# What is a Work Breakdown Structure or WBS?

Simple projects like packing for a trip might not need a plan to accomplish the project. When packing, most people will make of list of the items to pack. Everything on the list is added to the suitcase and the project is completed. Not all projects are this simple.

Larger projects like building a house will require more planning and detail to accomplish the goals of the project. More tasks will be required, more detail and organization to the detail. More data will be accumulated regarding how the project was performed. To accomplish these types of projects, a work breakdown structure or WBS will be required.

The WBS is a hierachitcal structure much like an outline list. This structure will contain the work of the project. When developing a WBS the total work of the project is divided into chucks of work. The larger chucks are subdivided into smaller chucks. After the work is divided it is then organized into a hierachitcal structure. Within the structure some tasks will serve as titles, some tasks will be goal points and others will contain task work details .

Consider the WBS of a project the same as the foundation for a building. Without a stable foundation the building will not be stable. Having a stable or well-planned WBS will be an asset to the performance of a project. Having an unstable WBS may adversely affect the management of the project schedule.