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Scheduling SMS notices through the API: send_at, time zones and when credits are charged

WhatsApp & APIs

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MozOut International
RLX Holdings (Pty) Ltd. · Group RLX Holdings
Tax no. (SARS) 943 907 6234 · Registration no. (CIPC) 2025/667953/07

https://www.my.mozout.com/knowledgebase/8124

Scheduling SMS notices through the API: send_at, time zones and when credits are charged

WhatsApp & APIs Created on **November 13, 2026** 2 min read



The short answer: add the **send_at** field to the send, with the date, time and time zone in ISO 8601, such as `2026-11-20T09:30:00+02:00`. The date must be in the future and **no more than 365 days ahead**. The message becomes **scheduled**, and credits are **only taken when it goes out**.

A scheduled request

```
curl https://api.mozout.com/v1/sms/messages \
-H "Authorization: Bearer sandbox_..." \
-H "Content-Type: application/json" \
-H "Idempotency-Key: consulta-5812-vespera" \
-d '{"number": "841234567", "text": "Reminder: your appointment is tomorrow at 10:00.",
"send_at": "2026-11-20T09:30:00+02:00"}'
```

The answer carries the message **id**, the status **scheduled** and the planned time in **scheduled_for**. Store the id in your system next to the booking or invoice: you need it to look the notice up or cancel it.

The time zone

The end of the timestamp says which zone the time is in. Mozambique is on **+02:00** and Angola on **+01:00**: the same "09:30" with the wrong offset goes out an hour early or late. If your system stores dates in UTC, you can send UTC with a trailing **Z**, as long as the conversion is right.

What happens until the time comes

Moment	What happens
When you schedule	The API only checks that the balance is enough. Nothing is taken: **charged** stays **false**.
Meanwhile	The balance shows, in **scheduled_credits**, what is scheduled and not yet taken.

Moment	What happens
At the time	The message goes out and the credits are taken.
At the time, balance short	The message is not sent and ends up **failed**, with the error **insufficient_credits**.

Scheduling errors

Reason (details.reason)	What it means
invalid_send_at	The date is not in a valid format. Check the ISO 8601 and the offset.
send_at_in_past	The date has passed. If you want it out now, send without send_at.
send_at_too_far	The date is more than 365 days away.

These come back with status 422. The other SMS errors are listed in **SMS API errors and message statuses**.

Keep enough balance for notices already scheduled.
A reminder booked weeks ago fails at send time if the balance ran out in the meantime. See how to watch the balance in **what automatic notices cost**.

Test with a sandbox_ key.
The API checks everything and answers, but sends and charges nothing.

RECOMMENDED

Want your notices to go out on their own at the right time? See the API page.

See the API page →

SEE ALSO

- **Cancelling a scheduled SMS through the API, for example when the customer has already paid** →
- **Sending SMS through the API: key, permissions, Sandbox and your first request** →
- **SMS API errors and message statuses: what each one means and what to do** →

- Sending many SMS notices in one API request: the batch endpoint and its results
- What automatic SMS notices cost each month, and how to keep credits from running out
- SMS history and scheduling: statuses, filters and what happens when a message fails

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TAX NO. (SARS)	943 907 6234
REGISTRATION NO. (CIPC)	2025/667953/07
REGISTERED OFFICE	1111 Olive Street Saint Louis 63101, Missouri, United States
CONTACT	info@mozout.com · +27 78 823 3325 · www.mozout.com
OPENING HOURS	Monday to Friday - 08 AM to 04 PM Saturday & Sunday - Closed

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