

Business Process Model Notation (BPMN)


Introduction

Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN) is a graphical notation and modeling language used to represent and document business processes and workflows. It provides a standardized visual representation of business activities and the flow of information, allowing organizations to improve process efficiency, communication and collaboration between stakeholders.

Modeling Symbol Definitions

1. Start Event is a graphical element that marks the beginning of a process flow. It signifies the start of a process instance and triggers the flow of activities in a process. Start events can have different triggers, such as the arrival of a message, the completion of another activity, or the passage of time. They are represented as a circle or with a single incoming flow arrow inside of a circle if arriving from another business process.
2. End Event is a graphical element that marks the end of a process flow. It signifies the completion of a process instance and triggers the end of the flow of activities in a process. End events are represented as a thicker line circle or with a single outgoing flow arrow if the business process is handing off to another business process. End events can have different results, such as the sending of a message, the termination of a process, or the escalation of an error.
3. Task: Represented by a rounded rectangle, it represents a unit of work or activity to be performed.
4. Gateway: Represented by a diamond shape, it is used to control the flow of activities in a process.
5. Sequence Flow: Represented by an arrow, it shows the flow of activities in a process.
6. Pool: Represented by a rectangle with a dividing line, it defines the scope of a process and the participants involved.
7. Swimlane: Represented by a horizontal band within a pool, it organizes tasks into functional units or roles.
8. Message Flow: Represented by a dotted arrow, it shows the flow of messages between participants.

These are some of the most commonly used symbols in BPMN, but there are many more that can be used to represent complex business processes.

 In BPMN Gateways are displayed with **complex**, **parallel** or **exclusive** gateway symbols but in my experience everyone understand “And” & “Or” better.

Message flows can be handled with the message icon over dotted lines as well. This is up to the creator on how he wants to display the flow of events.

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Diagram Example

