How to Mind Map – A Students' Guide

Mind Maps are the ultimate organisational thinking tool. They are the easiest way to put information **into** your brain and to take information **out** of your brain as they literally 'map out' your thoughts.

We are now going to look at how to Mind Map in six simple steps. Let's begin Mind Mapping!

Step 1 – Creating your central idea
Firstly start by creating your central idea. This will set the theme of your Mind Map.

This should ideally be an image as images have much greater power than words. Images help you imagine and remember as well as keep your mind focused.

You can choose between a selection of iMindMap images and you caan import your own.

iMindMap allows you to add a short text label as well as your image if you would like to.

Step 2- Adding your ideas
You next need to add your ideas and thoughts to your Mind Map. You can do this by adding branches for each of your ideas. Curved, natural branches are the most effective as they reflect how you brain thinks. Straight lines are boring. They don't excite your mind which means that you aren't soaking up so much information. Straight lines also don't allow your brain to think creatively.

Curved, rounded lines create variety and excitement for your eyes, making the information they hold easier to remember!

Give your main ideas thicker branches to show their importance. Your branches should become less and less thick as you add your second and third level ideas. In iMindMap this is done for you.

You can create curved branches easily using iMindMap too. Simply use your mouse, make sure the Predefined Branch drawing tool is on, and click and drag to create your branches.

Step 3- Using colour

A very important part of Mind Mapping is colour. Colours are as exciting to your brain as images. They add extra interest and life to your Mind Map, as well as giving energy to your creative thinking.

Using iMindMap, each of your branches is given a different colour via the AutoColour tool.

Step 4- Using key words

Once you have created a branch for your idea, you can add a word to describe this idea. It is important that you try and only use one **key word** here. This is because one word will create many more connections than two. This allows your mind to have the freedom to spark off new ideas and thoughts.

To add a word simply type straight after creating your branch..

One more tip, if you ever need to include more information than just one word, iMind Map lets you attach notes to any of your branches so you can add further words or information.

Step 5 – Using images

You can also attach an image to your branch… Images have a lot of power on your brain, the more you use, the better!

You can attach images to any branch using images from the iMindMap Image and Icon Library or by importing your own.

An even better way to Mind Map is to try and use images instead of words on your branches.

Step 6 - Making connections and associations

You carry on creating your Mind Map you need to make connections from your first idea to other ideas. Let your brain start making associations with other thoughts you have.

These connections will start forming the rest of your main branches and then your second level branches and then third level branches. For each new idea create a branch from the branch you were thinking about.

This works so easily because your brain works by association. It likes to link two (or three or four) things together. If you connect branches and therefore ideas, you will understand and remember a lot easier.

So just carry on adding your branches…

Congratulations you are now Mind Mapping!

For those of you who want to add more to your Mind Maps, try out these other ideas:

☆ Why not highlight important areas of your map by using **Highlight Clouds**?

☆ **Relationship Arrows** can be used to connect two ideas that are related but may not follow each other.

☆ Want to add more information to your Mind Map? Why not add **links** to your branches to different websites, documents or other Mind Maps. This will allow you to easily access more information about a particular topic.

☆ Try adding a **background colour** to your Mind Map to give it even more impact.

Now you can Mind Map you should start remembering, learning, note taking, coming up with ideas, planning, problem solving, concentrating and organising more easily and better!