

Five Simple but Powerful Ways to Split User Stories

by Mike Cohn

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This blog post refers to a four-part series of videos on overcoming challenges with user stories. Topics covered are conducting story-writing workshops with story maps, splitting stories, and achieving the right level of detail in user stories.

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Today's post introduces the second installment in a free series of training videos all about user stories. Available for a limited time only, you can watch all released videos by [signing up to the Better User Stories Mini-Course](#). Already signed up? Check your inbox for a link to the latest video, or continue reading to find out about today's lesson.

One of the most common struggles faced by agile teams is the need to split user stories. I'm sure you've struggled with this. I certainly did at first.

In fact, when I first began using Scrum, some of our product backlog items were so big that we occasionally opted for six-week sprints. With a bit more experience, though, that team and I saw enough ways to split work that we could have done one-day sprints if we'd wanted.

But splitting stories was hard at first. Really hard.

But I've got some good news for you. Not only have I figured out how to split stories on my own, I've learned how to explain how to do it so that anyone can quickly become an expert.

What I discovered is that almost every story can be split with one of five techniques. Learn those five simple techniques and you're set.

Even better, the five techniques form an easily memorable acronym: SPIDR.

I've just released a new, 20-minute, free video training that describes each of these techniques as part of the Better User Stories Mini-Course. To watch it simply sign up [here](#) and you'll get instant access.

Remember, if you've already signed up to the course you don't need to sign in again, just check your inbox for an email from me with a link to the latest lesson.

Unless you've already cracked the code on splitting stories, you definitely want to learn the five techniques that make up the SPIDR approach by watching [this free video training](#).

Mike

P.S. This video is only going to be available for a very short period. I encourage you to watch it now at <https://www.betteruserstories.com>.

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Tagged: user stories, news

About the Author

As the founder of Mountain Goat Software, Mike Cohn specializes in helping companies adopt and improve their use of agile processes and techniques to build extremely high-performance teams. He is the author of *User Stories Applied for Agile Software Development*, *Agile Estimating and Planning*, and *Succeeding with Agile*. Mike is a founding member of the Agile Alliance and Scrum Alliance. Mike can be reached at hello@mountaingoatsoftware.com. If you

want to succeed with agile, you can also [have Mike email you a short tip](#) each week.
