

# Agile Estimating

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## Agenda

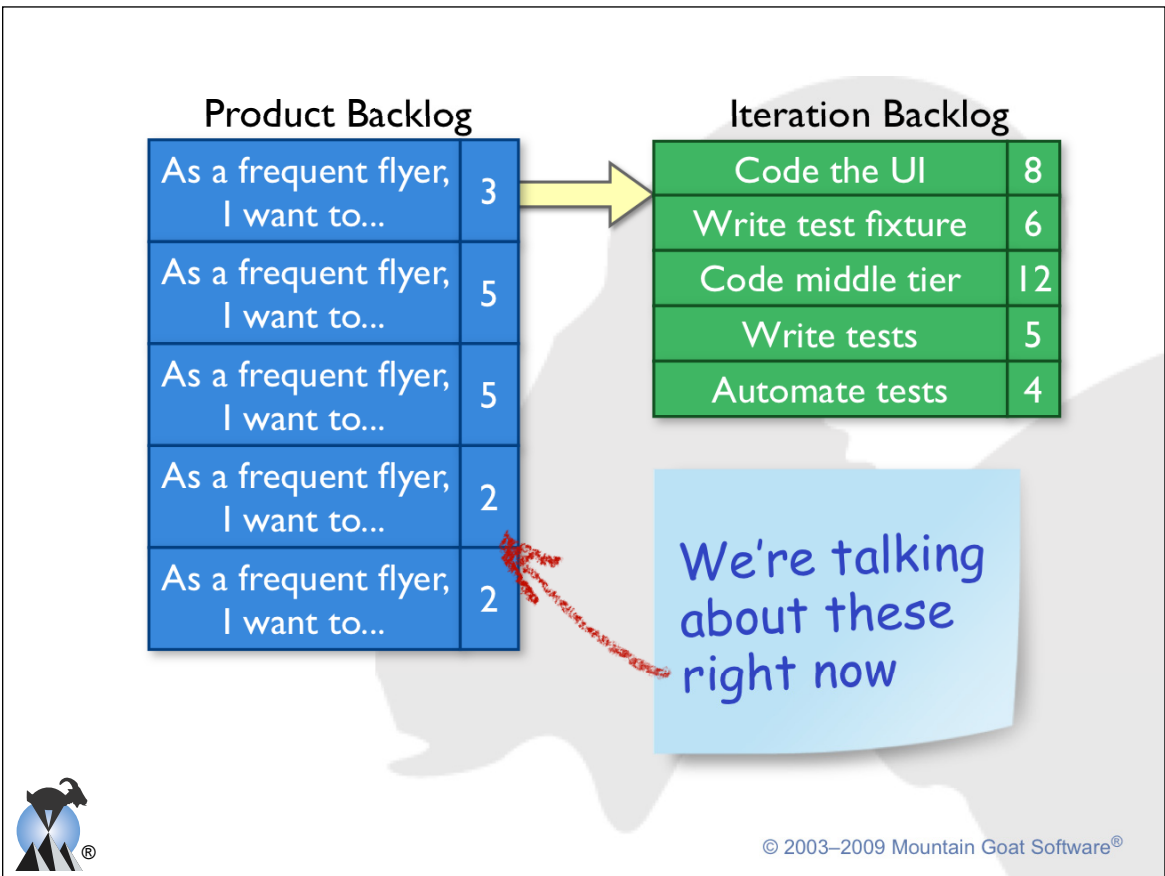
- Product backlog estimation units
  - Story points
  - Ideal time
- Estimating with Planning Poker®



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# How long will it take...



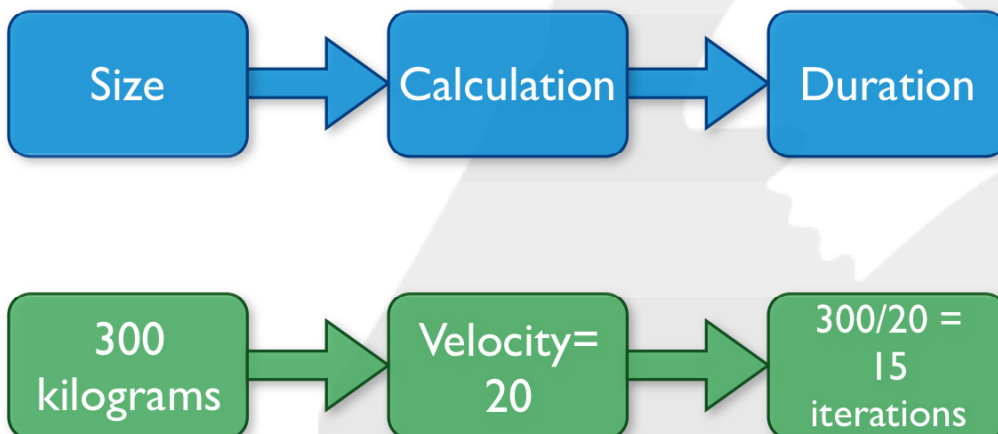
- Suppose I asked you how long it would take to read the last Harry Potter book?



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## Estimate size; derive duration

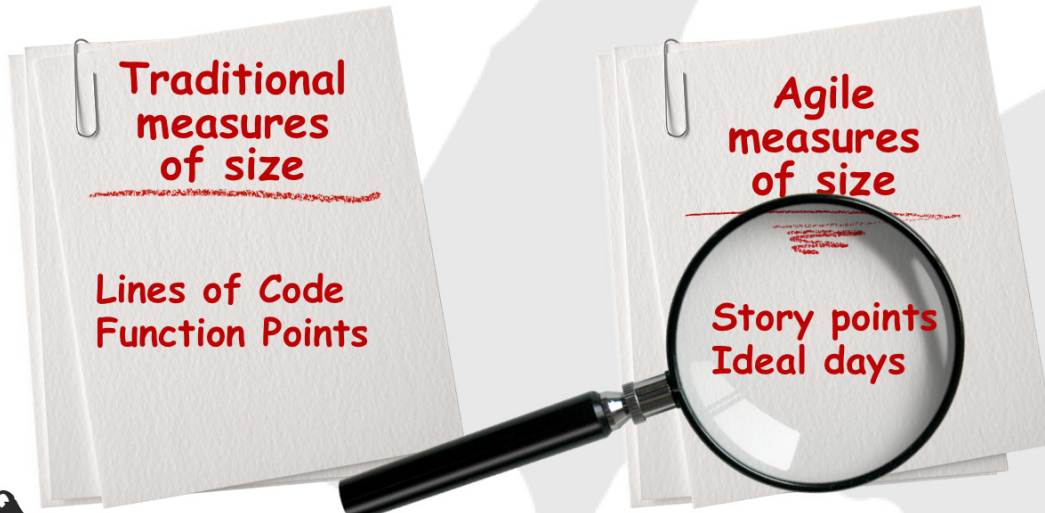


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# Measures of size

- Traditional and agile measure size differently

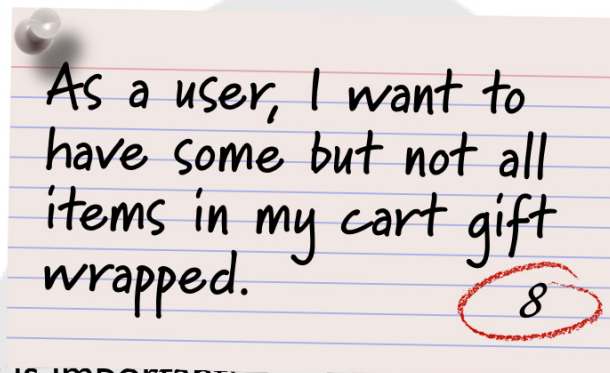


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# Story points

- The “bigness” of a task
- Influenced by
  - How hard it is
  - How much there is
- Relative values are what is important:
  - A login screen is a 2.
  - A search feature is an 8.
- Points are unit-less
- Basic math properties should hold, e.g.,  $5+5 = 10$



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# Dog points



Assign "dog points" to the following breeds

Labrador retriever  
Dachshund  
Great Dane  
Poodle  
German Shepherd  
Terrier  
St. Bernard  
Bulldog

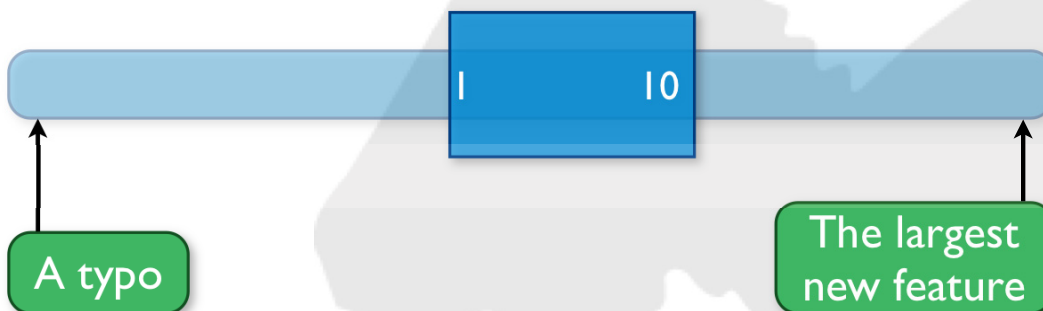


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# One order of magnitude

- We're good over one order of magnitude
- So think about where to place it on your product backlog



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## Ideal time

- How long something would take if
  - it's all you worked on
  - you had no interruptions
  - and everything you need is available
- The ideal time of a Cowboys game is 60 minutes
- The elapsed time is much longer



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# Ideal time vs. elapsed time

- It's easier to estimate in ideal time
- It's too hard to estimate directly in elapsed time
  - Need to consider all the factors that affect elapsed time at the same time you're estimating



# Two big advantages to story points

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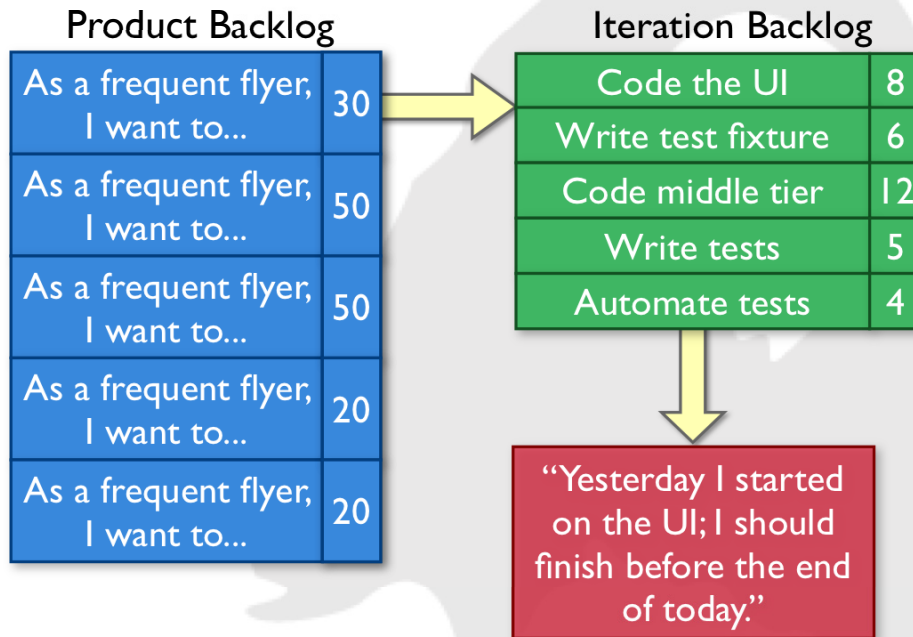
Story points are additive; time-based estimates may not be

2

Story points help avoid problems with unit confusion



# Confusing units



Planning Poker®  
for Estimating





# Planning poker



- An iterative approach to estimating
- Steps
  - Each estimator is given a deck of cards, each card has a valid estimate written on it
  - Customer/Product owner reads a story and it's discussed briefly
  - Each estimator selects a card that's his or her estimate
  - Cards are turned over so all can see them
  - Discuss differences (especially outliers)
  - Re-estimate until estimates converge



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## Planning poker - an example



Estimator	Round 1	Round 2
Susan	3	5
Vadim	8	5
Ann	2	5
Chris	5	8



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Product backlog item	Estimate
Read a high-level, 10-page overview of Scrum in <i>People</i> magazine.	
Read a densely written 5-page research paper about Scru in an academic journal.	
Write the product backlog for a simple eCommerce site that sells only clocks.	
Recruit, interview, and hire a new member for your team.	
Create a 60-minute presentation to give here next month.	
Wash and wax your boss' Porsche.	
Read a 150-page book on agile software development.	
Write an 5-page description of Scrum for your boss.	



# www.planningpoker.com

Free, or I wouldn't mention it



# Upcoming classes in Dallas

Date	What
1-2 February	Certified ScrumMaster
3-4 February	Certified Scrum Product Owner

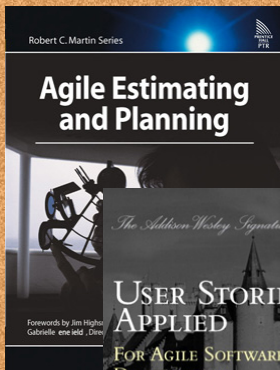
Information and registration at  
[www.mountangoatsoftware.com](http://www.mountangoatsoftware.com)

Also classes in San  
Jose and Boulder in  
early 2010



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