# 5 Ws and H

## **What Does 5 Ws and H Mean?**

The term 5 Ws and H refers to the six basic questions to ask when gathering information or solving a problem. The questions are:

1. Who?

2. What?

3. Where?

4. When?

5. Why?

6. How?

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## **Where Do the 5 Ws and H Come From?**

The 5 Ws and H approach to information-gathering originated as a tool to help journalists write their stories. A common rule among newspaper editors is that reporters should answer all six of these questions in the lead paragraph of their news articles.

Although it’s popular in many professions, we refer to the 5 Ws and H technique as “the reporter’s questions.”

Many journalists believe that with the answers to the 5 Ws and H, a reporter has everything they need to write an accurate and compelling story. For example, imagine a crime reporter was investigating a local murder. Using the 5 Ws and H approach, the reporter would use these questions to discover:

* What was the crime?
* When and where did it happen? (And does either the time or location the crime took place to provide any additional clues or insights into the crime itself?)
* How did it take place? (What method did the killer use? Where was the murder weapon? What other details do we know about the crime?)
* Why did the murderer do it? (Did the killer have a rational motive, such as a plan to profit from the crime? Or was it irrational, such as the act of a serial killer?)
* Who did it? (The answers to the questions above will increase the reporter’s chances of learning this final piece of the story: who was responsible?)

As you might have noticed, this technique follows the same type of methodical fact-finding that the police use in solving crimes. Law enforcement also uses the 5 Ws and H approach.

## **When Should Product Managers Use the Ws and H Technique?**

[Product managers](https://www.productplan.com/product-manager-job-description/) can use the 5 Ws and H technique to gain clarity on a wide range of issues. Let’s consider two examples.

### **Writing up a user persona:**

* Who is this person? (Demographic information, goals, desires, fears, etc.)
* What do they do in their organization? (Job title, responsibilities, etc.)
* Where do they work? (Industry, size of the company, geographic region, etc.)
* How do they work? (What tools do they use, what people and departments do they work with, etc.?)
* Why would they need our help? (What can our company offer that adds value to this person’s job, business, or life?)
* When would they need the solution we’re proposing? (Where in this person’s workflow or activities can our product or service provide the answer to their problem?)

### **Building a product roadmap:**

* Who are we trying to help with this product? (User persona.)
* What is our product vision? (Big-picture idea about our product’s anticipated impact.)
* Where should we start? (Prioritize major themes and epics.)
* Why will we succeed? (The product’s high-level mission and strategy.)
* How will we do it? (Allocating resources, developing timeframes, assigning budgets.)
* When should we launch? (Planning for the most strategically advantageous but realistic market-release timeframe.)

Using the 5 Ws and H approach allows product managers to organize their thinking and planning in a logical, systematic way. Additionally, because it addresses all of the fundamental questions to a complex problem, this technique also helps ensure that a product team won’t forget to think through any major issues before making strategic decisions and plans on the [product roadmap](https://www.productplan.com/what-is-a-product-roadmap/).

The 5W1H approach is an iterative interrogative technique used to explore the cause-and-effect relationships underlying a particular problem and fits perfectly when we need to elaborate a project planning. From an ancient origin, four W’s (who, what, where, when, why) and the one H (how) is great to comprehend the details, analyze inferences, and get to the fundamental facts to solve issues related with the project. See below the questions detailed:



**WHY**

Why did that happen? Use this question to try to identify the project business justification, including history outlining, the reason why the project is being undertaken in terms of the issue, problem and/or opportunity.

**WHAT**

What is necessary? From this question, you can identify the scope, project high-level key outputs that will need to deliver, and activities that it will undertake.

**WHO**

Who is involved in the project? Use this question to identify the stakeholders, explore the list of the members of the project team, this includes, for example, all members of the client team, details of vendor representatives, and other staff assigned to provide support for the project.

**WHERE**

Where did it take place? Try identify where will your project be done and where will it be delivered.

**WHEN**

When did it take place? Use this question to determine the project due dates, it will help you to provide a high-level overview of the project timeline.

**HOW**

How it will be done? Use this question to define what will be the effort to do the project, as high level breakdown of the costs associated with the project (how much it costs), and breakdown of project deliverables (products), including the specific methods used (eg. software development approach, check quality method and user validation).

**Example :**

**5W’s 1H Formula Approach for Website & Application**



If you are someone that needs to create website or Application in order to connect with your customers. Using a well-worn writer’s technique called the “reporter’s questions,” or “the 5 W’s and the H” may be just what you need.

The 5 W’s and the H refers to the six questions helps our customer and also us to understand what our client is looking for. This makes more sense.

* Who
* What
* When
* Where
* Why
* How

Let’s say we have going to make application for a client.

**Who will benefit?**

**When you are developing an application that will get benefit on by this application.**

**What solutions give for a problem?**

**What are the features you are looking to develop?**

**What are feature and module we are going to implement in our development?**

**When you are going to launch?**

Some projects are needed to launch on specific duration. It will hit markets like Netflix launched in India during summer holidays same way online exam portal launch for NEET exam as it was made mandatory.

**Where it is going launch?**

Some project will be online or offline based customer usage it depends.

**Why does it matter?**

Why this application required for your customer. What solutions it gives at the end of the day.

**How it can be done?**

Here our more involvement towards solutions. How we can give best solutions.

You can still use these questions to help you brainstorm for ideas and map out an outline for your application.