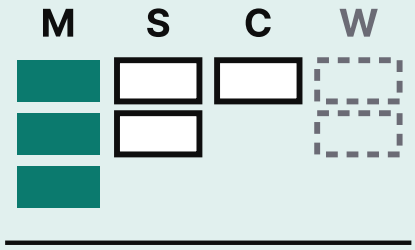
Method

MoSCoW method

A method that sorts requirements or ideas into four groups for a specific release: what must be in (Must), what should (Should), what could (Could) and what won't this time (Won't).



In Spanish
MoSCoW

Origin
Clegg and Barker (1994), for rapid application development

Output
A prioritized list in four groups

What it's for

Helps decide what goes in when time or budget can't cover everything, and to get it agreed.

Key elements

Few musts
If almost everything is a must, the list isn't prioritizing.

Time-bound
The categories apply to a specific release, not forever.

The "no" is agreed too
Leaving something out in writing avoids arguing about it again.

How it's done

1 

List everything that could be done.

2 

Sort each item into one of the four groups.

3 

Agree on what stays out with whoever decides.

Applications in design

When to use it

To settle the scope of a release with the team and the decision-maker.

Avoid

Marking almost everything as a must.

Don't fall for it

Make clear what "not this time" means: whether it comes back in the next release or is dropped.

Connections

Used by

- Learning design

Related to

- Agile UX
- User stories
- Lean UX
- User story mapping
- Kano model
- Six Thinking Hats
- Design sprint
- Dot voting

Authors and works

1994	**Dai Clegg and Richard Barker**	Presented the method for prioritizing requirements in rapid development projects with fixed deadlines.

Sources

Original sources

- Clegg, D., & Barker, R. (1994). Case method fast-track: A RAD approach. Addison-Wesley.

Last reviewed: October 25, 2026

Atlas público de diseño, de Adriana Ojeda. Texto e ilustraciones bajo licencia CC BY 4.0.