

How to Estimate With Story Points

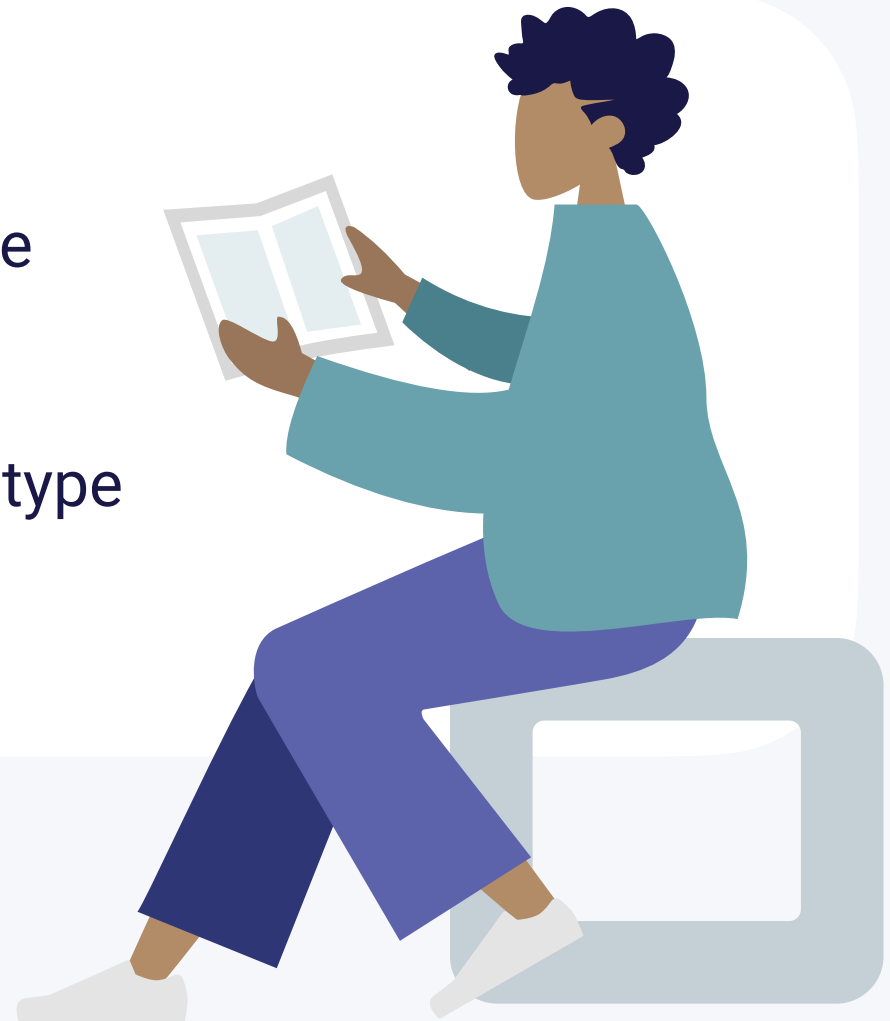
Four Things to Understand about Story Points

- 1 | Story points are relative

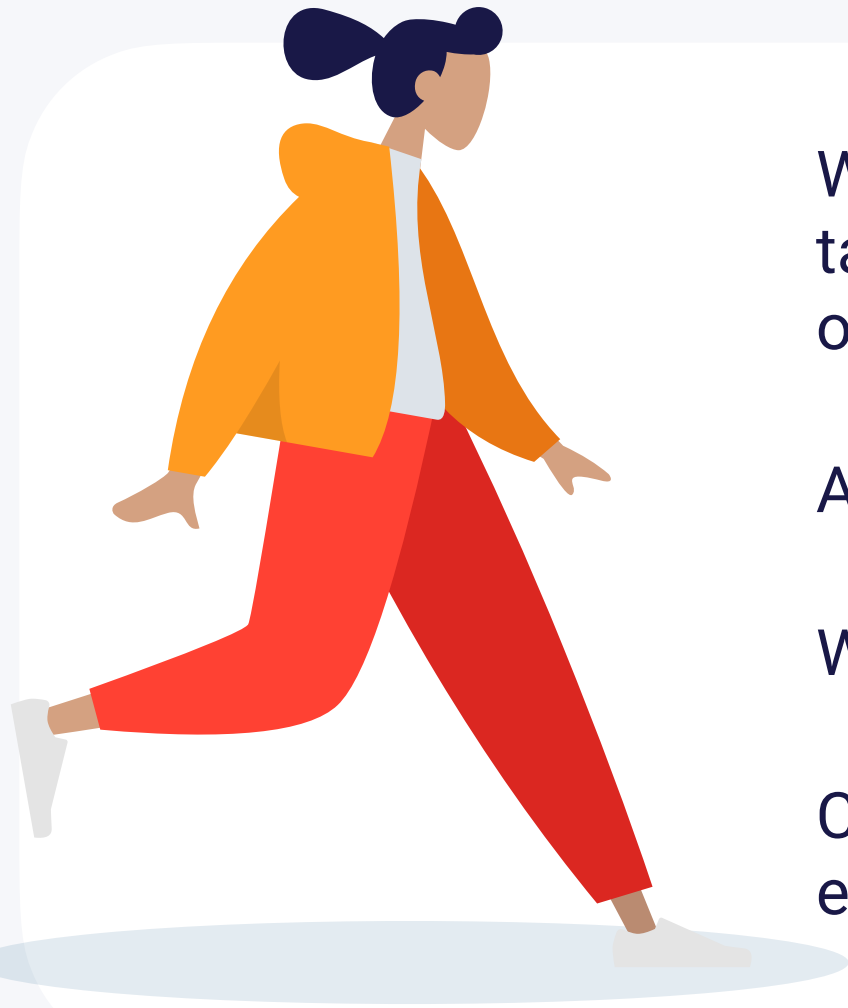
Points Are Relative

Reading a 300-page book will take twice as long as reading a 150-page book.

Assuming they generally the same type of books, etc.



Points Are Relative



Walking or running two kilometers will take twice as long as walking/running one kilometer

Assuming the same terrain, etc.

Would an Olympic runner agree?

Can you and the Olympian agree to estimate those as 10 and 20 then?

An Exercise

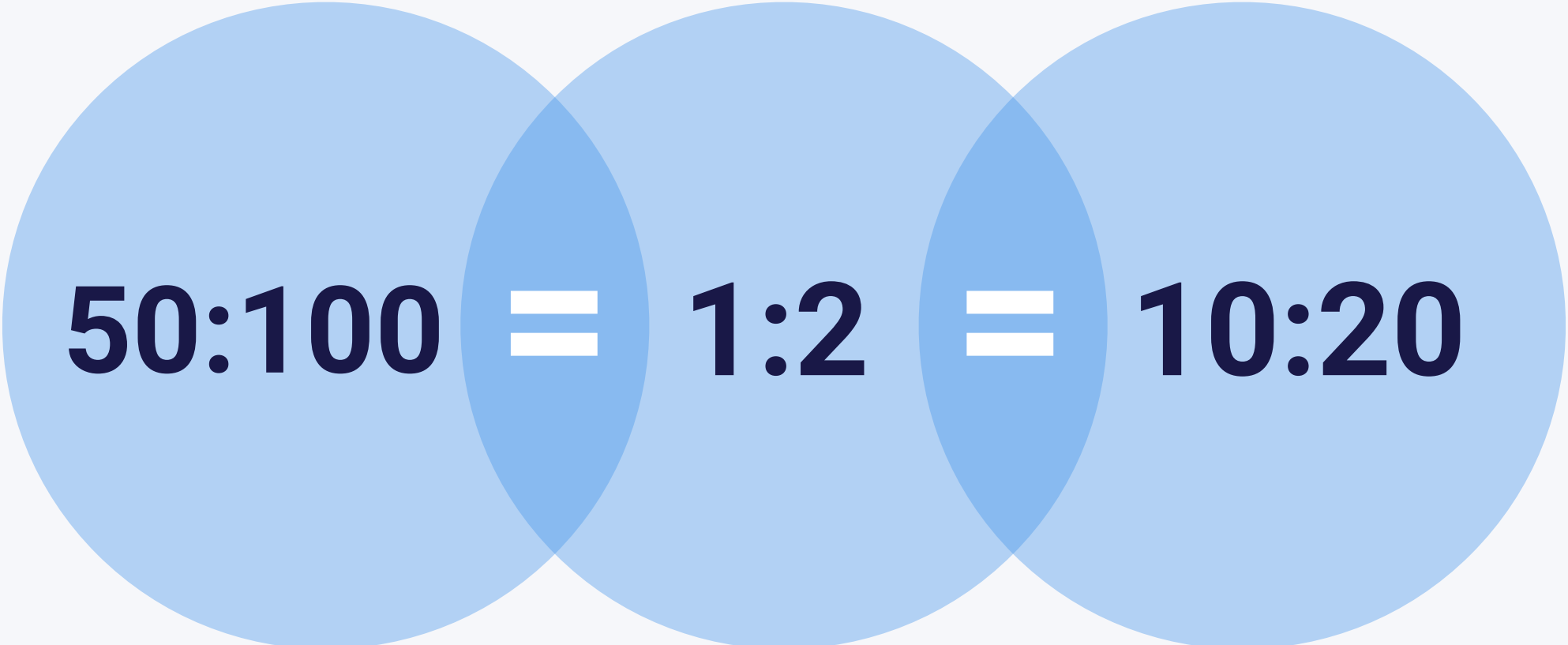


Four Things to Understand about Story Points

- 1 Story points are relative
- 2 The units are meaningless

Units Are Meaningless

Estimating items as **50:100** is the same as estimating **10:20**, **1:2** or even **0.1:0.2**.

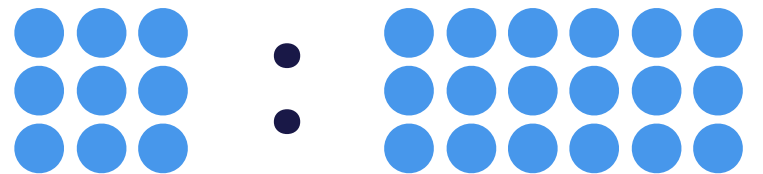
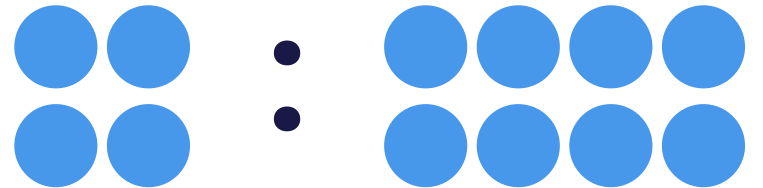
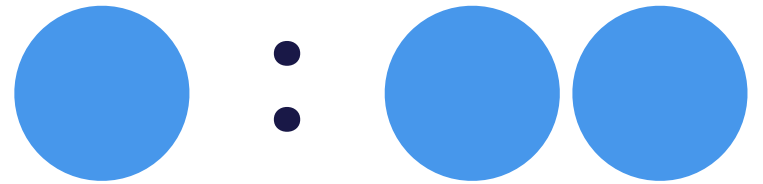

$$50:100 = 1:2 = 10:20$$

Units Are Meaningless

The ratio is all that matters

Obviously integers are easier to deal with

A good way to avoid fractions is to set your scale so that {3, 5} or {4, 8} are used on typical small items for that project



Four Things to Understand about Story Points

- 1 Story points are relative
- 2 The units are meaningless
- 3 Story points are about effort

What happens if we ask them to estimate how long it will take to build a 2,000-brick wall?



Experienced bricklayer
500 bricks / day



Apprentice
250 bricks / day

2,000
Brick Wall

4,000
Brick Wall



Experienced bricklayer
500 bricks / day

4
DAYS

8
DAYS



Apprentice
250 bricks / day

8
DAYS

16
DAYS

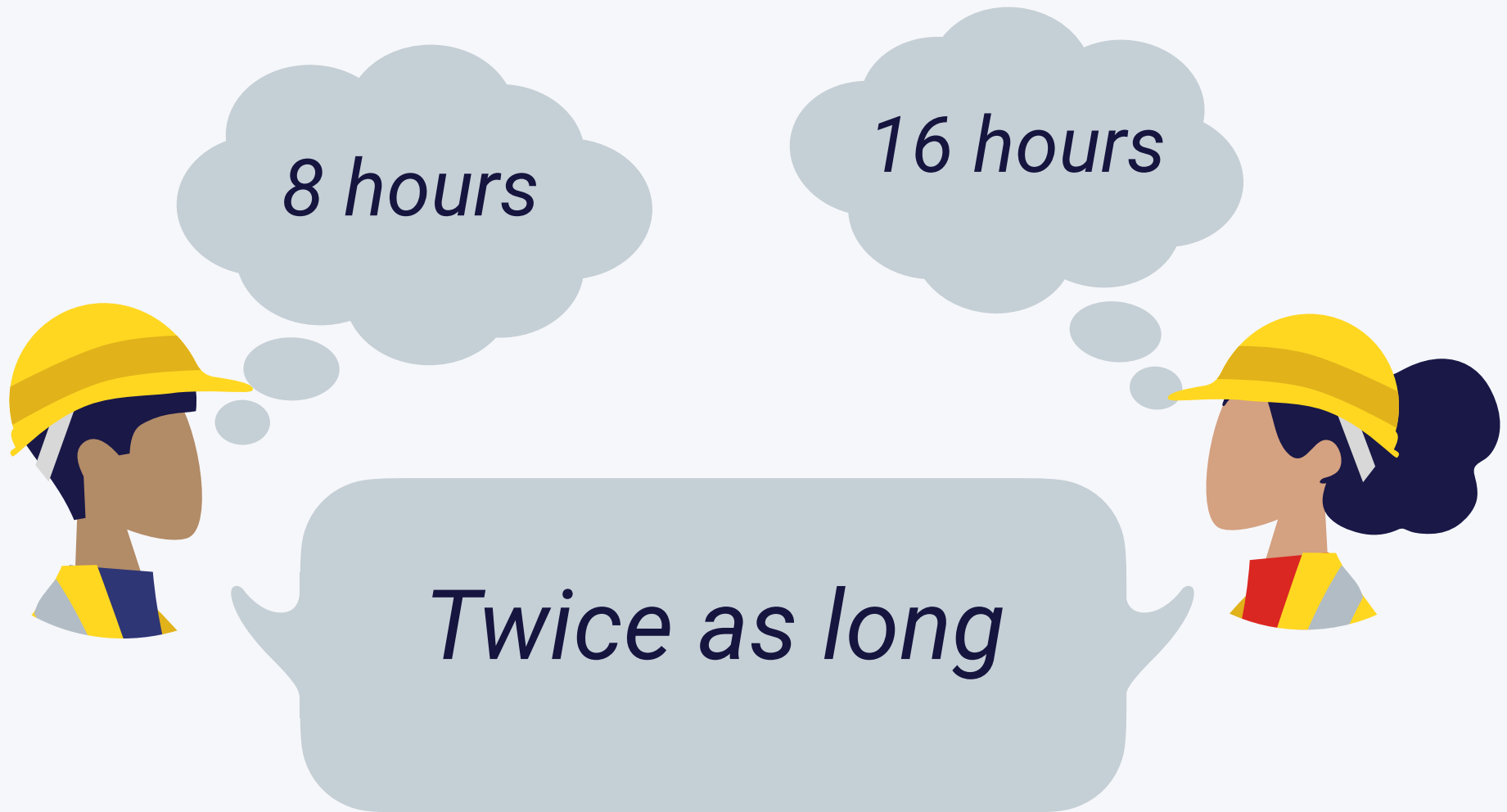
Disagreeing or Agreeing?

How will the experienced bricklayer respond when the apprentice says the larger wall will take:

16 Days

*Twice as long as
the smaller wall*

Think in Hours, Speak in Points

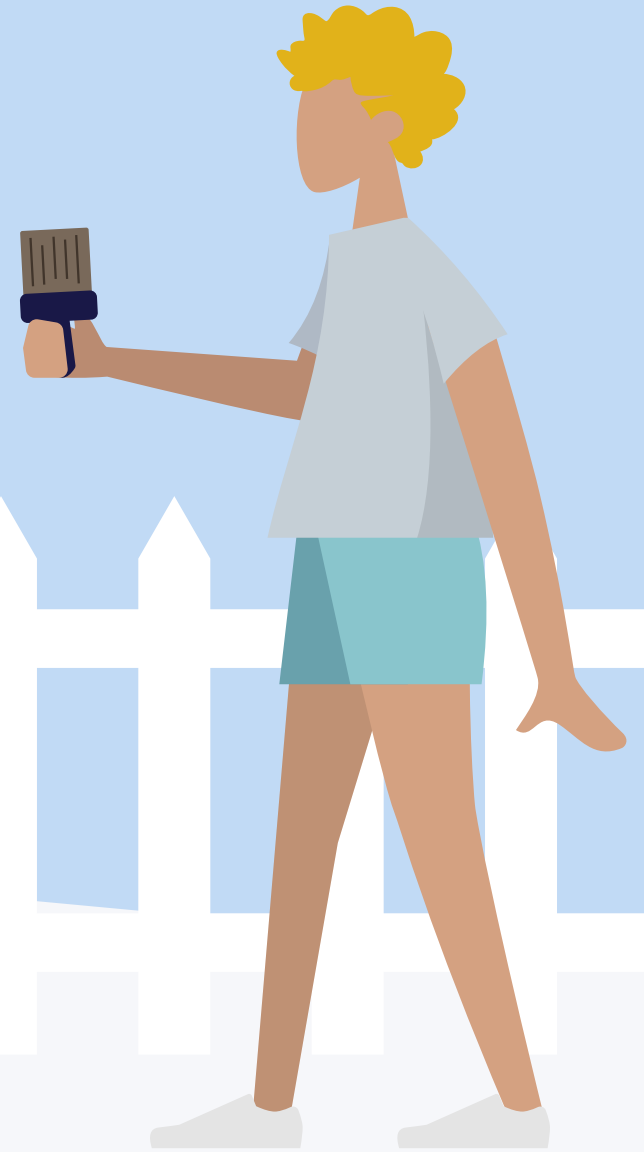


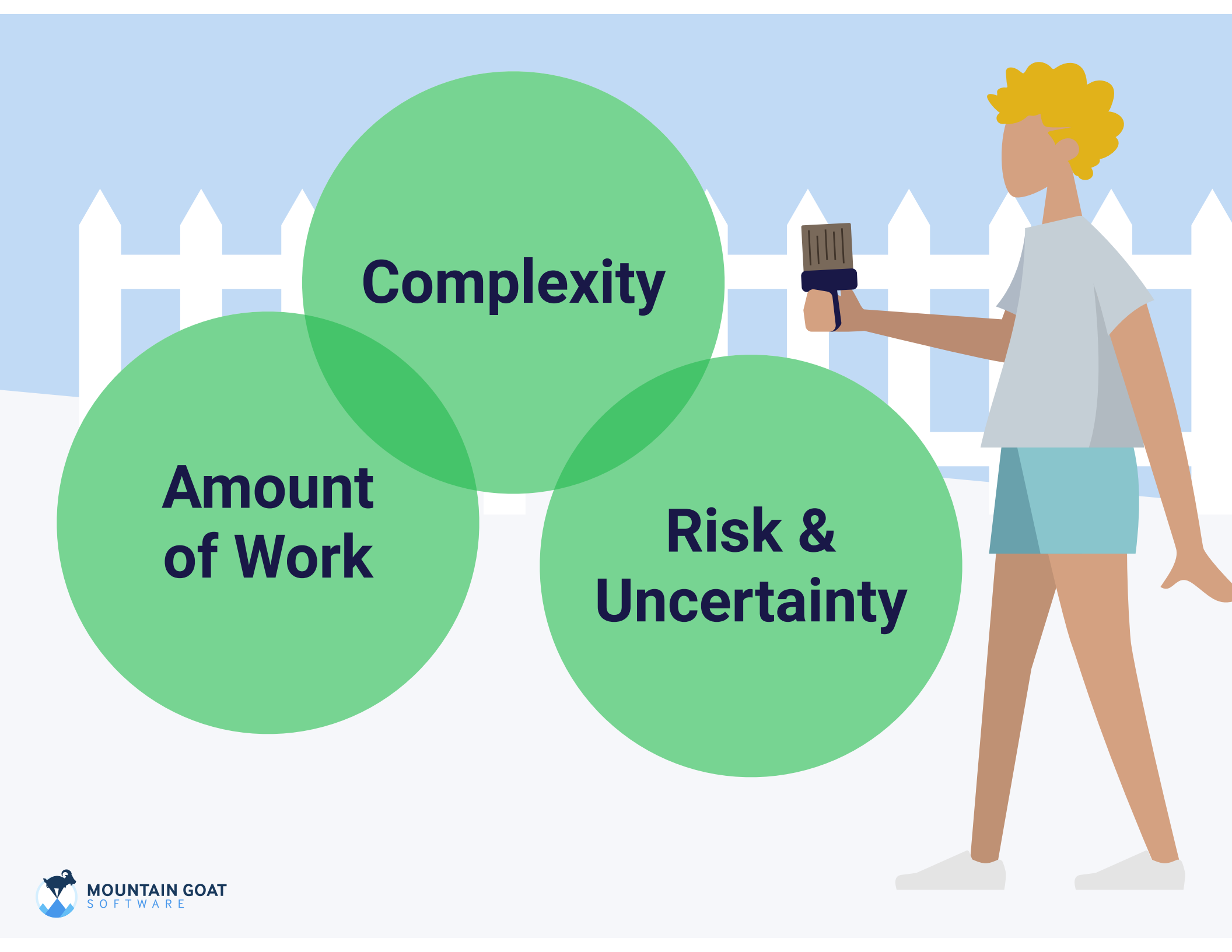
Four Things to Understand about Story Points

- 1 Story points are relative
- 2 The units are meaningless
- 3 Story points are about effort
- 4 Story points are a function of amount, risk, uncertainty, and complexity

**How long will it take to paint
the fence around a house?**

**What would be useful to
know about the fence?**





Complexity

**Amount
of Work**

**Risk &
Uncertainty**



The Amount of Work



FENCE

How long the fence is



WEBSITE

How many different types
of pages



WEDDING

How many guests are
invited to the wedding

Risk and Uncertainty



FENCE

Not knowing what color to
paint it



WEBSITE

A screen or feature that
hasn't been designed



WEDDING

Not knowing yet how
many guests will be
invited

Complexity



FENCE

Painting a mural instead
of a single color



WEBSITE

A difficult calculation



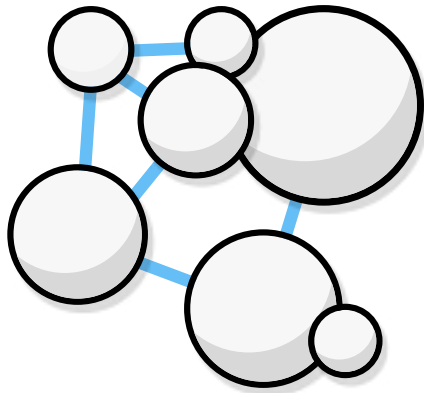
WEDDING

A seating chart when
some guests don't like
one another

The Four Key Things

- 1 Story points are relative
- 2 The units are meaningless
- 3 Story points are about effort
- 4 Story points are a function of amount, risk, uncertainty, and complexity

For More Information



Estimating with Story Points

with Mike Cohn

Learn more at: <https://mtngo.at/esp>

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