

Use case template

Use cases are a cornerstone of product development. They help teams capture, communicate, and align on how users will interact with a product or system to achieve a specific goal.

This template is designed to make that process as clear, structured, and useful as possible – whether you're mapping a new feature, documenting requirements, or collaborating across product, design, and engineering teams.

This use case template provides a consistent format to describe all the critical elements of a use case, including actors, triggers, preconditions, main flows, alternatives, and exceptions. It encourages you to think not only about what should happen but also what could go wrong – and how your product should gracefully handle those scenarios. The goal is to create clarity for everyone involved, from developers to stakeholders.

The template includes a blank version for you to fill out with your own use cases, plus a completed example, so you can see how it looks in action. The example shows how a task management tool might handle assigning a task to a teammate.

Whether you're documenting your first use case or refining an existing library, this template will help you build a strong foundation for user-focused, outcome-driven product development.

Template

Use case ID and name	e.g., UC-001 – Create a new task
Author	[Your name]
Date created	[MM/DD/YYYY]
Primary actor	[Main user/system]
Secondary actors	[Any other participants]
Description	[What the use case accomplishes]
Trigger	[What initiates the use case?]
Preconditions	[Activities that must happen or any conditions that must be met before the use case can be started]
Postconditions	[The state of the system when the use case is successfully executed]
Basic flow	1.0 [Step] 1.1 [System response] ...
Alternative flows	1.2A [Alternative path] 1.3A [Alternative path]
Exceptions	1.0.E1 [Error condition and system response] 1.1.E2 [Another error]
Priority	High / Medium / Low

Example

Use case ID and name	UC-002 – Assign a task to a team member
Author	Jane Doe
Date created	11/24/2025
Primary actor	Project manager
Secondary actors	Assigned team member Notification service
Description	The project manager assigns a task to a teammate, triggering an in-app notification and email alert.
Trigger	The manager clicks “Assign” on a task card
Preconditions	PRE-1. Task exists PRE-2. Project manager is logged in PRE-3. Team member is part of the project
Postconditions	POST-1. Task is assigned POST-2. Notification is sent
Basic flow	1.0 Manager opens task details 1.1 System displays task info 1.2 Manager selects team member 1.3 Clicks "Assign" 1.4 System updates task 1.5 Sends notification
Alternative flows	1.3A User located via search bar 1.4A Task assigned via drag-and-drop
Exceptions	1.2.E1 Dropdown fails to load → Show error 1.4.E2 Unauthorized user → Block action
Priority	High

