

# Breaking down user stories, a cheatsheet



“Can we break this user story down (vertically) on ... “  
(and make it simpler, more understandable and easier to estimate & prioritize)

<p><b>1. Workflow steps?</b> What steps does a user perform? Are all of the steps necessary now? Can steps be simplified for now?</p> <p><i>Steps in an order process, like selecting a payment option, delivery method, etc.</i></p>	<p><b>2. Business rules?</b> What rules apply to this story? Are all business rules necessary now? Can simpler rules suffice?</p> <p><i>Rules in an order process (no order below 10 dollars, no shipping outside US)</i></p>
<p><b>3. Happy / unhappy flow?</b> What does the happy / unhappy flow look like? Are all unhappy flows necessary (right now)? Can unhappy flows be simplified (for now)?</p> <p><i>Failures during a webshop order process and possible recovery options</i></p>	<p><b>4. Input options?</b> Which platforms are supported? Are all platforms required (right now)? Are some platforms harder to implement than others?</p> <p><i>Tablet, iPhone, desktop, touchscreen</i></p>
<p><b>5. Datatypes and parameters?</b> What datatypes are supported and relevant? Which parameterized views are there? Are all parameters relevant at the moment?</p> <p><i>Different search options / strategies or different kinds of reports (tables, graphs, etc.)</i></p>	<p><b>6. Operations?</b> What operations does the story entail? Are all operations necessary right now?</p> <p><i>Breaking down on CRUD (create, read, update, delete)</i></p>
<p><b>7. Test cases?</b> What tests scenarios are used to verify this story? Are all test scenarios relevant at the moment?</p> <p><i>Some test scenarios may be very complex, but not highly relevant at this time</i></p>	<p><b>8. Roles?</b> Which roles are involved in this story? What can the roles do? Are all roles necessary now?</p> <p><i>A customer can create orders, administrators can manage orders, etc.</i></p>
<p><b>9. Browser compatibility?</b> What browsers have to be supported? Are all browsers important at this point?</p> <p><i>Ignoring support for Internet Explorer 9 because only a fraction of users makes use of it</i></p>	<p><b>10. Optimize now vs optimize later?</b> What optimizations can we think of (UX/UI)? Are all optimizations necessary now?</p> <p><i>Implementing auto-complete for addresses, usage of GPS-location</i></p>