

Columns as Variables

When using a [formula](#), you can assign a variable to reference another column in the structure, including another formula column.

To assign a variable to another column, look for the **Used in Columns** section of the attribute selection drop-down.

Original EstimateTime SpentRemaining EstimateEpic Under/Over TimeEpic Time Warning

NameEpic Time Warning

TypeFormula

FormulaIf (**epicstime** < 0; "WARNING!")

Variables < Back to Variable List

epicstime

Select attribute...

Options

Used in Columns

FormatEpic Under/Over Time (Formula)

Original Estimate

Remaining Estimate

Copied, Not Linked

The **Used in Column** attribute copies the existing column. It does not link to that column. This means:

- You can remove the original column without affecting your new formula. The calculations will continue to work just as they did at the moment you first configured the variable.
- If you update the original column and want that update reflected in your new column, you need to reassign the variable.

In the example above, we created a variable to track the results from the **Epics Under/Over Time** formula we created in our [Formula Column article](#). If the original formula resulted in a negative value, this column will list a simple "WARNING" text flag. (You could also make this flag more effective with [Wiki Markup!](#))

Simple Structure

Key	Summary	Original Estimate	Time Spent	Remaining Estimate	Epic Under/Over Time	Epic Time Warning
STMB-40	Epic 1	5w			1w 3d 7h	
STMB-31	Story 1		2d	3d 4h		
STMB-32	Story 2	1w		1w		
STMB-42	Story 3		5h	1w		
STMB-41	Epic 2	5w		4w	-3d 4h	WARNING!
STMB-37	Story 4	2w	1w 2d	3d		
STMB-39	Story 6	2w	3w 1d	2d 4h		

Once we've created this new formula, we could delete our original Epic Under/Over Time column (if we wanted to). The Epic Time Warning column will still give us a warning whenever we've spent too much time on a particular epic, because the new column (Epic Time Warning) continues to do all the calculations the original column did, even though the original column no longer exists!