2019
(no formatting)	11:26 AM Saturday, June 15, 2019

See __FormatTime Syntax__ AutoHotkey documentation for more information.

The above AutoHotkey script uses merely `1.5 MB` of memory.

And you can even compile the .ahk script to a .exe file so that you don't need to have the AutoHotkey program installed. This is especially helpful if you manage a lot of computers as part of your home or work network.

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About the author

Ramesh Srinivasan founded Winhelponline.com back in 2005. He is passionate about Microsoft technologies and he has been a Microsoft Most Valuable Professional (MVP) for 10 consecutive years from 2003 to 2012.