

Top note-taking tips

Some basic principles for notes that are easy to read and understand:

1. Keep your notes **brief** and **be selective** in what you write down;
2. Highlight the **main points** and **keywords**;
3. Show **connections** between points and ideas;
4. Summarise content in **your own words**;
5. Always make note of any **references**.

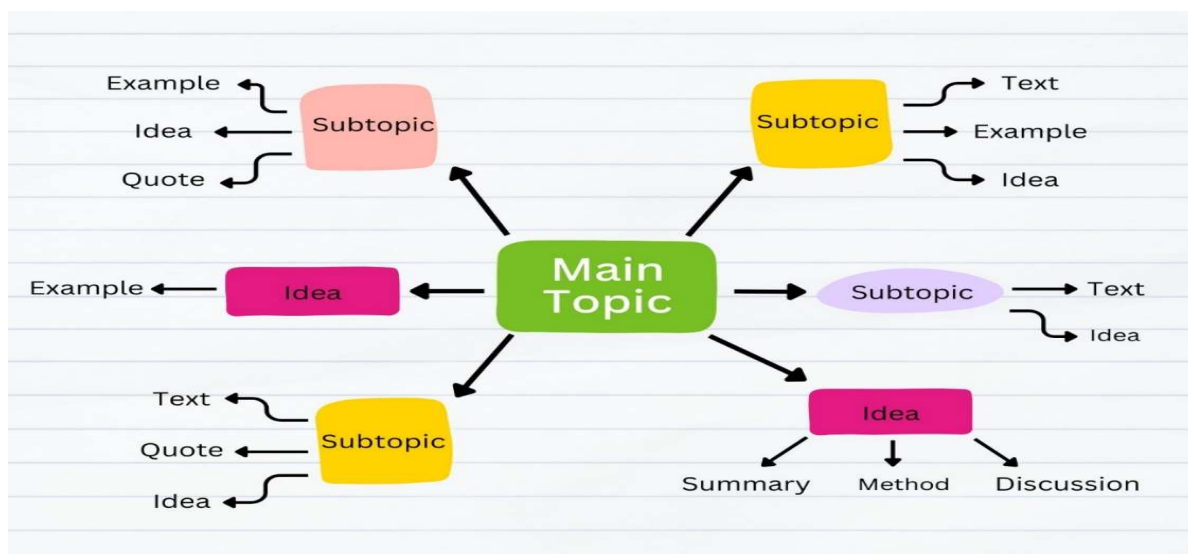
What is a mind map?

A mind map **visualizes** ideas and concepts, providing a systematic way to capture and organize thoughts. It helps users understand concepts by breaking them down into their component parts.

The flexible structure of idea mapping offers an expansive and adaptable framework. It helps you think about and understand how information works.

Mind Mapping is perfect for:

- Brainstorming and visualizing concepts
- Presenting and communicating ideas
- Graphic organizers and electronic note books
- Outlining reports and documents
- Simplifying task and project management



Some tips to create one:

➤ Start with a **central theme**/topic or idea:

Every mind map begins with a central theme placed at the center of a blank page. It represents the core idea, subject, or focus of the map, such as a problem or a thought. Visual imagery often accompanies the central theme to help with idea association.

➤ Branch out with main ideas:

From the central topic, draw lines outward like branches. Each line represents a main idea related to the central topic. Associations, or **branches**, radiate out from the central theme, capturing related subtopics or ideas. They're typically drawn as curved lines to guide the eye smoothly from one idea to the next.

Mind maps visually display the hierarchy and relationships among different ideas. The proximity of associated words or images is vital. The length of a word ideally matches the length of the curved line. This places related concepts in close proximity.

These associations can be first-level (directly from the central theme), second-level, third-level, and so on, forming a hierarchical structure. Mind maps typically have many first-level associations. The mind can only grasp about seven at a time, so simplicity and clarity are key.

➤ Add sub-branches for details: From each main idea, draw smaller lines (sub-branches) branching out. These represent details, subtopics, or aspects related to the main ideas. Write these down as well.

➤ Use keywords and images: Instead of writing full sentences, use **keywords or short phrases** to represent ideas. You can also include images or symbols to make your mind map more visually engaging.

Mind maps use single keywords instead of sentences to summarize information. A single word per association allows for more freedom, creativity, and clarity in the mind-mapping process. It simplifies the presentation of ideas, making them more accessible and easier to remember.

➤ Connect related ideas: Draw **lines** connecting related ideas or concepts across different branches. This helps to show relationships and connections between different parts of your mind map.

➤ Keep it flexible: Mind maps are meant to be flexible and fluid, so feel free to rearrange, add, or remove branches and ideas as your thoughts evolve.

➤ Use colors and formatting: Use different colors for branches or ideas to visually categorize or prioritize them. You can also use different fonts, shapes, or formatting styles to make certain ideas stand out. Using color and images enhances memory retention and learning. Like keywords, mind maps use images as visual stimuli. A single picture can convey complex ideas instantly and effectively.

➤ Review and revise: Once you've created your mind map, take some time to review it. Make sure it accurately reflects your thoughts and ideas, and revise as needed.

➤ Share and collaborate: Mind maps are great for brainstorming and collaboration. Share your mind map with others to get feedback, generate new ideas, or work together on projects.

➤ Use **mind mapping software**: While you can create mind maps using pen and paper, there are also many digital tools and software available that make it easier to create, edit, and share mind maps. Experiment with different tools to find one that works best for you.



Summary: Taking notes using mind mapping

1. Begin with a **central theme/idea/topic** and **branch out** into main categories.
2. **Connect related subtopics** to each category, showing the relationship between ideas.
3. Add layers of detail, including facts and examples, to each subtopic.
4. Use **colours, symbols, and images** for a more vivid and memorable map.
5. **Review** your mind map to reinforce knowledge and make connections.

Taken and adapted from:

<https://www.atlassian.com/work-management/project-management/mind-mapping>

<https://www.mindmapping.com/online-mind-mapping-software-review>