

Primo Date Handling

Compiled in September 2025; examples taken from questions asked by Georgetown library staff

Summary of the current understanding of MARC date fields and their use by Primo date-related functions, based on documentation and explanations provided in Ex Libris Support case #08147923.

Advanced Search by Date

Date fields are used in this order: 008 pos. 7-10 --> 260 c --> 264 c

A 008 start date (pos 7-10) of 9999 is disregarded and a 26x date is used instead. There's an internal rule that ignores "9999" in this field since it's the maximum value and can't be treated as a start date, so the system instead uses MARC 260c or 264c for the date portion of the search.

Publication Date Facet

Date fields are used in this order: 260 c --> 264 c --> 008

The facet starts by using the 26x fields (the date field(s) that are visible to patrons), and only reverts to the 008 if those are empty or unknown.

Sort By Date

Date fields are used in this order: 008 pos. 7-10 --> 260 c --> 264 c

The rule for skipping "9999" (when applying a date range as part of an Advanced Search) does not apply to sorting, so records with 9999 will be at the top of a Date-Newest sort.

This means that when the 008 date is unsortable (i.e., completely unknown like #### or ||||), Primo will fall back to 260c or 264c for sorting. If multiple fallback fields exist, it chooses the lower field according to the sort logic.

For partial dates like 19## or 19uu, the rule replaces the unknown elements with 0, so 19uu becomes 1900 for sorting purposes. This allows partially known dates to be sorted according to the 008, whereas completely unknown dates will trigger the fallback to 260c or 264c.

Examples

Example 1: Record a publication date and copyright date

A record with an 008 Date 1 of 2021, a 264c of 2021 (publication date), and a 264c of 2020 (copyright date) will use 2021 for the Advanced Search date range and for Date sorting. The Publication Date facet checks BOTH 2020 and 2021, so a 2020-2020 Publication Date range will include this record, as will a 2021-2021 Publication Date range.

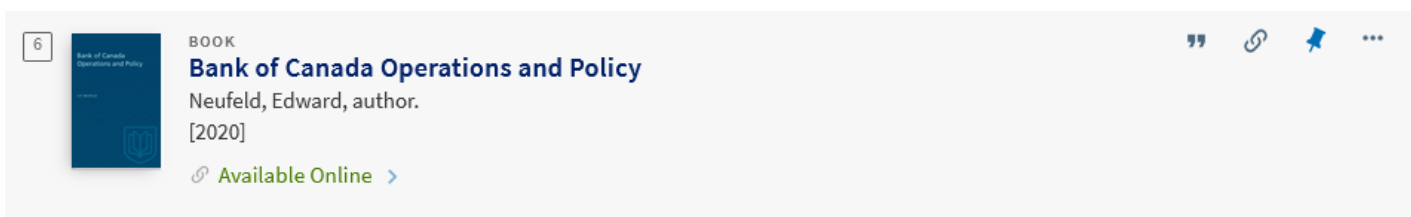



19  BOOK
This is big : how the founder of weight watchers changed the world--and me
Meltzer, Marisa, 1977- author.
2021
[Available at Lauinger Library Stacks \(RM214.6 .M45 2021\) >](#)

[Source record view](#)

Example 2: Record with a reprint date and copyright date

A record with an 008 Date 1 of 2020 (reprint/reissue date), a 264c of [2020] (approximate release date), and a 264c of 1958 (copyright date) will use 2020 for the Advanced Search date range and for Date sorting. The Publication Date facet checks BOTH 1958 and 2020, so an entered date range including one or the other date will include this record.



6  BOOK
Bank of Canada Operations and Policy
Neufeld, Edward, author.
[2020]
[Available Online >](#)

[Source record view](#)

Example 3: Largely unknown date

A record with an 008 Date 1 of 1uuu and no 264 dates will use 1000 (normalized from 1uuu) for the Advanced Search range, Date sorting, and the Publication Date facet.

1  JOURNAL ” 🔗 📌 ⋮
Calendars of the United States House of Representatives and history of legislation.
United States. Congress. House.; United States. Congress. House. Office of Legislative Operations.
1???


📖 Available at [Lauinger Library Microforms \(In Library Use Only\) \(CIS 2003 H940-7\) and other locations](#) >
🔗 [Available Online](#) >

[Source record view](#)

Example 4: Nonspecific date (9999)

A record with an 008 Date 1 of 9999 and a 260c date of 1970 will use 1970 for the Advanced Search date range and for the Publication Date facet. It will use 9999 for Date sorting, which puts it at the top of a Date-Newest listing.

(Such records are typically from e-resource vendors and do not conform to typical cataloging practice.)

1  BOOK ” 🔗 📌 ⋮
In Pride and With Promise
Deakin, Phyllis A., 1899-1997; International Federation of Business and Professional Women, 1930-1970

🔗 [Available Online](#) >

[Source record view](#)

Documentation

Ex Libris documentation of mappings:

[https://knowledge.exlibrisgroup.com/Primo/Product_Documentation/020Primo_VE/Primo_VE_\(English\)/120Other_Configurations/Mapping_to_the_Display%2C_Facets%2C_and_Search_Sections_in_the_Primo_VE_Record](https://knowledge.exlibrisgroup.com/Primo/Product_Documentation/020Primo_VE/Primo_VE_(English)/120Other_Configurations/Mapping_to_the_Display%2C_Facets%2C_and_Search_Sections_in_the_Primo_VE_Record)

Library of Congress documentation about the MARC date fields:

- [008](#)
- [260](#)
- [264](#)

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