

Tip Sheet: How to Write Good User Stories for Your Agile Project

1. What is a User Story?

A user story is a short, simple description of a feature or functionality written from the perspective of the end user. It typically follows this format:

As a [user role], **I want to** [goal] **so that** [reason].

This format ensures that the focus is on the value provided to the user, rather than technical details. It also keeps stories concise and easy to understand.

2. Characteristics of User Stories

The **INVEST model** is often used to evaluate the quality of a user story. It stands for:

- **Independent:** The story should be self-contained, avoiding overlap with other stories.
- **Negotiable:** A user story is not a detailed contract; it's an invitation to discuss.
- **Valuable:** It should deliver value to the user.
- **Estimable:** The team must be able to estimate the effort required to implement the story.
- **Small:** Keep the story small enough to be completed in a sprint or iteration.
- **Testable:** You should be able to verify that the story has been implemented correctly.

3. Steps for Creating User Stories

1. Understand the User

- Create user personas and conduct research.
- Gather insights into user pain points, goals, and motivations.
- Tailor stories to specific user needs.

2. Follow the User Story Format

- Use the format: As a [user role], I want to [goal], so that [reason].
- Define the user, their goal, and the reason for the feature.

3. Keep It Simple and Concise

- Avoid technical details and documentation.
- Focus on small, manageable, and valuable chunks of functionality.
- Break down complex stories into smaller ones.

4. Include Acceptance Criteria

- Set clear boundaries and conditions for story completion.
- Use specific, measurable criteria to avoid misunderstandings.

5. Collaborate with the Team

- Engage product owners, developers, and stakeholders.
- Ensure shared understanding of user stories in team discussions.
- Get input on technical feasibility and scope.

6. Make the Story Testable

- Ensure the feature is testable with clear acceptance criteria.
- Acceptance criteria should translate into test cases.

7. Prioritize the Stories

- Prioritize based on user needs, business goals, and dependencies.
- Focus on high-value features that deliver immediate user value.

As a

I want to

So that

Acceptance
Criteria

4. Examples

As a user	I want to reset my password	so that I can regain access to my account if I forget it.	- The user can request a password reset via their email. - The reset link is sent within 5 minutes.
As a project manager	I want to export project data into CSV format	so that I can easily analyze it in Excel.	- The export button is available on the project page. - The user can export data for selected time periods.
As a shopper	I want to filter products by price range	so that I can find products that fit my budget.	- The user can select a price range from a predefined filter. - The results update in real-time to display products within the selected range.

5. More Information

For more information, visit the following blog post:

<https://www.pmmajik.com/how-to-write-good-user-stories-for-your-project/>

If you are interested in a complete Agile Template Framework, visit the link below:

<https://www.pmmajik.com/members/agile-template-framework-info/>

