



Time Periods in Primavera P6

By Kreg McCall

TEPCO, LLC

www.tepco.us

The Time Period function within Primavera is often confused with the “work hours” function within the calendars. Although they may seem to have similar functions within the software, they serve very different functions. The purpose of this document is to identify two of the major functions of time periods and illustrate a few of the pitfalls that a scheduler may encounter.

Time Periods as a Denominator

One of the simplest and most important functions of the Time Period is to act as a divisor when calculating activity durations. When entering activities into the Primavera database they are always entered in hourly durations. However, through the User Preferences menu, the user can change how durations are displayed throughout the software. Time Periods are how the calculations are set for duration display.

The example below shows how durations are calculated through the Time Period table using days, but the same would apply to weeks, months or years.

A / B = C

Activity Name	Units with 1 Resource/Hour	Original Duration
Time Period Test	48h	3.0d
8 Hour Activity	8h	1.0d
16 Hour Activity	16h	2.0d
24 Hour Activity	24h	3.0d

A
B
C

Time Periods

Hours per Time Period

Hours/Day: (Between 1 and 24)

Hours/Week: (Between 1 and 168)

Hours/Month: (Between 1 and 744)

Hours/Year: (Between 1 and 8784)

Admin v. Calendar Time Periods

Depending on the database administrator’s preference, the Time Period can either be fixed in the Admin Preferences tab or it can be calendar specific. It is important to remember that if the Time Period is fixed, then all durations greater than hourly will be divided accordingly. This can present a problem if there are multiple resource calendars within the project.

To avoid any confusion, insure that all Time Periods are aligned with the amount of hours being worked per day. If not, it could calculate the durations incorrectly and illustrate misleading data.

The example below shows a 40 hour activity. The contractor that was brought in to work the job works a 4 x 10hr schedule. However, the Time Period is set to a 5 x 8hr schedule.

Activity Name	Units with 1 Resource/Hour	Duration
Aligning Calendars to Time Periods		
40 Hour Activity	40.00h	5.00d



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As you can see the data being presented is incorrect. On a 4 x 10hr calendar, it would only take 4 days to complete the job.

If multiple calendars are used it is best to allow the calculations to be made from a calendar specific Time Period. This can only be made available by the database administrator under the Admin Preferences menu, under the Time Periods tab.

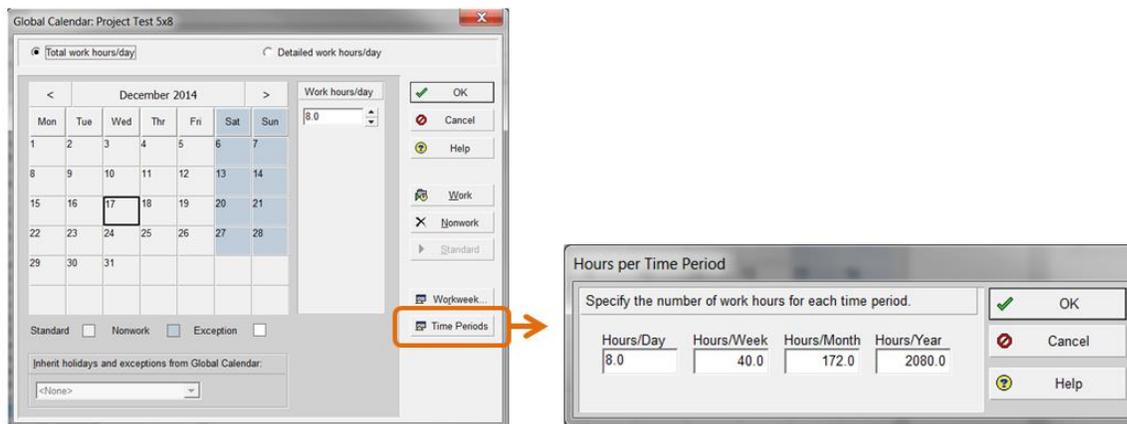
Time Periods

Hours per Time Period

Hours/Day 8.0 Between 1 and 24	Hours/Week 40.0 Between 1 and 168	Hours/Month 128.0 Between 1 and 744.	Hours/Year 1536.0 Between 1 and 8784.
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Use assigned calendar to specify the number of work hours for each time period

Once this option is selected by the administrator, the Time Period option will be available when a calendar is being modified. Here the user needs to choose the corresponding hours per day, week, month and year for each resource calendar to be used



Note: To create a new calendar in Primavera, you must choose an existing calendar to copy from. The calendar's Time Period will be copied as well. So, if the user is changing work hours, they must change the calendar Time Period to reflect this.

Effect on Activity Duration

Another very important function of the Time Period is determining the amount of hours in a day, week, month or year when adding activities. A calendar specific Time Period will have no effect on this, the hours that make up each duration increment are determined by the admin's Time Periods. However, at any time, a user can set their User Preferences to display durations into hours and manually change the hours in an activity.



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In the example below, all display options have been set to years. In the Admin Preferences, the amount of hours in a year has been set to 1 hour in the Time Periods tab and the default activity duration has been set to one year in the General tab.

Time Periods

Hours per Time Period

Hours/Day
1.0
Between 1 and 24.

Hours/Week
1.0
Between 1 and 168.

Hours/Month
1.0
Between 1 and 744.

Hours/Year
1.0
Between 1 and

Activity Duration

Default duration for new activities *
1.0y

One activity will be added then the display preference will be swapped back to hours.

Activity ID	Activity Name	Duration
Effect on Duration		
A1010	1 Hour/Year	1.00y

Activity ID	Activity Name	Duration
Effect on Duration		
A1010	1 Hour/Year	1.00h

Due to the fact that turnaround schedules are built on hours, this has little impact on that particular field. However, when stepping into the project side of scheduling, this could have a big impact. It is important to make sure that durations are compatible with each other. This is especially true when merging, copying and pasting schedules.