Linear Usage Guide

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Applies To: Engineering, Product, Design Teams

Overview

Linear is NovaTech's project management tool for engineering and product teams. This guide covers setup, workflows, and best practices.

Getting Started

Accessing Linear

1. Go to **linear.app** or click Linear tile in Okta
2. Sign in with NovaTech email (SSO)
3. You'll be added to your team workspace automatically

First-Time Setup

1. **Profile:** Add photo and display name
2. **Notifications:** Configure preferences
3. **Keyboard shortcuts:** Enable (highly recommended)
4. **Desktop app:** Download for better experience

Workspace Structure

Teams

Team	Purpose
Platform	Platform engineering
CloudForge	CloudForge product
DevPipeline	DevPipeline product
SecureVault	SecureVault product

Team	Purpose
DataLens	DataLens product
Design	Product design
DevOps	Infrastructure and operations

Projects

Projects group related work: - Features - Epics - Initiatives - Team goals

Cycles

Two-week sprints: - Automatic cycle creation - Work assigned to current cycle - Progress tracking per cycle

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Creating Issues

From Linear

1. Press `C` or click **New Issue**
2. Select team
3. Enter title and description
4. Set properties (priority, labels, etc.)
5. Click **Create**

From Slack

```
/linear create [title]
```

From GitHub

Link issues in commit messages:

```
git commit -m "Fix login bug

Fixes ENG-123"
```

Issue Templates

Use templates for consistency: - Bug Report - Feature Request - Task - Spike/Research

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Issue Properties

Status

Status	Meaning
Backlog	Not yet planned
Todo	Planned for current/next cycle
In Progress	Actively being worked on
In Review	Code review or QA
Done	Completed
Canceled	Will not be done

Priority

Priority	Response	Examples
Urgent	Immediate	Production down, security issue
High	This cycle	Important feature, significant bug
Medium	Soon	Regular work
Low	Eventually	Nice to have

Labels

Common labels: - `bug` - Something broken - `feature` - New functionality - `improvement` - Enhancement to existing - `tech-debt` - Technical debt - `documentation` - Doc updates - `spike` - Research/investigation

Estimates

Use story points or time estimates: - Points: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 - Time: Hours or days

Team decides which system to use.

Workflows

Typical Issue Flow

```
Backlog → Todo → In Progress → In Review → Done
```

Developer Workflow

1. **Pick issue** from cycle backlog
2. **Assign yourself** and move to "In Progress"
3. **Create branch** (Linear integrates with GitHub)
4. **Work on code**
5. **Create PR** - issue auto-updates
6. **Move to "In Review"**
7. **Merge PR** - issue auto-closes (if configured)

Code Review Workflow

1. Reviewer gets notification
2. Reviews PR on GitHub
3. Approves or requests changes
4. Author addresses feedback
5. Merged when approved

Cycles (Sprints)

Cycle Basics

- 2-week cycles (configurable per team)
- Start on Monday
- Automatic creation
- Work carries over if incomplete

Planning

1. Review backlog before cycle starts
2. Move issues to cycle
3. Assign owners
4. Set priorities

During Cycle

- Focus on cycle work
- Add urgent items as needed
- Track progress in cycle view

Cycle Review

At cycle end: - Review completed work - Move incomplete to next cycle - Update estimates based on learnings

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Views and Filters

My Issues

See your assigned work: - Active issues - Recently completed - Upcoming

Team Board

Kanban view of team's work: - Filter by assignee, label, priority - Drag cards between columns

Cycle View

Current cycle progress: - Burndown chart - Scope changes - Completion rate

Custom Views

Create saved views: 1. Apply filters 2. Click **Save View** 3. Name and save 4. Access from sidebar

Useful Filters

```
# High priority bugs
priority:urgent,high label:bug

# My in-progress work
assignee:me status:"In Progress"
```

```
# Unassigned this cycle
assignee:none cycle:current

# Created this week
created:>7d
```

Integrations

GitHub

Setup: Connected at workspace level

Features: - Link PRs to issues - Auto-update issue status - Auto-close on merge - Branch creation from issue

Linking PRs:

```
# In PR description or commit
Fixes ENG-123
Closes ENG-123
```

Slack

Setup: Add Linear app to Slack

Features: - Create issues from Slack - Get notifications in channels - Update issues via commands - Link previews

Commands:

```
/linear create Fix login button
/linear ENG-123
```

Figma

Features: - Embed Figma designs in issues - Link to design specs - Comment sync (limited)

Best Practices

Writing Good Issues

Title: - Clear and specific - Action-oriented - Include context

Description: - What needs to be done - Why it's needed - Acceptance criteria
- Links to specs/designs

Example:

```
Title: Add password strength indicator to signup form

Description:
## Context
Users are creating weak passwords. We need to guide them toward stronger passwords.

## Requirements
- Show strength meter below password field
- Indicate: weak, fair, strong
- Require at least "fair" to submit
- Show requirements (length, characters)

## Design
[Figma link]

## Acceptance Criteria
- [ ] Strength meter displays
- [ ] Real-time updates as user types
- [ ] Blocks submission if weak
- [ ] Mobile responsive
```

Issue Hygiene

- Update status promptly
- Add comments on progress
- Link related issues
- Close or cancel abandoned work

Cycle Hygiene

- Don't overcommit
- Track scope changes
- Complete what you start
- Carry over thoughtfully

Keyboard Shortcuts

Action	Shortcut
New issue	`C`
Search	`Cmd/Ctrl + K`
My issues	`G` then `M`
Team board	`G` then `T`
Cycle	`G` then `C`
Assign to me	`I`
Set status	`S`
Set priority	`P`
Add label	`L`
Move to project	`Shift + P`

Enable shortcuts in Settings → Keyboard shortcuts.

Mobile App

Download Linear mobile app: - View and update issues - Get notifications - Quick actions - Limited creation features

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FAQ

Q: How do I move teams? A: Contact your manager. Admin will update team membership.

Q: Can I be on multiple teams? A: Yes, you can be a member of multiple teams.

Q: How do I link to an issue? A: Copy URL or use `ENG-123` format (auto-links in many places).

Q: What happened to Jira? A: We migrated from Jira in 2023. Old issues archived in Confluence.

Q: Can I create personal projects? A: Use "Personal" project for individual tracking.

Support

- **Linear help:** linear.app/docs
- **Internal questions:** #linear-help on Slack
- **Access issues:** IT Service Desk

Related Documents: Agile Development Process (ENG-PROC-001), GitHub Workflow (IT-SW-003)