

## What Is Scheduling in Project Management

Scheduling in project management is the listing of activities, deliverables, and milestones within a project. A schedule also usually includes the planned start and finish date, duration, and resources assigned to each activity. Effective project scheduling is a critical component of successful time management.

Project scheduling is a mechanism to communicate what tasks need to get done and which organizational resources will be allocated to complete those tasks in what timeframe. A project schedule is a document collecting all the work needed to deliver the project on time.

In fact, when people discuss the processes for building a schedule, they are usually referring to the first six processes of time management:

1. Plan schedule management.
2. Define project activities.
3. Sequence activities.
4. Estimate resources.
5. Estimate durations.
6. Develop the project schedule.

### How to do scheduling in project management

There are three main types of schedules:

1. Master project schedule. A master schedule tends to be a simplified list of tasks with a timeline or project calendar.
2. Milestone schedule or summary schedule. This type of schedule tracks major milestones and key deliverables, but not every task required to complete the project.
3. A detailed project schedule. This is the most thorough project schedule, as it identifies and tracks every project activity. If you have a complex, large, or lengthy project, it's important to have a detailed project schedule to help track everything.

The most common form of project schedule is a Gantt chart. Both a milestone schedule and a detailed project schedule can be created as a Gantt chart. When choosing a scheduling software, look for scheduling tools that allow you to create different views from the same schedule. If you create a detailed schedule with milestones as a Gantt chart, make sure it can be summarized up to that level for a simpler view that can be easily shared with your team or stakeholders. This gives you the ability to present the same schedule in different formats depending on the level of detail required and the target audience.

### **Benefits of project scheduling in project management**

Project scheduling provides the following benefits:

- Assists with tracking, reporting on, and communicating progress.
- Ensures everyone is on the same page as far as tasks, dependencies, and deadlines.
- Helps highlight issues and concerns, such as a lack of resources.
- Helps identify task relationships.
- Can be used to monitor progress and identify issues early.

### **Steps for creating project schedule**

1. The time management processes identified earlier are the key steps to creating a project schedule. However, keep these seven tips in mind to make sure your schedule is realistic. Get input from stakeholders. Make sure you don't create your schedule in isolation. It's important to use your team and other stakeholders to identify tasks, resources, dependencies, and durations.
2. Reference past projects. Looking at previous projects with similar scope and requirements can help create realistic estimates and ensure you haven't forgotten any tasks.
3. Include project milestones. Milestones are events or markers that stand for an important point in your project. They're useful for creating a summary schedule, reporting to executives, and identifying problems early. Here are some milestone examples:
4. Project kickoff
5. Design approvals
6. Completion of requirements
7. Product implementation
8. Project closeout
9. Consider any non-work time. For example, make sure vacations and holidays are reflected in your schedule so that you're not assuming people will be working when they're not.
10. Define the critical path on your project. Identifying your project's critical path allows you to prioritize and allocate resources to the most important tasks in the project.
11. Record scheduling assumptions. Write down the logic behind your scheduling predictions. For example, if you assume it will only take 10 hours to complete a task because you're going to have a senior engineer. That way, if you end up with a junior engineer, you can understand and explain why it took twice as long as planned.

12. Keep risk in mind. Identify and document any factors that pose a risk to staying on schedule. This will help your risk management efforts.