

CHECKLIST

20 REVIEW POINTS 10 MIN REVIEWED 10/08/2026

Get the software project ready to go

A practical test for goal, user journey, data, security and operations before the first development sprint.

FOR WHOM

Product managers, departments and project teams before a new application or major expansion.

WHEN TO USE IT

Before the proposal, kickoff or first sprint and again when there is a significant scope change.

THE SHORT ANSWER

A software project is ready to start when the problem, target group, complete core process, success signal, non-goals, data responsibility and operational path are clear enough for a verifiable first version.

01

problem and decision

The application first needs a testable purpose, not the longest possible list of functions.

☐

Describe the problem in one sentence

Name the users affected, what happened today and the specific consequences of the problem.

☐

Set a success signal

Define which observable result should be better after the first version.

☐

Name responsible person

One person prioritizes professionally and can clarify open decisions in a binding manner.

☐

Document non-goals

Visibly record which users, exceptions and convenience functions are not yet included.

02

User journey and requirements

The first scope must enable a complete process, even if it remains deliberately small.

☐

Determine primary user role

Describe previous knowledge, rights and initial situation for this role.

☐

Outline the core path from entry to result

Consider input, check, error case and visible result.

☐

Clarify rights and releases

Control who can read, modify, share, export, or delete.

☐

Formulate acceptance criteria

Each core function is given an observable criterion instead of a vague description.

03

Data and connections

Unclear data sources and responsibilities quickly become the biggest project risk later on.

☐ **Inventory required data sources**

Mention system, owner, format, quality and expected timeliness.

☐ **Mark personal and confidential data**

Reduce data to purpose and clarify access, retention and deletion.

☐ **Technically check interfaces**

Validate authentication, limits, failure cases and available test environments.

☐ **Plan migration or initial data**

Determine the scope, cleanup, test run and technical acceptance.

04

Security and operations

Security, recovery and accountability belong in the first complete user journey.

☐

Record protection needs and most important risks

Assess impacts on availability, confidentiality and integrity.

☐

Decide registration and permissions

Clarify identity source, roles, privileged access and necessary multi-factor authentication.

☐

Outline hosting and recovery

Define environment, backup, restart, monitoring and responsible persons.

☐

Name update and incident path

Determine who assesses vulnerabilities, approves changes and makes decisions in the event of disruptions.

05

Start decision

Open points may remain, but must be visibly evaluated and assigned responsibly.

☐ **Prioritize risks and assumptions**

Associate each critical point with a test, decision, or conscious acceptance.

☐ **Confirm first deliverable scope**

The scope contains a complete path and remains small enough for early feedback.

☐ **Set an acceptance and feedback date**

Determine who checks based on which criteria and when user feedback is included.

☐ **Go, clarify or stop**

Only begin when critical ambiguities are either resolved or secured as a limited experiment.

Result of the joint review

- ✓ A clear project mandate with a signal of success
- ✓ A delineated complete user journey
- ✓ A visible risk and assumption register
- ✓ An initial operational and security framework

Related guidance

Define software project correctly



Automate processes



Anonymized platform reference



Sources and professional basis

This working aid translates general recommendations into a compact initial review. The primary sources and your specific context remain decisive.

NIST: Secure Software Development Framework



NIST SP 800-218: SSDF Version 1.1



Frequently asked questions

Do all points have to be completed before the first interview?



Is the checklist a requirement specification?



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