



A simple guide to Scrum

Scrum is a lightweight, team-centric framework for solving complex problems and generating value. Purposefully incomplete, Scrum is designed to be built upon by the collective intelligence of the people using it.

Founded on empiricism and lean thinking, Scrum enables teams to work artfully, adapting to changing requirements, while generating value for the user, early and often. For this to be successful those implementing Scrum need to work with focus, and embody certain values, including, but not limited to commitment, openness, respect and courage.

Work is done in short 'sprints', typically of one to four weeks duration. The sprint is the heartbeat of Scrum, creating rhythm and allowing for rapid feedback.

Implementing Scrum effectively requires that the following elements are clearly established.

The Scrum Team

The fundamental unit of Scrum is a small, self-managing, cross-functional collective with three accountabilities.

- **Developers** — (3-8) individuals with different skills, who collaboratively create a valuable increment each sprint.
- **Product Owner** — (1) the voice of the business; the PO maximizes product value by talking with customers, setting clear product goals and managing the product backlog.
- **Scrum Master** — (1) organisational change agent; ensures Scrum is applied effectively and fosters an environment for continuous learning and personal growth.

A note on scaling: If the team grows too large the developers should reorganize into multiple cohesive teams, each focused on the same product. Therefore, they should share the same product goal, product backlog, and product owner.

Commitments

Clear purpose directs the work and makes the intent visible to all.

- **Product Goal** — describes a future state of the product: a commitment to clear direction.
- **Sprint Goal** — a concrete stepping stone towards the product goal: a commitment to incremental value.
- **Definition of Done** — a commitment to quality for all work items.

Artifacts

These elements provide transparency. Each one is reviewed regularly at one or more of the Scrum Events.

- **Product Backlog** — an evolving, ordered list of items, committed to the product goal; this backlog is regularly refined and updated.
- **Sprint Backlog** — selected backlog items and a plan of action committed to the sprint goal.
- **Increment** — completed backlog items that actualise the sprint goal, and meet an agreed definition of done.

Events

There are three sprint events, one daily event, and a meta-event containing the other four. These events allow inspection and adaptation to occur on a regular basis, at different levels of granularity.

- **Sprint** — a time-boxed container for the work and the four alignment events; the heartbeat of Scrum, where ideas are turned into value.
- **Sprint Planning** — occurs at the start of every sprint: product owner and developers define the sprint goal and select backlog items; developers may create a list of tasks.
- **Daily Scrum** — occurs every working day, ideally at the same time and place: a short developer conversation to inspect/adapt the sprint backlog in service to sprint goal.
- **Sprint Review** — occurs at the end of every sprint: stakeholders inspect the increment, and offer feedback; the scrum team may update the product backlog.
- **Sprint Retrospective** — occurs immediately after the sprint review: the scrum team reflects on the sprint and identifies changes to improve its effectiveness.

End Note

Scrum is a container for agility, inviting in other techniques, methodologies, and practices. The Scrum framework, adopted holistically, enables teams to inspect, adapt, and deliver valuable products in complex environments.

Attribution & Credits

A simple guide to Scrum was compiled by Tobias Mayer, inspired by Bob Hartman, and with advice, suggestions and guidance from members of the professional Scrum community, including Björn Jensen, Hector Feliciano, Joachim Atunwa, Joel Bancroft-Connors, Marcelo Lopez, Mike Vizdos, Natasha Baisiwala, Nick Perry and Tariq Juneja, to whom we offer thanks.

A simple guide to Scrum is a shortened, edited version of the [official Scrum Guide](#), by Ken Schwaber and Jeff Sutherland, which remains the source of truth for Scrum. This version summarises and rearranges the content, but neither adds any new elements, nor removes anything essential.

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