

# datetime iso8601 string input

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I was a little surprised to recently discover that datetime has no method to input a string value. PEP 321 appears does not convey much information, but a timbot post from a couple years ago clarifies things:

<http://tinyurl.com/epjqc>

You can stop looking: datetime doesn't support any kind of conversion from string. The number of bottomless pits in any datetime module is unbounded, and Guido declared this particular pit out-of-bounds at the start so that there was a fighting chance to get *\*anything\** done for 2.3.

I can understand why datetime can't handle arbitrary string inputs, but why not just simple iso8601 format -- i.e. the default output format for datetime?

Given a datetime-generated string:

```
>>> now = str(datetime.datetime.now())
>>> print now
'2006-02-23 11:03:36.762172'
```

Why can't we have a function to accept it as string input and return a datetime object?

```
datetime.parse_iso8601(now)
```

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