

The anatomy of a good user story.

D8A.ACADEMY/RESOURCES/USER-STORY-ANATOMY

THE TEMPLATE

```
As a <role>,           -- who benefits, never just "user"
I want <capability>,   -- what they can do, not which widget
so that <outcome>.     -- the value; if empty, why build it?
```

INVEST TEST

I · Independent	ships without waiting on others
N · Negotiable	a conversation, not a contract
V · Valuable	someone wants the outcome
E · Estimable	clear enough to size
S · Small	fits in a sprint, ideally days
T · Testable	you can prove it is done

ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

```
Given <context>,
When <action>,
Then <observable result>.

-- one scenario per criterion
-- edge cases get their own
```

BAD → GOOD

"Add export button"	a solution with no who and no why
the rewrite	As an analyst, I want to export filtered results to CSV, so that I can share them in my weekly report.

→ if the "so that" is empty, it is a task wearing a story costume

WORTH MEMORIZING

01 Three lines, all of it

Role, capability, outcome. Everything else is acceptance criteria.

```
As a <role>,
I want <capability>,
so that <outcome>.
```

→ The template is not bureaucracy: each blank is a question someone forgot to answer.

02 The INVEST test

Six letters that catch 90% of bad stories before the sprint does.

Independent	ships without waiting on another story
Negotiable	a conversation starter, not a spec
Valuable	a real someone wants the outcome
Estimable	the team can size it
Small	days, not weeks
Testable	done is provable, not debatable

03 Trap: the disguised spec

"As a user, I want a dropdown" is a UI spec wearing a story costume.

the smell	role is "user" and the want is a widget
the question	who exactly? what outcome do they get?
the rewrite	widget moves to acceptance criteria, outcome stays in the story

→ Stories describe problems worth solving. Solutions belong to the team.