

Estimating with Story Points

What is a story point?

Story points are a way to estimate the amount of effort required to complete a user story in your product backlog.

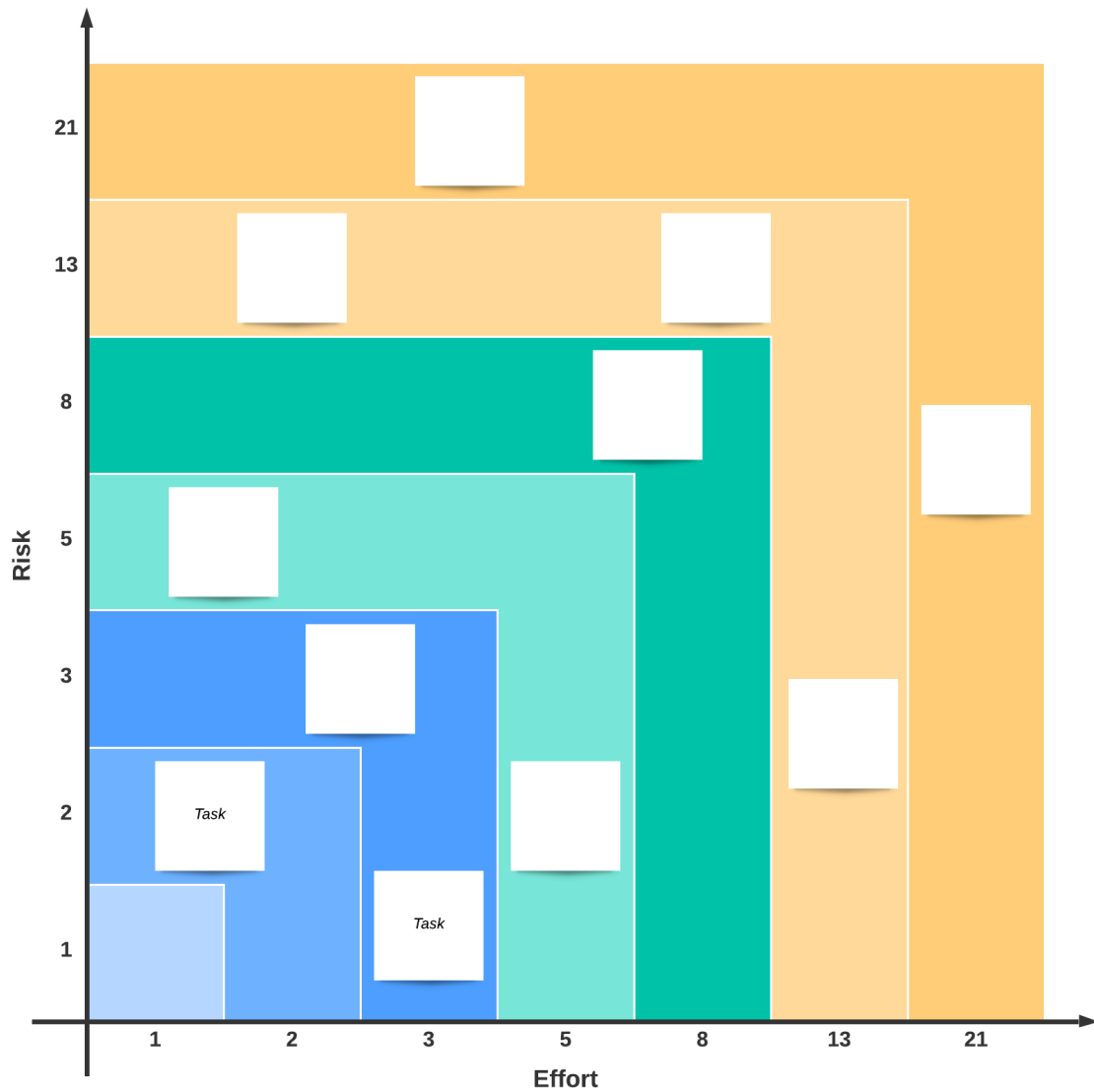
Why use them?

Product owners capture organizational [requirements](#), but they don't always understand the details of implementation. So good estimation with story points can provide insight into the level of effort for each work item, which then feeds back into the assessment of each item's relative [priority](#).

Story Points

0	No effort. No business value is delivered. Might be a small lift like writing down ACTION items from a retro.	0 days, 1 hour or less
1	Extra Small. Requirements are clear, relatively easy task	1 day, 6 hours or less
2	Small. Team does similar tasks all the time. Requires a bit of thought, effort, or problem-solving. Considered low risk.	2 days, 12 hours or less
3	Average. Team has done a similar task before. Requires a some thought, effort, or problem-solving, maybe a few extra steps. Considered low risk.	3 days, 18 hours or less
5	Large. Complex work that hasn't been done very often. Needs multiple collaborators and touch-points to figure out a solution. Medium risk.	5 days, 30 hours or less
8	Extra Large. Not done before. This task requires research and more than one resource to complete. Assumptions are made. High risk.	6 days, 48 hours or less
13	Warning! Very complex piece of work with a lot of unknowns and multiple assumptions, requiring more than one resource. Consider splitting.	10 days, 78 hours or less
21	Way Too Big. Break it down	15 days, 120 hours or less

Story Points measure both risk and effort



Although useful story points should not be misused. Story points go wrong when they're used to judge people, assign detailed timelines and resources, and when they're mistaken for a measure of productivity. Instead, teams should use story points to understand the size of the work and the prioritization of the work.