

Simple Project Plan

1. Project Overview

Project name	{{Project name}}
Sponsor	{{Sponsor / decision-maker}}
Project manager	{{Project manager}}
Start date	{{Start date}}
Target end date	{{Target end date}}
Status	{{Not started / On track / At risk}}

Keep this block on page one so anyone can see the project, its owner, and where it stands at a glance. Name one accountable project manager and one sponsor who can unblock decisions.

2. Objectives & Success Criteria

- {{What this project will achieve, with a date — e.g. "Move the team into the new office by Aug 14 with zero lost work days"}}
- {{How you will know it worked — the one number or outcome that defines success}}

Write objectives you can measure — “launch the new checkout by Q3 with under 1% error rate”, not “improve checkout”. If you cannot tell whether it is done, rewrite it.

3. Scope

In scope

- {{What is included — the deliverable everyone is counting on}}
- {{A second thing this project covers}}

Out of scope

- {{What is NOT included — the assumption you need to head off}}

Naming what is out of scope is what actually prevents scope creep. Be explicit about the work people will assume is included but is not.

4. Milestones & Timeline

Milestone	Owner	Target date	Status
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{{First checkpoint — plan agreed}}	{{Owner}}	{{Target date}}	Not started
{{Midpoint — the main work is done}}	{{Owner}}	{{Target date}}	Not started
{{Done — project complete}}	{{Owner}}	{{Target date}}	Not started

Milestones are checkpoints, not tasks — a handful of dates that prove the project is moving. Each should be a clear “done / not done”, with one owner.

5. Tasks & Work Breakdown

Task	Owner	Start	Due	Status
{{Task — keep each one a single, ownable job}}	{{Owner}}	{{Start}}	{{Due}}	Not started
{{Next task}}	{{Owner}}	{{Start}}	{{Due}}	Not started
{{Final task before you are done}}	{{Owner}}	{{Start}}	{{Due}}	Not started

Break the work into tasks small enough to track in a week or less. Give each an owner and a due date; a task with no owner will not happen.

6. Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Name	Responsibility
Lead	{{Name}}	Runs the project and makes the call when something slips
{{Helper / role}}	{{Name}}	{{What they handle}}

Assign responsibilities to roles so the plan survives a team change. Be clear who decides, who does the work, and who needs to be kept informed.

7. Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation	Owner
{{The thing most likely to go wrong}}	{{High / Med / Low}}	{{High / Med / Low}}	{{What you will do about it}}	{{Owner}}
{{A second risk worth a plan B}}	{{High / Med / Low}}	{{High / Med / Low}}	{{Mitigation}}	{{Owner}}

List the few risks that would actually derail the project, rate impact and likelihood (High/Med/Low), and name the action and the owner. Review this table at every status check.

8. Budget

Item	Estimate	Actual
{{Main cost}}	{{Estimate}}	{{Actual}}
Contingency	{{Estimate}}	{{Actual}}

Estimate the main cost lines and add a contingency for the unknowns. If your project has no budget, keep the section and write “N/A” — reviewers expect to see it.

9. Approval

Project Manager Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	Sponsor Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____
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Both sign-offs confirm the plan, scope, and budget are agreed before work starts.