

Visualizing and Predicting Heart Diseases with an Interactive Dash Board

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What is a project milestone:

A milestone is a marker in a project that signifies a change or stage in development. Milestones are powerful components in project management because they show key events and map forward movement in your project plan.

Milestones act as signposts through the course of your project, helping ensure you stay on track. Without project milestone tracking, you're just monitoring tasks and not necessarily following the right path in your project.

What's the difference between tasks and milestones:

You're not building a rocket here—you're building a project plan, and the components aren't that complex. That said, distinguishing between tasks and milestones can be difficult on larger projects, or if the project you're managing just isn't within the realm of your expertise (yet).

If you've ever been confused about what is (or isn't) a milestone in your gantt chart, ask yourself these questions:

1. Is this a task or a deliverable?
2. Will this impact the final deadline?
3. Is this an important moment in the project that will indicate forward progress?
4. Does this need to be reviewed by stakeholders?
5. Is this an event that impacts the project?

Essentially, you want to set the most important events of your project as milestones so they can be easily seen and mapped by the project team. Milestones are given additional significance over tasks in a plan so the project manager can track the tasks while the team and stakeholders focus on forward progress.

Here's how to tell the difference between milestones vs tasks when looking at your plan in Team Gantt:

- A milestone is represented by a gold, diamond-shaped icon or symbol on your gantt chart with a single-day duration.
- Tasks show up as horizontal bars on the gantt chart. They can be assigned different task colors, as well as multi-day durations.

What Is a Milestone Schedule:

A milestone schedule, or milestone chart, is simply a timeline that uses milestones to divide a project schedule into major phases. Due to its simplicity, it's used when project managers or sponsors need to share an overview of the project schedule with stakeholders or team members without going over every detail.

How to Decide What's a Project Milestone:

As discussed above, project milestones measure progress by breaking the project into phases. A milestone is a marker that separates the end of one phase from the start of another.

According to the project management institute (PMI), there are typically five phases in project management: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring & controlling and closure. But when exactly do you add the milestones?

The simple answer is when you've completed everything related to that project phase. For example, completing the project charter is usually the last step in the initiation phase of a project. This would be when you place your milestone to indicate you're moving from initiation to planning.

However, the exact point at which you want to set your milestones might vary depending on your project, your organization and other factors. It's always best to seek help from experts in the industry and in your company or project team. A little guidance upfront can save a lot of headaches later on.

Milestones are more a period in time than the specific completion of tasks or project deliverables, so the question arises, can you have milestones that don't relate to project phases? The short answer is yes. You can set any sort of milestones you want in a project. Traditionally, they break projects into phases, but you can choose to create a milestone to indicate a big task, important event, deliverable or more.

Project Milestones Examples

What could be better to explain how to use milestones in project management than some examples? Let's look at some common project milestones examples for each phase of the project life cycle.

- I. Project approval
- II. Start and end of project phases
- III. Getting your project charter approved
- IV. Securing financing, equipment or resources
- V. Assembling a project team
- VI. Getting your project plan approved
- VII. Project kick-off meeting
- VIII. Completing critical tasks
- IX. Producing key project deliverables
- X. Reaching project goals and objectives
- XI. Project completion

