User Stories

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# User Story

## Primary Sources

* [User Story](https://www.productplan.com/glossary/user-story/), ProductPlan
* [Acceptance Criteria](https://www.productplan.com/glossary/acceptance-criteria/), Product Plan

## User Story Template & Examples

A *user story* is similar to the terms: *use case, scenario, script*. A *use case* is sometimes more detailed.

*In agile software development, a user story is a brief, plain-language explanation of a feature or functionality written from a user’s point of view. Many agile experts also describe a user story as the smallest unit of product development work that can lead to a complete element of user functionality.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

A common format for writing a user story is:

As a [*description of user*], I want to [*functionality*], so that [*benefit*].

Some examples:

* As a brand manager, I want to get alerts whenever a reseller advertises our products below agreed-upon prices so that I can quickly take action to protect our brand.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* As an iOS user, I want to sync data with an Apple Watch so that I can track calories burned more accurately.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* As a student employee, I want to log my hours so that I will get paid for my work.[[4]](#footnote-4)
* [Student Project](http://ieng6.ucsd.edu/~cs110x/static/res/DAB_User_Stories.pdf), UCSD, Course Scheduling
* [Student Project](http://ieng6.ucsd.edu/~cs110x/static/res/NANI_User_Stories.pdf), UCSD, Travel Planner
* [User Story Example](https://tech.gsa.gov/assets/cms/files/UserStoryExamples.pdf), Tech@GSA.gov
* More examples are found in another [section](#_User_Story_Examples).

## Other Definitions & Sources

* [User stories with examples and a template](https://www.atlassian.com/agile/project-management/user-stories), Atlassian
* [User Stories](https://tech.gsa.gov/guides/glossary/#user-stories), Teach@GSA.gov
* Writing Effective User Stories, Tech@GSA.gov

# Videos to Watch

Watch these 4 videos:

1. [How to Write Good User Stories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ar_LqdUlQQ), by CA Technologies (4 min)
2. [Agile User Stories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apOvF9NVguA&t=296s), by Mark Shead (7 min)
3. [Splitting User Stories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDT0HMtDwYI&t=28s), by Mark Shead (9 min)
4. [What Are Agile Story Points](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CX7BISMrdIc) (4 min)
5. [How To Do Agile Sizing and Estimating](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XW3US0tRruI) (4 min)
6. [What are Epics, User Stories, and Story Points?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogV2r9579WI) (Start at 3 min, then 4 min left)
7. [What Are Story Points in Agile?: A Beginners Guide | Story Points Estimation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJpXWCspWz0) (stop at 3 min)
8. [What Are User Story Acceptance Criteria?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DavPyEFeEFw), by BA-EXPERTS (5 min)

# User Story Examples

## Example 1

**Title: Clock-in/out**

User Story

As an hourly worker, I want to clock-in and clock-out so I get paid correctly.

Acceptance Criteria

The worker types their ID into the kiosk and indicates “IN” or “OUT.” The system displays a message with the current date and time and whether it was a clock-in or out

Non-Functional Requirements

1. The system should take less than 1 second to inform the work of the success or failure of the clock-in/out.

Notes

1. No attempt is made to validate whether “in” or “out” has been selected “correctly.” For example, a work may clock-in in the morning and at lunch, may be intending to clock-out, but mistakenly clock-in. Errors are found when processing reports and/or when reported to a manager. Errors are fixed manually by a manager.
2. If the ID is invalid inform the user
3. A worker’s ID is 4 digits.
4. If the network is down, clock-in/outs are stored locally and uploaded when the network is open.

## Example 2

**Title: Generate Payroll Report**

User Story

As a payroll supervisor, I want to display a Payroll Report so I can analyze the report for trends, discrepancies, *etc.*

Acceptance Criteria

The payroll supervisor supplies the department ID and date range and the system displays a list of all employees in the department, the total hours worked, and their respective pay over the date range.

Notes

1. The format of the report is … <<< stuff deleted >>>
2. <<< Tons of rules of how hours are calculated and pay are calculated >>>
3. The date range should default to the last complete week.

## More Examples

Source: [Mountain Goat Software](https://www.mountaingoatsoftware.com/agile/user-stories)

* As a trainer, I can create a new course or event, so site visitors can see it.
* As a trainer, when I create an “Other Course” or Event, I am charged a listing fee for that activity so I don’t list events I don’t really intend to hold.
* As a trainer, I can update one of my existing courses or events so that it reflects accurate information.
* As a trainer, I can delete one of my courses or events, so it’s no longer listed if I cancel for some reason.
* As a site administrator, I can create an “Other Course” or Event that is not charged a listing fee.
* As a site administrator, I can set the listing fee for Other Course or Event so that we have flexibility on what (if anything) to charge in the future.
* As a trainer, I can copy one of my courses or events so that I can create a new one. When copying it I am asked for the date(s) of the new course or event.
* As a trainer, I am notified about the results of surveys about my classes, so I can read them.
* As a site admin, I can see the results for each trainer and averages for the class (for all trainers), so I can identify any outliers or possible problems.
* As a site visitor who is considering attending a certification course, I want to see a trainer’s rating (either for that course or for all of his or her certification courses combined), so I choose a course from an appropriate trainer.
* As a trainer, I want my rating to show up on my profile page, so site visitors can choose wisely.

Appendix

1. Useful Resources
	1. Videos
2. [[Myth Busting] What Is A User Story?](https://www.scrum.org/resources/blog/myth-busting-what-user-story?gclid=Cj0KCQjwyOuYBhCGARIsAIdGQRMDD2QgFkx0XUas53zF-c44fDfWfCR9_nz-qRT-RxcSyHxL2jhLDekaAspxEALw_wcB), Joshua Partogi, Scrum.org (5 min)
3. [A Product Owner's Guide to Writing Excellent User Stories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYw7FqsY_RA), Tracy Cook (56 min). Shows how business problems and objectives lead to user stories. Very detailed.
4. [Agile User Stories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRRQCDZQ6G4) (35 min) – good, lots of detail.
5. [Agile User Stories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEPLaYcdgeg) (12 min) – good
6. [Writing good user stories in agile software development](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQzS30PtsiM) (5 min), by Atlassian
	1. Articles
7. [Essential XP: Card, Conversation, Confirmation](https://ronjeffries.com/xprog/articles/expcardconversationconfirmation/), Ron Jeffries. Inventor of user stories concept. Short read.
8. [User Stories](https://www.cs.odu.edu/~zeil/cs350/latest/Public/stories/index.html), Steven J Zeil, Old Dominion University. Very detailed on all aspects, probably a lecture or two’s worth of material
9. Definition of Done, Tech@GSA.gov
1. <https://www.productplan.com/glossary/user-story/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.productplan.com/glossary/user-story/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.pagerduty.com/blog/agile-user-stories-examples-and-templates/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [https://wiki.cac.washington.edu/display/BAC/User+Stories](https://wiki.cac.washington.edu/display/BAC/User%2BStories) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)