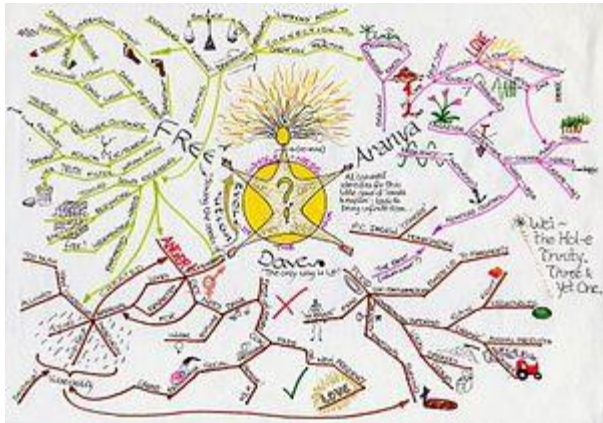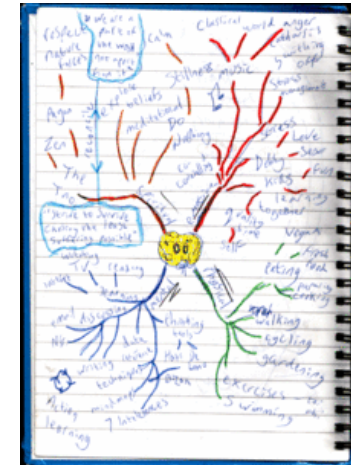# Mind map

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A hand-drawn mind map session

Mind map of mind map guidelines

Rough mindmap notes taken during a course

A **mind map** is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other items linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea. Especially in British English, the terms **spidergram** and **spidergraph** are more common,[1] but they can cause confusion with the term *spider diagram* used in mathematics and logic. Mind maps are used to generate, visualize, structure, and classify ideas, and as an aid to studying and organizing information, solving problems, making decisions, and writing.

The elements of a given mind map are arranged intuitively according to the importance of the concepts, and are classified into groupings, branches, or areas, with the goal of representing semantic or other connections between portions of information. Mind maps may also aid recall of existing memories.

By presenting ideas in a radial, graphical, non-linear manner, mind maps encourage a brainstorming approach to planning and organizational tasks. Though the branches of a mindmap represent hierarchical tree structures, their radial arrangement disrupts the prioritizing of concepts typically associated with hierarchies presented with more linear visual cues. This orientation towards brainstorming encourages users to enumerate and connect concepts without a tendency to begin within a particular conceptual framework.

The mind map can be contrasted with the similar idea of concept mapping. The former is based on radial hierarchies and tree structures denoting relationships with a central governing concept, whereas concept maps are based on connections between concepts in more diverse patterns. However, either can be part of a larger personal knowledge base system.

Characteristics

Mind maps are, by definition, a graphical method of taking notes. Their visual basis helps one to distinguish words or ideas, often with colors and symbols. They generally take a hierarchical or tree branch format, with ideas branching into their subsections. Mind maps allow for greater creativity when recording ideas and information, as well as allowing the note-taker to associate words with visual representations. Mind maps differ from concept maps in that mind maps focus on *only* one word or idea, whereas concept maps connect multiple words or ideas.

A key distinction between mind maps and modeling graphs is that there is no rigorous right or wrong with mind maps, relying on the arbitrariness of mnemonic systems. A UML Diagram or a Semantic network has structured elements modeling relationships, with lines connecting objects to indicate relationship. This is generally done in black and white with a clear and agreed iconography. Mind maps serve a different purpose: they help with memory and organization. Mind maps are collections of words structured by the mental context of the author with visual mnemonics, and, through the use of colour, icons and visual links are informal and necessary to the proper functioning of the mind map.

Mind map guidelines

In his books The Mind Map Book (6 September, 1993) ISBN 0-563-36373-8 on mind maps author Tony Buzan suggests using the following guidelines for creating mind maps:

- Start in the center with an image of the topic, using at least 3 colors.
- Use images, symbols, codes, and dimensions throughout your mind map.
- Select key words and print using upper or lower case letters.
- Each word/image is best alone and sitting on its own line.
- The lines should be connected, starting from the central image. The central lines are thicker, organic and thinner as they radiate out from the centre.
- Make the lines the same length as the word/image they support.
- Use multiple colors throughout the mind map, for visual stimulation and also to encode or group.
- Develop your own personal style of mind mapping.
- Use emphasis and show associations in your mind map.
- Keep the mind map clear by using radial hierarchy, numerical order or outlines to embrace your branches.

This list is itself more concise than a prose version of the same information and the mind map of these guidelines is itself intended to be more memorable and quicker to scan than either the prose or the list.

Uses

A mind map is often created around a single word or text, placed in the center, to which associated ideas, words and concepts are added.

Mind maps have many applications in personal, family, educational, and business situations, including notetaking, brainstorming (wherein ideas are inserted into the map radially around the center node, without the implicit prioritization that comes from hierarchy or sequential arrangements, and wherein grouping and organizing is reserved for later stages), summarizing, as a mnemonic technique, or to sort out a complicated idea. Mind maps are also promoted as a way to collaborate in color pen creativity sessions.

Mind maps can be used for:

- problem solving
- outline/framework design
- structure/relationship representations
- anonymous collaboration
- marriage of words and visuals
- individual expression of creativity
- condensing material into a concise and memorable format
- team building or synergy creating activity
- enhancing work morale

Despite these direct use cases, data retrieved from mind maps can be used to enhance several other applications, for instance expert search systems, search engines and search and tag query recommender.[3] To do so, mind maps can be analysed with classic methods of information retrieval to classify a mind map's author or documents that are linked from within the mind map.

Mindmaps can be drawn by hand, either as "rough notes" during a lecture or meeting, for example, quality. An example of a rough mind map is illustrated. There are also a number of software packages available for producing mind maps.

EXAMPLE : Based on the song "AMERICA"

(female singer)
Puerto Rico, my heart's devotion,
Let it sink back in the ocean.
Always the hurricanes blowing,
Always the population growing,
And the money owing,
And the sunlight streaming,
And the natives steaming.
I like the island Manhattan.

(male singer)
I know you do.

(female singer)
So clean your pipe and put that in !
I like to be in America,
O.K. by me in America,
Everything free in America,

(alternately)
- For a small fee in America.
- Buying on credit is so nice,
- One look at us and they charge twice.
- I have my own washing-machine,
- What will you have, though, to keep clean ?
- Skyscrapers bloom in America,
- Cadillacs zoom in America,
- Industry boom in America,
- Twelve in a room in America !

- Lots of new housing with more space,
- Lots of door-slamming in our face !
- I'll get a terraced-apartment,
- Better get rid of your accent !
- Life can be bright in America,
- If you can fight in America !
- Life is all right in America,
- If you're all white in America !

La, la , la, America, America (bis)
- Here you are free and you have pride,
- As long as you stay on you own side !
- Free to be anything you choose,
- Free to wait tables and shine shoes !
Everywhere grime in America,
Organised crime in America,
Terrible time in America,
- You forget I'm in America !

- I think I go back to San Juan,
- I know a boat you can get on,
- Bye, bye !
-Ah, ah !
- Everyone there will give big cheer,
- Everyone there will have moved here !

music : Leonard Bernstein
lyrics : Stephen Sondheim
(West Side Story)

♪♫ **America**
from
West Side Story

BOYS ≠ GIRLS

SAN JUAN / ♡ PUERTO RICO
- Big cheer!

go back

my heart's devotion
- irony

⚥ PUERTO RICO
- slow tempo
- sink back in the ocean

weather
- hurricanes
- sunlight streaming

population
- growing
- money owing
- steaming

organised crime

terrible time
- violence
- consonances

a small fee
- money
- charge twice

⚥ AMERICA

grime places

housing
- 12 in a room

material comfort
- no clothes to wash

deception
- menial jobs

you can fight

discrimination
- door slamming in our face
- humour
- broad accent

stay on your side

if you're all white

Pride
life is bright
freedom

job opportunities

wealth
- cadillacs zoom
- skyscrapers bloom
- industry boom
- consonances

♡ Manhattan / America
- everyone there will have moved here!
- exaggeration

money / Buying on credit
everything free

material comfort
- washing machine

housing
- a terraced apartment
- more space

fast tempo