# Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is a tool which can be helpful to support the organisation of ideas – for example when writing an essay, structuring workplace reports, or thinking about an area in life that you might like to develop or change. Mind maps are a visual way of taking notes – perhaps in word or picture format – and may be used during a class, at a meeting, or to plan an assignment, event or project. There are several software programmes which can be used for this; however pen and paper can also be used.

Ideas can be arranged according to the importance of the information being recorded, with 'branches' linking or expanding on specific concepts. This format of recording information promotes creativity, whilst helping with memory and organisation. By seeing a task as a diagram (mind map), some people might find it easier to develop a plan and follow it through.

Here is an example of a basic mind map:
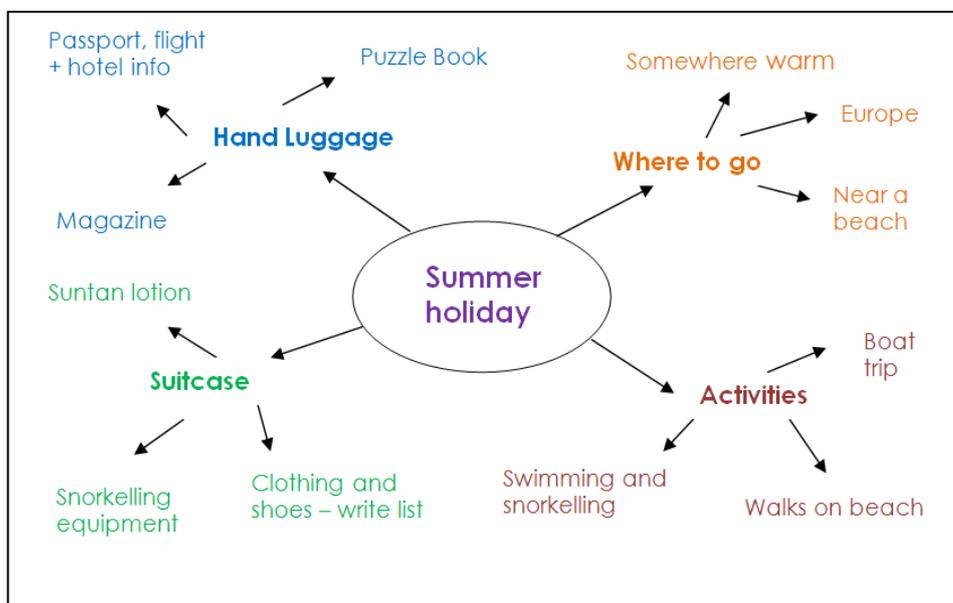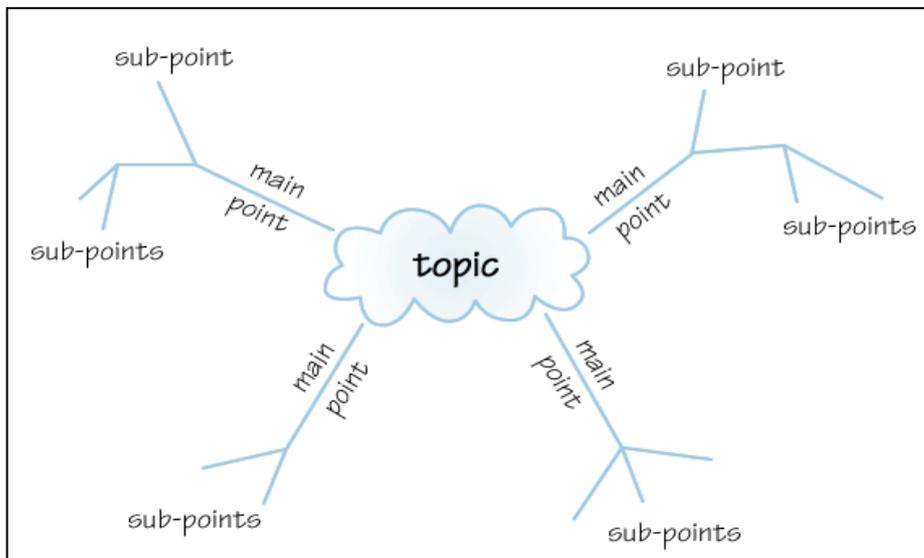
If the topic for this example was 'summer holiday', the four main points and their sub points could be developed like the mind map on the left.
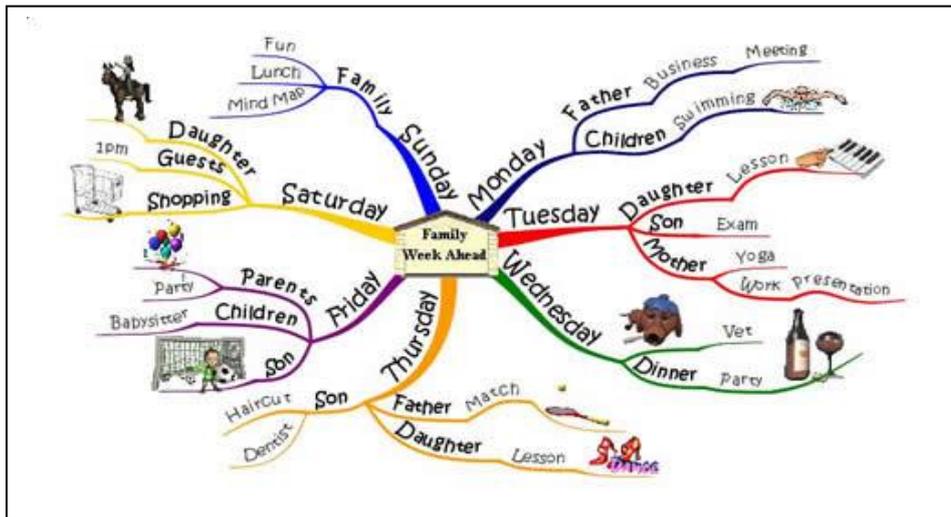
If you search mind maps in Google or YouTube, you will be able to find some step by step guides which may raise your awareness of how to use mind maps effectively. Many will be similar to the map on the left.
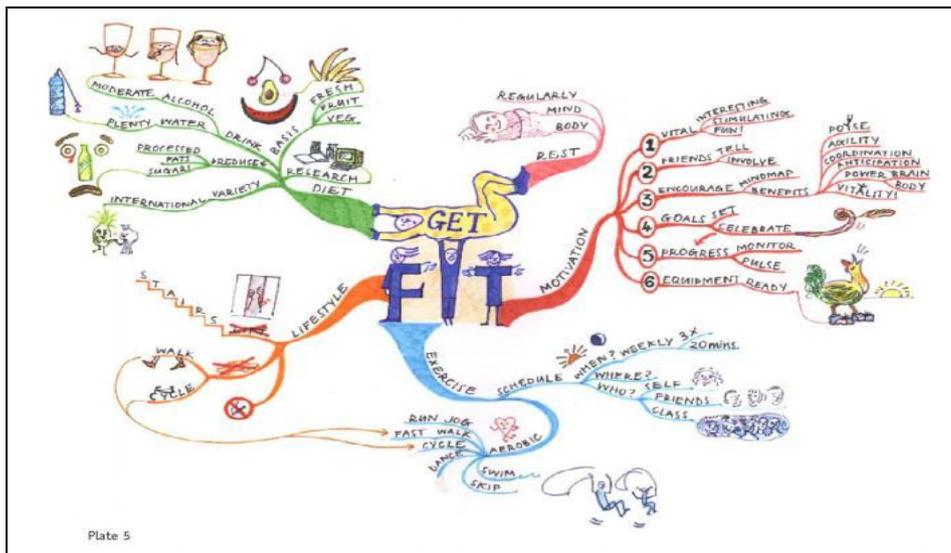
An example of a 'to do' list in relation to getting fit is shown on the left. You can see how creative the individual is in the way they have developed their map, using images, but also using a minimal volume of text.

Spending time on planning can help to develop structure – whether this is for a child's weekly news story, a work assignment, an exam, or even a cover letter for a job. Being able to present a piece of work in an acceptable, fluent, format which has been well planned can increase confidence and results. Mind mapping can appear confusing at first and is not for everyone – it is worth experimenting with topics and situations to find a method that suits you.

More information

There is a variety of mind mapping software online. It may also be worth checking websites such as www.imindmap.com and www.mindgenius.com

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