

# **Resource Loading Like a Pro**

...or How I Learned to Stop Building Crazy Excel Worksheets and Love Assignments in Project

MPUG Webinar July 2, 2025

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4	Simple Task     Bob     Ned	160 hrs 10 days 80 hrs 80 hrs	rs 7/14/25 7/25/25 7/14/25 7/25/25 7/14/25 7/25/25	1 1 1 1	Flat Flat	None Assign Resou Task: Simple Task	Fixed Duration	Must Start On	7/14/25	No Work		16h 8h 8h	16h 1 8h 8h	5h 16h 3h 8h 3h 8h	16h 16h 18h 18h	30 19 30 20	16h 8h 8h	16h 8h 8h	16h 8h 8h	16h 8h 8h	16h 8h 8h	54 20
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## Introduction to Calendars

Base Calendars can be used as Project Defaults or Task Calendars Resources have their own calendars which may be modified (or not) from a Base calendar

Project Standard Calendar:

- 2 4-hr shifts during the day
- 1 hr break for lunch
- Weekends are non-working
- No other exceptions

_	Change Working Time									×
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### 9-80 Alternate Calendar:

- 9hr shift Mon-Thu, 8hr shift Fri
- Weekends and Fridays are non-working
- No other exceptions



Resource Calendar (Sally):

- Based on the 9-80 Alternate calendar
- Exception for NG training week of July 21-25

Chan	ge Wo	rking Time								×
Resour	ce calen	dar for 'Sally':								
<u>B</u> ase ca	lendar:	9-80 Alternate \	Work S	che	dule				~	-
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## Adding a Task Calendar

#### 🗙 🖌 Simple Task Alt Calendar

	ask ∕loc <del>v</del> Ta	ask Name 🗸 🗸	Work 🗸	Duration 👻	Start 👻	Finish 👻	Assignmen Units	Peak 👻	Work Conto 🕶	Task Calendar 👻	Type v Constraint	Constraint Date	Effort Drive 🕶	Details	Jul 13, '2 Su 13	5 Mo 14	Tu 15	We 16	Th 17	Fr 18 Sa	Jul 20, 12 19 Su 20	25 Mo 21	Tu 22	We 23	Th 24	Fr 25 S
4	⊿ :	Simple Task	160 hrs	s 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25				None	Fixed Duration Must Start On	7/14/25	5 No	Work		16h	16h	16h	16h	16h		16h	16h	16h	16h	16h
		Bob	80 hrs	s	7/14/25	7/25/25		11	Flat					Work		8h	8h	8h	8h	8h		8h	8h	8h	8h	8h
		Ned	80 hrs	s	7/14/25	7/25/25		11	Flat					Work		8h	8h	8h	8h	8h		8h	8h	8h	8h	8h
5	(	Simple Task Alt Calendar	142 hrs	s 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25				9-80 Alternate W	Fixed Duration Must Start On	7/14/25	5 No	Work		16h	16h	16h	16h			16h	16h	16h	16h	14h
		Bob	71 hrs	s	7/14/25	7/25/25		11	Flat					Work		8h	8h	8h	8h			8h	8h	8h	8h	7h
		Ned	71 hrs	s	7/14/25	7/25/25		1 1	Flat					Work		8h	8h	8h	8h			8h	8h	8h	8h	7h
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		Change Wor	king Time							×		Change	Working	, Time								>				
		For <u>c</u> alendar:	9-80 Alternate	Work Schedu	ile	~		Cre	ate <u>N</u> ew Ca	alendar		For <u>c</u> alenda	ar: Bob					~		C	Create <u>N</u> ew C	alendar				
		Calendar '9-80 A	lternate Wo	' is a								si, <u>B</u> ase calend	iar: Stan	dard				~		_						
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		Name	e Fridav Off			Start /1/2025	Finish 12/31/2	025		D <u>e</u> tails		Na	ime	VEEKS			Sta	rt	Fin	ish		D <u>e</u> tails				
			,							Delete			-	Work												

The task calendar is the alternate 9-80, with a single 9 hr shift from 9a to 5p Mon-Thu and an 8 hr shift ending at 4p alternate Fridays. Bob and Ned's resource calendars are based on the standard, 2-shift calendar, which has a lunch break from 12p to1p Mon-Fri.

The available working hours are the intersection of the task and resource calendar working times. Which in this case means lunch breaks (Resource Calendars) AND alternate Fridays off (Task Calendar).

## TMS

## **Resources with Different Base Calendars**

### 🗙 🖌 🖌 Sally

	Task						Assignmen		Work			Constraint	Constraint	Effort		Jul 13, 1	25						Jul 20, 12	25					
	Moc 🔻	Task Name 👻	Work 👻	Duration ¬	🖌 Start 👻	Finish 👻	Units	→ Peak         →	Conto 🔻	Task Calendar 👻	Туре 👻	Туре 🔻	Date 🔻	Drive 🔻	Details	Su 13	Mo 14	Tu 15	We 16	Th 17	Fr 18	Sa 19	Su 20	Mo 21	Tu 22	We 23	Th 24	Fr 25	Sa 26
4	<b></b>	▲ Simple Task	160 hrs	s 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25	5			None	Fixed Duration	Must Start On	7/14/25	i No	Work		16h	16h	16h	16h	16h			16h	16h	16h	16h	16h	
		Bob	80 hrs	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	5	11	Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h	8h			8h	8h	8h	8h	8h	
		Ned	80 hrs	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	5	11	Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h	8h			8h	8h	8h	8h	8h	
5	<b></b>	Simple Task Alt Calendar	178 hrs	s 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25	5			9-80 Alternate W	Fixed Duration	Must Start On	7/14/25	i No	Work		25h	25h	25h	25h				16h	16h	16h	16h	14h	
		Bob	71 hrs	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	5	11	Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h				8h	8h	8h	8h	7h	
		Ned	71 hrs	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	5	11	Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h				8h	8h	8h	8h	7h	
		Sally	36 hrs	5	7/14/25	7/17/25	5	11	Flat						Work		9h	9h	9h	9h									
															Work														
															Work														

### Assign Resources

Task: Simple Task Alt Calendar

Resource list options -

Fi	ilte	r I	by:
-			- J.

Group...

-

Add Resources 👻

Available to work

Resources from HowToResourceLoad2025.mpp

0h

Resource Name	R/D	Units	Cost
Bob		1.00	\$3,550.00
Ned		1.00	\$3,550.00
Sally		1.00	\$1,800.00
			1
			1
-			

\*

Why are Sally's hours different from Bob and Ned?

- Sally's base calendar is the 9-80 calendar, not the standard calendar.
  - That means Sally doesn't take lunch breaks Mon-Thu.
  - Sally also has a personal exception the week of July 21-25 for her National Guard Training Exercise.

<u>H</u> elp	



# Assignments that Do Not Align with Task Dates

		7.4.11	· ·	·/ · ·/ ···	1/20/20			1.194.5																			
	Sally	36 hr	s	7/14/25	7/17/25		11	Flat								Work		9	h 9	n 9h	9h						
6	🔄 🔺 Bob Wins the	Lottery 192.25 hr	s 14.5 days	7/14/25	7/31/25				9-80 Alternate W	Fixed D		n Mus.	art On	7/14/25	No	Work		33	.h 31	n 31h	31h		14h	14h	14h	14h	12.25ł
	Bob	32 hr	s i	7/14/25	7/17/25		Microso	oft Droioc	+										h 8	n 8h	8h						
	Ned	71 hr	s i	7/14/25	7/25/25		IVIICIOSC	JIL PIOJEC	.1									<u> </u>	h 8	n 8h	8h		8h	8h	8h	8h	7ł
	Sally	36 hr	s	7/14/25	7/17/25		•	The resou	irce is assigned outsic	le the origina	al .		o Bob Win	s the Lottery in p	roject "Ho	wToResour	ceLoad2025	· 9	h 9	n 9h	9h						
	Fred	53.25 hr	s i	7/21/25	7/31/25	О.		The durat	ion of this fixed-dura	tion task will	l chang	ne to accor	mmodate t	he resource assid	inment.			(	ih 6	n 6h	6h		6h	6h	6h	6h	5.25ł
											_		_														
											l	OK															
19F																Work											

## What happens if Bob wins the Lottery?

- We set Bob's assignment finish date to 7/17. This reduces his hours.
- Now we assign Fred to the task to take over Bob's work. Fred only has 75% availability.
- We want Fred to start on 7/21, so we change the Start to 7/21...

If you change an assignment start date, the assignment duration will stay the same. This will push the end of the task but will NOT change the assignment end dates for other assignments!

However, if you set the assignment finish date first, even if you don't change it, then you can change the start without the finish moving! But note this changed the constraint type to FNET and changed the constraint date to 7/25/25...

6	4	Bob Wins the Lottery	168.25 hrs 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25				9-80 Alternate W	Fixed Duration	Io Farlier Than	7/25/25	No	Work	25	ih	25h	25h	25h		14h	14h	14h	14h 12	2.25h	
		Bob	32 hrs	7/14/25	7/17/25	1	1	Flat						Work	8	ßh	8h	8h	8h							
		Ned	71 hrs	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1	Flat						Work	8	ßh	8h	8h	8h		8h	8h	8h	8h	7h	
		Sally	36 hrs	7/14/25	7/17/25	1	1	Flat						Work	9	h	9h	9h	9h							
		Fred	29.25 hrs	7/21/25	7/25/25	0.75	0.75	Flat						Work	(	)h	0h	0h	0h		6h	6h	6h	6h 5	5.25h	



## Setting the Hours Directly

#### 🗙 🗹 🛛 Simple Task

	Task						Assignmen		Work			Constraint	Const	straint	Effort		Jul 13, 1	25						Jul 20,	25					-
	Moc 🔻	Task Name 👻	Work 👻	Duration 👻	Start 👻	Finish 👻	Units 🔻	Peak 👻	Conto -	Task Calendar 👻	Туре 👻	Туре	▼ Date	*	Drive 💌	Details	Su 13	Mo 14	Tu 15	We 16	Th 17	Fr 18	Sa 19	Su 20	Mo 21	Tu 22	We 23	h 24	Fr 25	Sa 26
6	>	Bob Wins the Lottery	180 hrs	10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25	i			9-80 Alternate W	Fixed Duration	n Jo Earlier Th	an	7/25/25	No	Work		25h	25h	25h	25h				16.41h	16.41h	16.41h 1	6.41h	14.36h	
		Bob	32 hrs	3	7/14/25	7/17/25	i i	11	Flat							Work		8h	8h	8h	8h									
		Ned	71 hrs	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	i i	11	Flat							Work		8h	8h	8h	8h				8h	8h	8h	8h	7h	
		Sally	36 hrs	3	7/14/25	7/17/25	i i	11	Flat							Work		9h	9h	9h	9h									
		Fred	29.25 hrs	3	7/21/25	7/25/25	0.75	5 0.75	Flat							Work		0h	0h	0h	0h				6h	6h	6h	6h	5.25h	
		Jill	11.75 hrs	5	7/21/25	7/25/25	i 0.5	5 0.3	Flat							Work		0h	0h	0h	0h				2.41h	2.41h	2.41h	2.41h	2.11h	

Let's make the task hours equal exactly 180 by adding Jill (50% availability) starting July 21:

- If the Assignment start and finish are the same as the Task, then changing hours will change the Assignment Units and Peak, and changing Units will change work and Peak, but no dates or durations will change.
- If the Assignment and Task dates are NOT the same, then changing the hours directly will change the Peak, but not the Assignment Units.
  - If the hours are increased, then the assignment duration will change to match the task duration. If the
    assignment start date does NOT match the task start then this will extend the task, otherwise the assignment
    finish will change to match the task finish. Hours will match what you typed in, and peak will adjust to match
    the highest ratio of planned to available hours in a day. Changes to the Task duration will not impact dates or
    hours in other assignments.
  - If hours are decreased, hours and peak will change, but assignment dates and duration will stay the same.
- Project distributes the hours across the assignment duration proportionally based on the available work time.
- Peak units is calculated, not set, and equals the highest daily work assigned (2.41 hours for Jill) divided by the highest daily work available (8 hours for this task).

Note: If you want the assignment dates to stay the same you can only decrease the work, not increase it!



# Changing the Assignment Units

🗙 🗹 🛛 Simple Task

	Task	Task Manag		Duration	Charak	<b>Finish</b>	Assignmen	Deels	Work	Tech Colorador	Tana	Constraint	Constraint	Effort	Dataila	Jul 13, 1	25	T 45	141-15	75.47	5-10	6- 10	Jul 20,	25	T. 22		75.04	5-05	6- 05
	Moc 🔻	Task Name 👻	Work 👻	Duration -	Start 👻	Finish 👻	Units 💌	Реак 🔻	Conto 🔻	Task Calendar 👻	туре 👻	lype	🔻 Date 🔍 🔻	Drive 🔻	Details	SU 13	M0 14	TUTS	vve 16	In I/	Fr 18	29 1A	SU 20	M0 21	TU 22	vve 23	I n 24	Ff 25	Sa 26
6		Bob Wins the Lottery	180 hrs	10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25				9-80 Alternate W	Fixed Duration	Io Earlier Tha	n 7/25/25	No	Work		25h	25h	25h	25h				16.41h	16.41h	16.41h	16.41h	14.36h	
		Bob	32 hrs		7/14/25	7/17/25	i 1	1 1	Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h									
		Ned	71 hrs		7/14/25	7/25/25	i 1	1 1	Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h				8h	8h	8h	8h	7h	
		Sally	36 hrs	1	7/14/25	7/17/25	i 1	11	Flat						Work		9h	9h	9h	9h									
		Fred	29.25 hrs	1	7/21/25	7/25/25	0.75	5 0.75	Flat						Work		0h	0h	0h	0h				6h	6h	6h	6h	5.25h	
		Jill	11.75 hrs		7/21/25	7/25/25	0.5	5 0.3	Flat						Work		0h	0h	0h	0h				2.41h	2.41h	2.41h	2.41h	2.11h	

Increasing or decreasing the Assignment Units changes the Work and the Peak, but leaves the assignment dates the same. So, can we set the work precisely by figuring out the Assignment Units?

- First, set the Assignment Units to 1 and look at the work. For Jill on this assignment, that is 39 hours.
- Then, divide by the target work, which is 11.75 hours. 11.75 ÷ 39 = 0.301282.
- Copy that in the Assignment Units field:

×	✓ 11.7 hrs														
	Task Moc ▼	Task Name 👻	w	/ork	•	Duration	Ŧ	Start	•	Finish 👻	Assignmen Units <del>•</del>	Peak 👻	Work Conto 🕶	Task Calenda	
6	<b>-</b> →	Bob Wins the Lottery		179.	95 hrs	10 days		7/14/	25	7/25/25				9-80 Alterna	
		Bob			32 hrs			7/14/	25	7/17/25	1	1	Flat		
		Sally			36 hrs			7/14/	25	7/17/25	1	1	Flat		
		Ned			71 hrs			7/14/	25	7/25/25	1	1	Flat		
		Fred		29.	25 hrs			7/21/	25	7/25/25	0.75	0.75	Flat		
		Jill		11	l.7 hrs			7/21/	25	7/25/25	0.3	0.3	Flat		

Project will not accept more than two decimals of precision. If you are like me, 11.7 is not the same thing as 11.75!

There is a workaround: Set the Assignment Units higher than needed, then manually change the hours to the lower number you want.



# Changing Time Scale Values (Hard Core)

	Task					Assignmen	Work			Constraint	Constraint	Effort		Jul 13, '29	5						Jul 20, 12	25					4
	Moc 🔻	Task Name 👻	Work 👻 Duration 👻	Start 👻	Finish 👻	Units 👻	Peak 👻 Conto	🖌 Task Calendar 👻	Туре 👻	Туре 🔻	Date 🔻	Drive 🔻	Details	Su 13	Mo 14	Tu 15	We 16	Th 17	Fr 18	Sa 19	Su 20	Mo 21	Tu 22	We 23	Th 24	Fr 25	Sa 26
6	<b>-</b>	Bob Wins the Lottery	162 hrs 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25			9-80 Alternate V	Fixed Duration	Must Start On	7/14/25	No	Work		25h	25h	25h	25h				14h	14h	14h	13h	7h	
		Bob	32 hrs	7/14/25	7/17/25	1	1 Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h									
		Sally	36 hrs	7/14/25	7/17/25	1	1 Flat						Work		9h	9h	9h	9h									
		Ned	71 hrs	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1 Flat						Work		8h	8h	8h	8h				8h	8h	8h	8h	7h	
		Fred	23 hrs	7/21/25	7/24/25	0.75	0.75 Contou	n					Work		0h	0h	0h	0h				6h	6h	6h	<mark>5 5 h</mark>		

- You can also directly change the hours in the time grid. This changes the Time Scale Values associated with the assignment, and the assignment values will adjust to match what you type in.
- This is deep magic. I asked Chat GPT to try and figure it out, then give us a concise explanation:

## How Microsoft Project Stores Timephased Data

- Timephased data is not stored as raw tables of values by day/hour/etc.
- Instead, MS Project uses:
  - Work contours, assignment dates, and calendars to dynamically calculate values
- Manual edits to usage grids are stored as sparse overrides for specific time slices
- This approach avoids massive storage needs and allows flexible, scalable views across different time scales
  - \* Think of it as "compute when needed, store only what changes."



# Using Work Contours (Showing Off)

	Task Moc ▼ Task Name ▼	Work -	Duration 👻	Start 👻	Finish 👻	Assignmen Units 🔻	Peak 🗸	Work Contour <del>•</del>	Task Calendar 👻	Туре 🗸	Constraint Type 🔻	Constraint Date 🗸	Eff Dr Details	Jul 13, '25 Su 13 Mo	4 Tu 1	5 We 16	Th 17	Fr 18	Sa 19	Jul 20, '2 Su 20	5 Mo 21	Tu 22	We 23	Th 24	Fr 25	Sa 26
7	The Effect of Work Contours	256 hr:	s 10 days	7/14/25	7/25/25				None	Fixed Duration	Must Start On	7/14/25	Work	19	6h 22.8	3h 29.2h	28.4h	28h			28h	28.4h	29.2h	22.8h	19.6h	
	Bob	80 hr:	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1	Flat					Work		8h 8	3h 8h	8h	8h			8h	8h	8h	8h	8h	
	Fred	48 hr:	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1	Back Loaded					Work	0	8h 1.2	2h 2h	4h	4h			6h	6h	8h	8h	8h	
	Jill	48 hr:	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1 1	Front Loaded					Work		8h 8	3h 8h	6h	6h			4h	4h	2h	1.2h	0.8h	
	Ned	40 hr:	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1	Double Peak					Work		2h 4	Ih 8h	4h	2h			2h	4h	8h	4h	2h	
	Ted	40 hr:	5	7/14/25	7/25/25	1	1	Bell					Work	0	8h 1.(	ih 3.2h	6.4h	8h			8h	6.4h	3.2h	1.6h	0.8h	

Work contours "shape" the spread of hours across the assignment. They do this by applying a preset curve to the available work using the Peak field to determine the inflection points. Think of it as carving away from the available work using a template:



Over the last 40 years, millions of people have spent billions of hours recreating MS Project capability in Excel because they don't know how to assign hours precisely. You can help stop the madness!

Tune in next month to learn how to automate large scale MS Project resource loads (and rates!) from Excel using Visual Basic for Applications. Thanks for attending today!

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