

How to use the MoSCoW Method

What it is

A way to sort a list of things you could do into four buckets, from must-have down to won't-have, so you know what actually matters.

MoSCoW spells out the four buckets: Must, Should, Could, and Won't.

When to use it

When you're planning something with more ideas than time or money, like a group project, a party, or a move.

Steps

1. **Must have.** Without these, the whole thing fails. Not negotiable.
2. **Should have.** Important, but the plan survives without them.
3. **Could have.** Nice extras if there's time and money left over.
4. **Won't have.** Not this time. Say so now, so nobody expects them.

Common mistake

Putting everything under Must have. If it's all critical, none of it is.

Pairs with

Eisenhower Matrix and Pareto Principle.

Example: planning a cross-country move

Date: Fri, Apr 4

1 Must have Can't succeed without these

Sign the new lease

Book the moving truck

Transfer the utilities

3 Could have Nice if there's time

Repaint the bedroom

Buy new furniture

2 Should have Important, not critical

Update my address with the bank

Forward the mail

4 Won't have Not this time

A housewarming party this month

Custom closet shelving

MoSCoW Sorting Sheet

Date: _____

1 Must have Can't succeed without these

3 Could have Nice if there's time

2 Should have Important, not critical

4 Won't have Not this time
