

When To Use a Story, Task, or Defect

Per the April 2022 SDLC Newsletter

We often hear from teams that they are unsure of when to use a **Story**, **Task** or **Defect**. We also see misuse of these issues in the dashboards used for SDLC adherence, which results in issues incorrectly showing as being out of compliance, as well as increased defect leakage. This article aims to simplify determining when to use each issue type.

Story

Use a **Story** when:

- Work needed to deliver an **Epic** requires software development and will be released to production
- An issue arises during development, testing or in production and there is no known requirement defining the expected behavior
 - Avoid creating defects for requirements errors, as this problem is solved by refining an existing **Story** or creation of a new **Story**

Task

Use a **Task** when:

- Work needed to deliver an Epic does not require software development and will not be released to production
- An issue arises during development, testing or in production and you are unsure if there is a requirement defining the expected behavior
 - Use the Task to determine if there is an existing requirement defining the expected behavior
 - If there is, move the **Task** to a **Defect** and manage the issue via resolution of the **Defect**
 - If there is not, move the **Task** to a **Story** and manage the issue via completion of the **Story**
 - If there is no need for a change, resolve and close the **Task**
- Requesting support from another team/ team member, including Business requesting support from IT
 - Avoid creating defects for inquiries and other support requests

Defect

Use a **Defect** when:

- Development is complete and the application is not working as expected, as defined by a known requirement
 - Create a **Task** when you are unsure if there is an existing requirement specifying the expected behavior
 - This is more common with production issues