Create Product Backlogs using work management tools

Workers from across a variety of industries lose countless hours to "work about work." This is the time wasted on searching for information, switching between apps, and holding status meetings. Work management tools are designed to reduce wasted time by empowering project managers to focus on project planning, team alignment, and resource allocation. Many organizations use these types of tools to manage everything from simple projects with small teams to complex projects with multiple stakeholders.

As a project manager, you may encounter different work management tools that can streamline your team's work and maximize your productivity throughout your career. Luckily, many of these tools have similar functions. In this reading, you will learn about creating Product Backlogs using one of these work management tools. This example will showcase these skills using Asana; however, you can also apply these concepts to other tools!

Work management tools and Product Backlogs

As you've already learned, a Product Backlog is one of the most important Scrum artifacts and functions as the single authoritative source for project tasks. It contains all of the features, requirements, and activities associated with the project deliverables in one place.

Since it's a living artifact, you need to update and reorganize the Product Backlog according to the product owner's evolving project needs. Tools like Asana can automate some of this work for you. Many organizations encourage these types of tools to manage complex projects with multiple stakeholders.

Note: If you would like to follow along, you can create an Asana account for free here. When you sign up, your free 30-day Premium trial will start automatically. If you signed up for Asana in an earlier course and are still within the 30-day trial, you can log in to that account to access Premium features. You can also access free tools like ClickUp or Monday to explore their interfaces!

Leverage templates

In the activity *Create a Product Backlog*, you built a Product Backlog for the Virtual Verde Project. In this reading, you will explore how to build the same Backlog using projects, tasks, subtasks, and custom fields in Asana. One of the great things about tools like Asana is that they have a lot of helpful templates for all kinds of projects. When you choose to create a new project, you can select the appropriate template from the library and customize it to fit your needs.

Create a new project

How would you like to start?

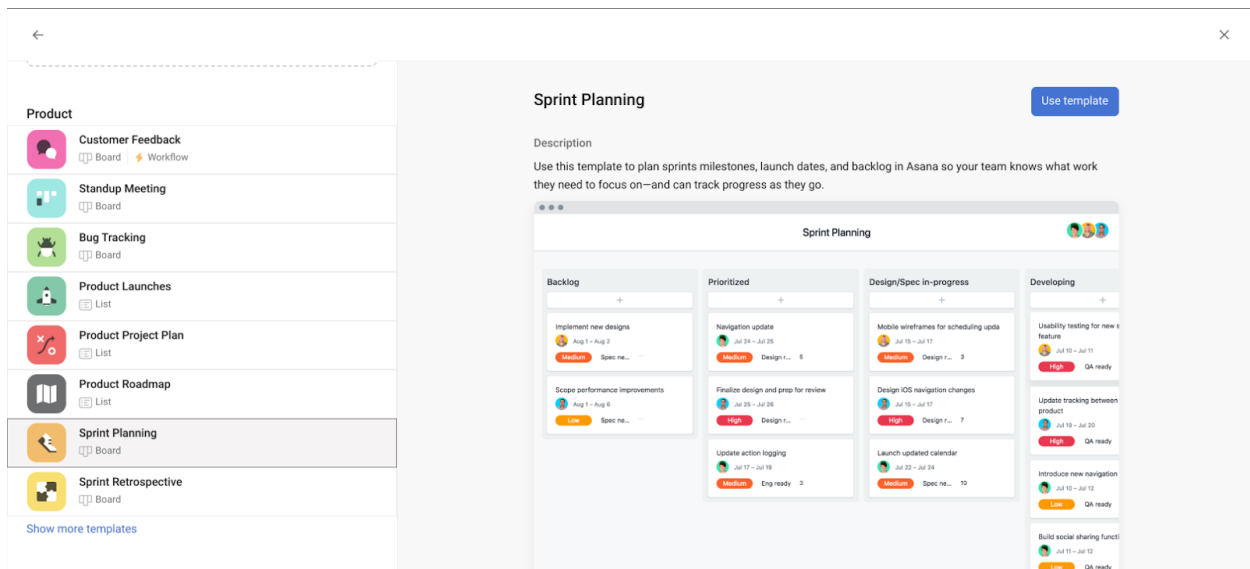| Blank project	Use a template	Import spreadsheet
+		
Blank project	**Use a template**	**Import spreadsheet**
Start from scratch	Choose from library	Add from another tool

In this case, the Sprint Planning template from Asana's library is a great option for creating a Product Backlog.

After creating a project, you'll be directed to the Board View where you can start adding project details.

Board View can help you track your team's sprint plans, similar to using a Kanban board. Most teams make projects at the beginning of each sprint and track their work through each stage to make sure they know where their sprint work stands. In this template, those stages are represented by sections, which appear as column headers in the board view.

Add user story titles to the "Backlog" column

After creating the project, you can enter User Story Titles by adding tasks to the Backlog column for the Virtual Verde project.
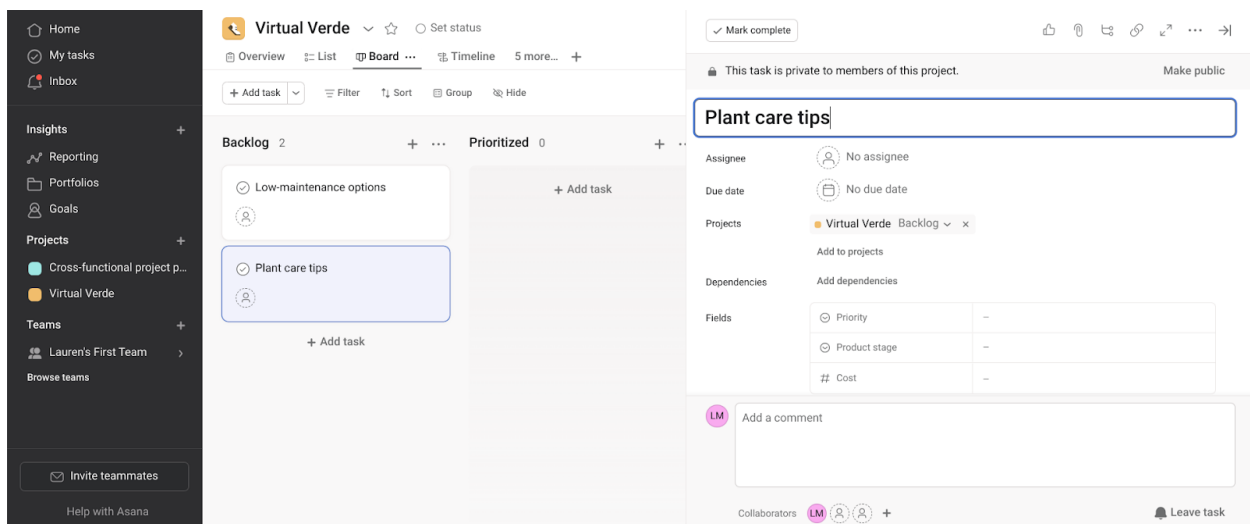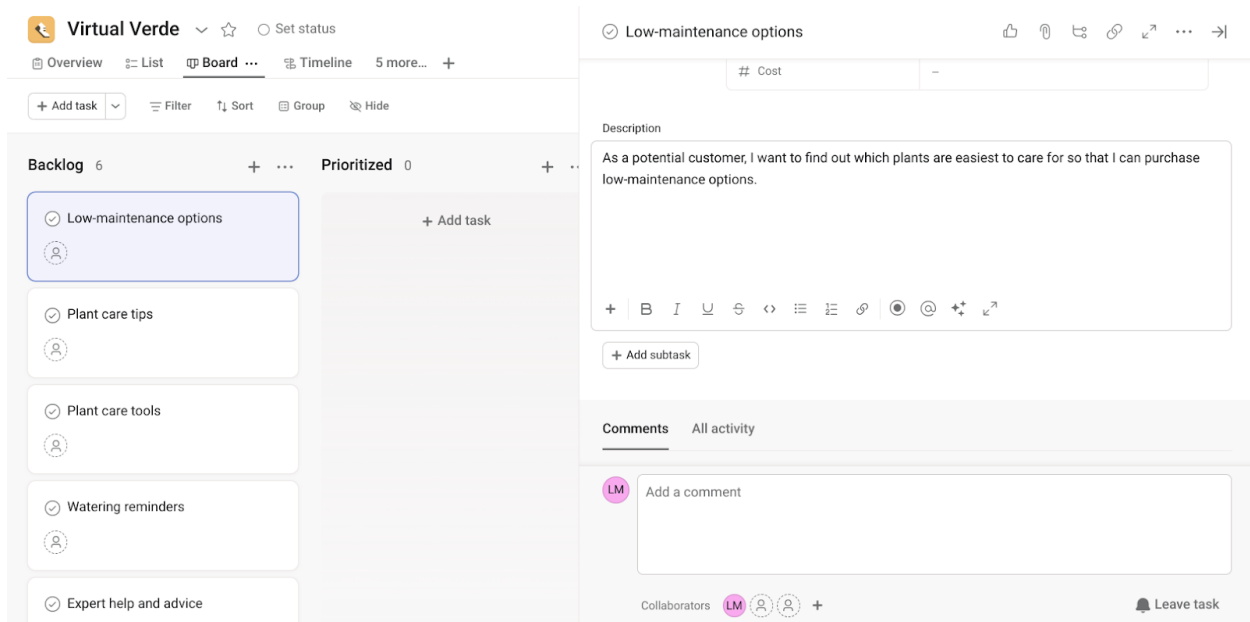

In this case, the same user story titles from the last activity have been added:

1. Low-maintenance options

2. Plant care tips

3. Plant care tools

4. Watering reminders

5. Expert help and advice

6. Return policy

You can also add the User Stories in the task details. For example, the User Stories from the previous activity:

1. As a potential customer, I want to find out which plants are easiest to care for so that I can purchase low-maintenance options.

2. As a plant owner, I want to access care instructions easily so that I can keep my plant alive longer.

3. As a plant owner, I want to have the right tools to care for my plant so that I can keep it healthy and beautiful.

4. As a plant owner, I want to be reminded when to water my plants so that I don't under- or overwater them.

5. As a plant owner, I want to get expert help and advice quickly so that I know what to do if my plant gets sick.

6. As a customer, I want a hassle-free way to return my order so that I can be sure I have the right plant for me.

Add acceptance criteria as subtasks

Because the user story titles were entered as "tasks" in this template, the acceptance criteria can be added as subtasks.
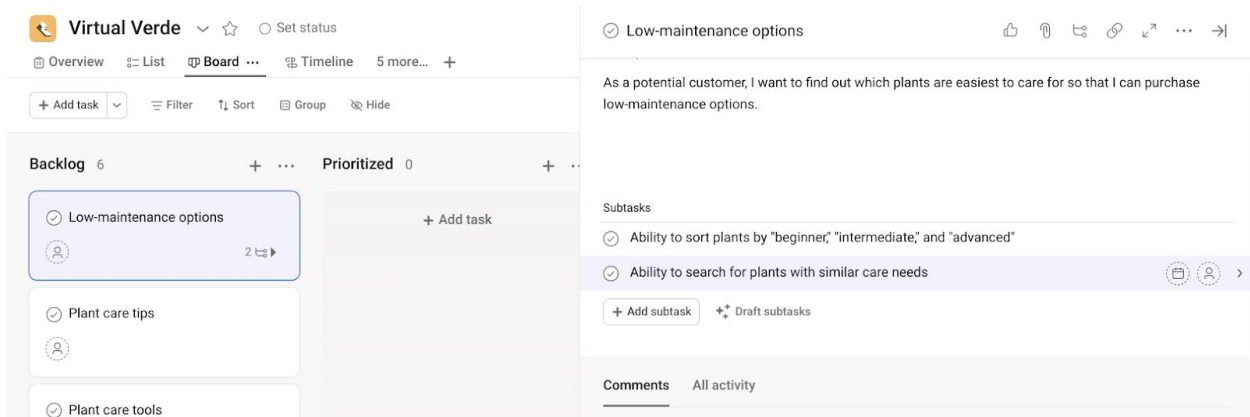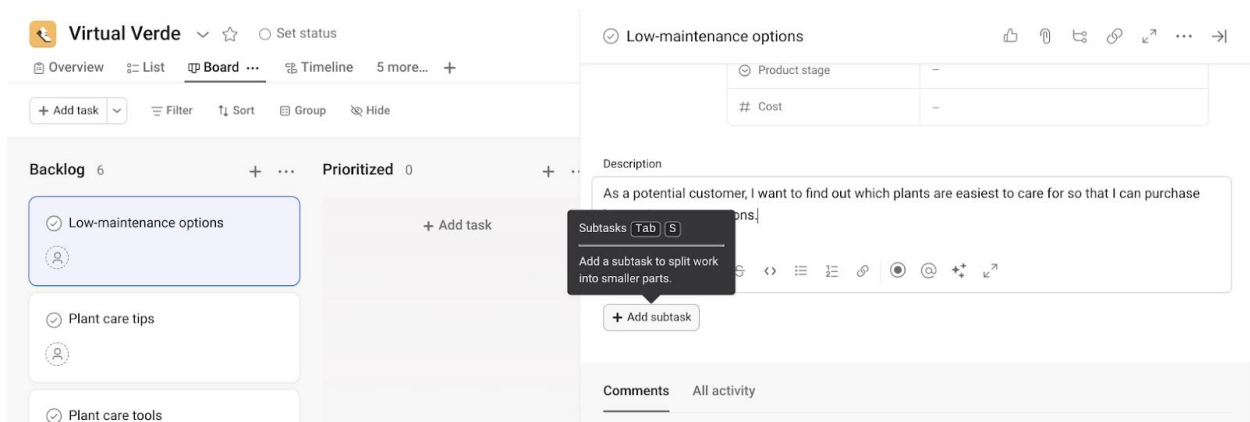
Here are some examples for acceptance criteria from the previous activity:

Low-maintenance options

- Ability to sort plants by "beginner," "intermediate," and "advanced"

- Ability to search for plants with similar care needs

Plant care tips

- Receive plant care leaflets with each order

- Option to sign up for monthly emails with seasonal care tips

Plant care tools

- Can purchase plant care starter kits

- Option to buy partial kits or single tools

Add a custom field for epic title

You can also add a custom field for the Epic title. Custom fields let you add additional details to the tasks in a project— you can think of them like tags, or columns in a spreadsheet.

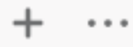From the Board View, you can add fields from the Customize menu.

···

Developing 0   + ···   Done 0

+ Add task

Add field

Create new   Choose from library

This field will be added to Virtual Verde

Field title

Epic

Field type

Single-select

+ Add description

Plant Care Initiatives

+ Add an option

☐ Add to gwgcertificates.goog's field library
☐ Notify collaborators when this field's value is changed

Cancel   Create field

Since all of these stories are part of the same epic, you can update the epic for all the user stories at once. To assign a user story to an epic, open its task detail pane. Then select an epic from the dropdown next to "Epic." You can also assign user stories to epics from List view by selecting an epic from the dropdowns in the "Epic" column.

For more information, and to practice using Asana for Agile and Scrum processes, check out Asana for Agile and Scrum.

Key takeaways

This was just one example of how you can use work management tools to create Product Backlogs. As you'll discover, there are many different tools designed to help you keep track

of all of your to do's, and ensure that you and your teammates are always clear about who's responsible for what and when it needs to get done. Understanding the concepts that drive these tools will allow you to make the most of them, whatever tool your organization uses!

Resources for more information

For tips on how to create Product Backlogs using other popular work management tools, check out these resources:

- [How to manage a Product Backlog with ClickUp](#)

- [A guide to managing your Product Backlog with Monday](#)