

Gantt chart tutorial video: Learn how to create Gantt charts

- 1 Hello, I'm James Manktelow, CEO of MindTools.com, home to hundreds of free career-bursting resources.
- 2 And I'm Amy Carlson from Mind Tools.
- 3 Have you ever had to plan a complex project?
- 4 If so, you'll know that you can do some activities at any time during the project, while some tasks can only be started once others have been completed.
- 5 What's more, there can be so many tasks to think about that you might end up missing some in all the confusion.
- 6 You can make things easier by using a tool like Gantt charts.
- 7 Gantt charts are useful because they enable to plan up all your tasks.
- 8 This helps you work out the minimum delivery time for your project and to schedule when the right people will be available to get your project finished efficiently.
- 9 To put together a Gantt chart, you start by listing all of the tasks you need to complete for your project.
- 10 Then write down the earliest date that you can start the task, how long you think it will take to finish, and whether or not the task is dependent on any other tasks.
- 11 In this example you think that Task A, Initial Design, will take one week.
- 12 Task B, Ordering Parts, will take two weeks, but you can't start Task B until Task A is completed.
- 13 So Task B is dependent on Task A, and those two tasks can't overlap.
- 14 Once Task B is complete, you'll need some people to do Task C, Putting the Parts Together.
- 15 This will take three weeks.
- 16 You'll also need to have an instruction manual written.
- 17 This is Task D, and it can be started at any time.
- 18 It will take two weeks.
- 19 Finally, once Task C and D are complete, you can do Task E, Training.
- 20 This will take another week.
- 21 Next, using a piece of graph paper, you make a column for each day or week that your project will last.
- 22 Then you can use your graph paper to plot out all of your tasks.
- 23 This helps you to see certain activities, and you'll see whether or not those activities overlap.
- 24 You plot your tasks by drawing a horizontal bar.
- 25 The length of the bar will represent how long you expect the task to take.
- 26 Once you've plotted out all of your tasks, your chart will probably look quite confusing and difficult to use.
- 27 So the last step is to colour all the tasks depending on the person or resource you need to complete it.
- 28 This will make the chart easier to see and understand.
- 29 For instance, you could colour code your own tasks red.
- 30 And you know that you will need a technician to order the parts and put the part together, so these tasks could be highlighted in blue.
- 31 You'll need to outsource the handbook to a freelance writer, so this task could be highlighted in green, and so on.
- 32 Once you complete your Gantt chart, you'll be able to see how long your project will take to complete.
- 33 You'll also know when you'll need to bring key resources on board to complete tasks.
- 34 And you don't have to use graph paper to create your Gantt chart manually.
- 35 In reality, project managers use software such as Microsoft Project to make the process much easier.
- 36 You can find out more about Gantt charts in the article that accompanies this video.
- 37 This is just one of the tools available at MindTools.com.
- 38 Take a few moments to explore the menus on the left-hand side of the site.
- 39 The articles you'll find there teach more than a hundred skills that will help you improve your career, completely for free.
- 40 You can also sign up to our free newsletter and receive a skill-builder tool every week.
- 41 When you subscribe from the Gantt charts article, you'll also get a free copy of our *What is Project Management* workbook, worth \$9.99.
- 42 So sign up now, and watch your career take off.