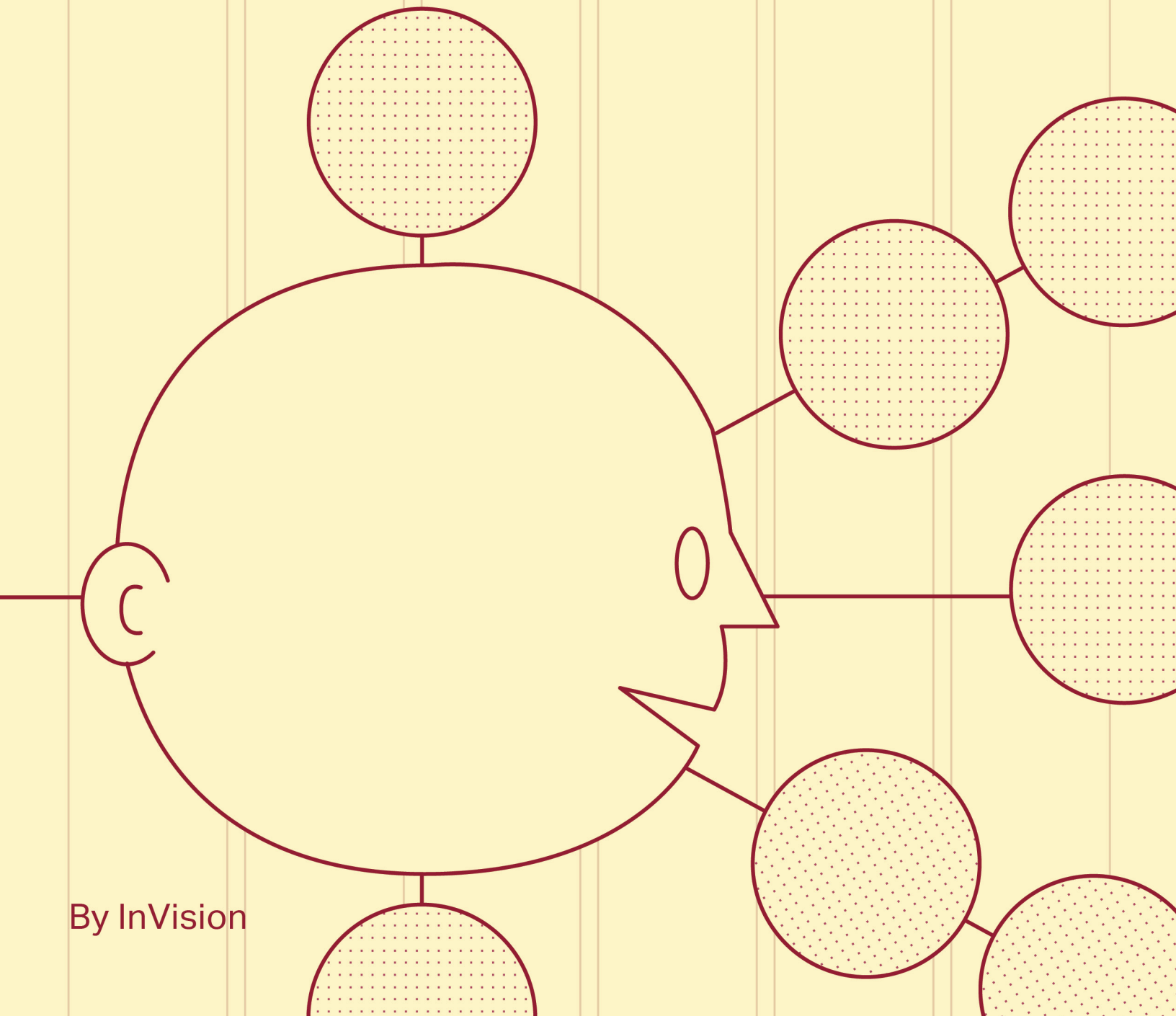
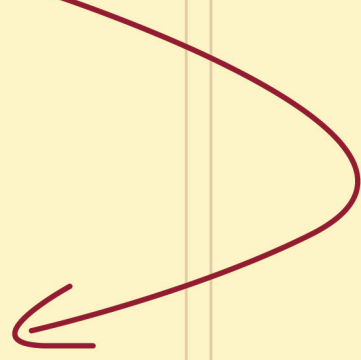


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Mind Maps: An essential field guide



By InVision

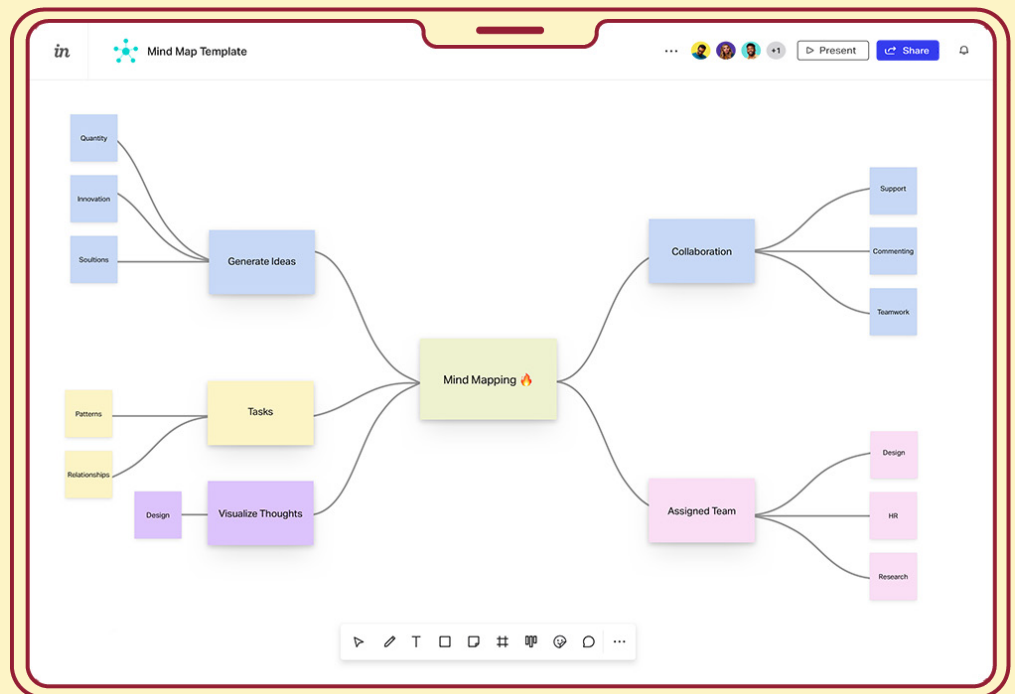
Ever wonder how to organize a mind's way of thinking and processing information in a constructive, actionable way?

Enter mind maps, an effective diagram used to determine and organize how minds process information.

Mind maps can be an integral part of productive brainstorming. They can help to explore and highlight important information, create connections between thoughts, and provide clarity for both individuals and teams in a brainstorming session.

In this guide, we will explore:

- What exactly is a mind map
- The benefits of using a mind map
- How to get started and create a mind map
- What happens after you create a mind map



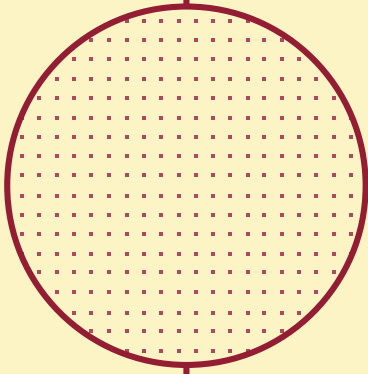
1. What is a mind map?



A mind map is a simple diagram that organizes information into a visual hierarchy. It maps out how concepts and ideas are related to one another using a tree-like structure with the main topic in the center, or as the 'trunk' of the 'tree'. Mind maps also represent how minds process information by analyzing, comprehending, synthesizing, and creating new ideas.

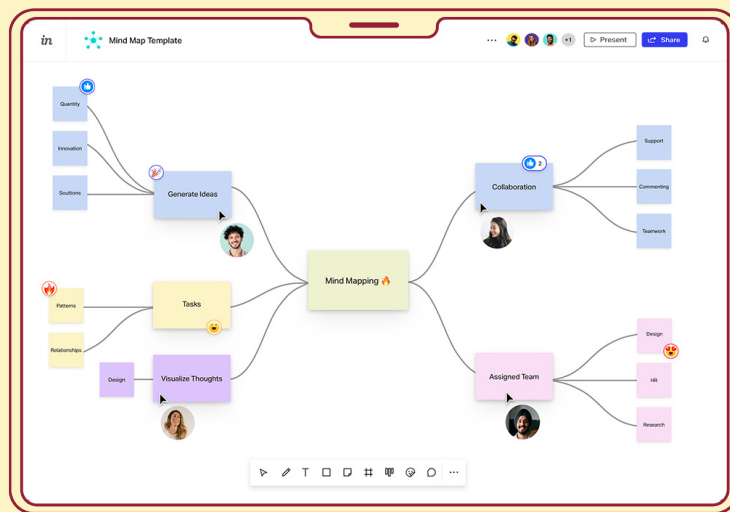
Mind maps can be created in many different ways, but are most commonly done on paper or using a digital whiteboard. Whichever option you choose to create your mind map, the key principles remain the same.

- **The topic:** Your topic should be at the center of your mind map in a neat, rectangular box. The central topic can be the primary idea, problem, or goal.
- **Keywords:** Branching off from your central idea with linear lines, start to include and write down any keywords associated with the central focus. These can be anything from strategy, creative blockers, and arsenal of design techniques. It is best to keep the keywords to a singular word per rectangular box, but no more than a few words to keep your mind map simple and focused on the central topic.



Helpful hint: If you or your team has trouble deciphering colors, shapes, and typography meaning, include a legend to establish what each distinction indicates and/or conveys.

- **Sub-keywords:** Again, branching off with linear lines, create sub-keywords in rectangular boxes associated with the keywords they are branching off from. There can be many sub-keywords so do not limit yourself to a specific number. For example, perhaps the main keyword is website redesigns but the sub-keywords branching off from that can be timeline, priorities, etc.
- **Colors, Shapes, and Typography:** All of these components can create distinctions between various elements of your mind map. For example, maybe all keywords are a specific color and sub-keywords are identified with an opposing color. It is up to you to determine what the meaning behind each color, shape, and/or typography is.



Once you include all of the above, your mind map will start to take form. It may look basic since you are sticking to limited words, but the goal is to help to simplify all of your ideas for a more concrete source of truth for your team to reference after the brainstorm.

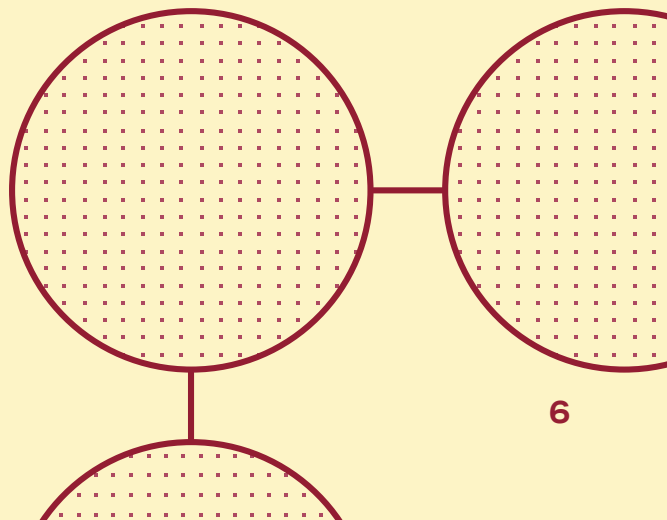
What are the benefits of using a mindmap?

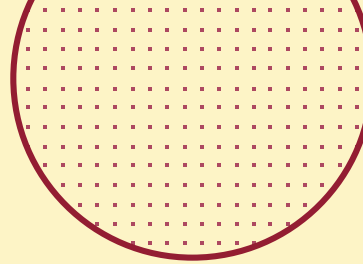


A mind map is a beneficial tool for you or your team's brainstorms. Mind maps allow for the hierarchical organization of flexible, free-flow associations of ideas and concepts that you can quickly 'map' out to solve a problem or achieve your desired goal.

Mind maps show clear connections between certain relationships to ideas while simultaneously making those connections and concepts easier to understand for you and your team.. Additionally, when visually collaborating with your team on a mind map, you may discover new ideas and concepts that you didn't think of before.

Since there is an emphasis on simplicity, your diagram will also help organize your project's complexities in a visual format, making your project easy to comprehend while neatly storing all the information.





The dos and don'ts of mind mapping.



Now that you know what a mind map is and how beneficial it can be to organize thoughts and ideas , it's time to review the do's and don'ts of mind mapping.

Before creating a mind map, some helpful things to remember are:

Do's

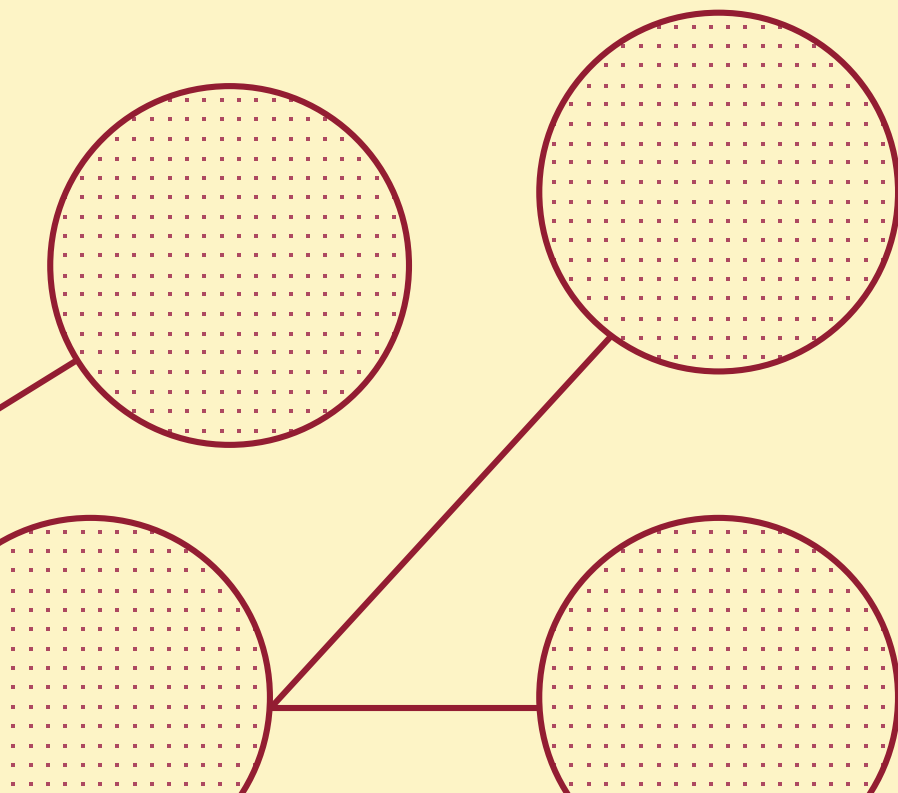
- Simplify your focal point, keywords, and sub-keywords. A mind map is expected to be straightforward to organize more effectively.
- Collaborate with your team if you want to. Whether visually or verbally, collaborating is a great way to find new ideas you might not have thought of before.
- Take your time. Mind maps are a thoughtful process, as is most brainstorming, so take your time to create your best mind map.

What a mind map should not include:



Dont's

- Blurt out words that don't have any association with your focal point or keywords. Keep your ideas focused on what you are trying to accomplish so you don't waste time on irrelevant topics.
- Combine other diagrams. A mind map is a single focused diagram so remain concentrated to that one diagram.
- Be too detailed. Simplicity is key!

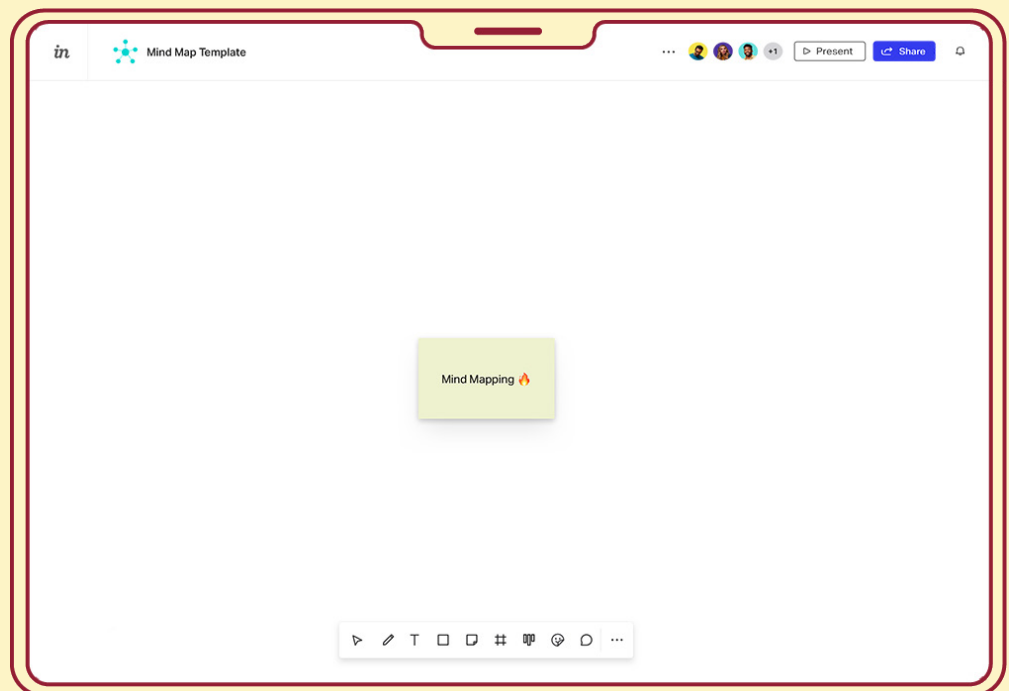


2. How do you create a mind map?

Think you're ready to incorporate mind mapping into your next brainstorm? Try creating a mind map with the instructions below.

Step 1: Place your topic as the central focal point.

Your central idea, problem, or goal should be placed in a center box. Try to use one or few words to simplify the focal point.

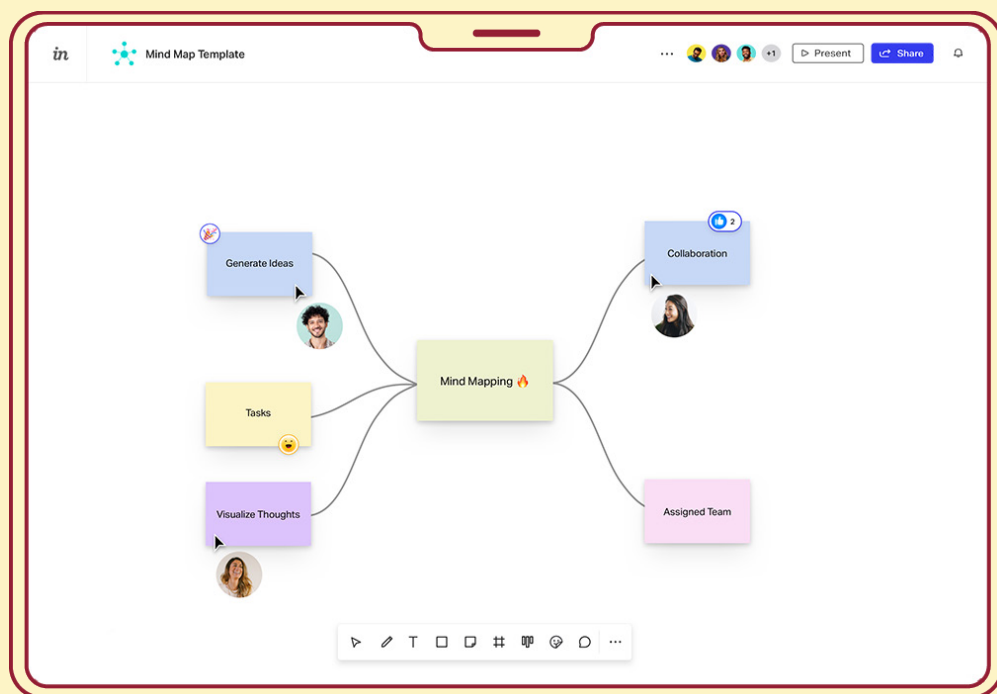


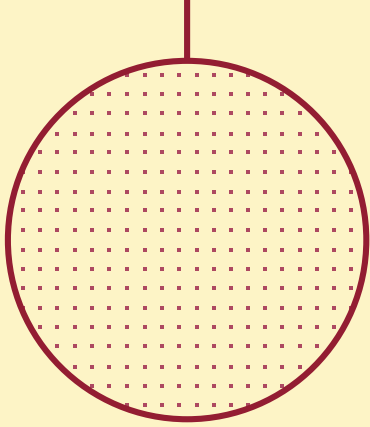
Step 2: Add keywords associated with the central focal point.

Once your main focal point is established, find keywords that are associated with the main topic. Try to keep keywords limited to a few words. Make sure they have their own boxes for each word or words. This is also the time to ask your team or cross-functional team for their input on keywords.

Step 3: Connect those keywords with the central focal point.

After you complete your keywords, connect their boxes with lines to the focal point to show their relationship. This step is when your mind map starts to take the form of a diagram.



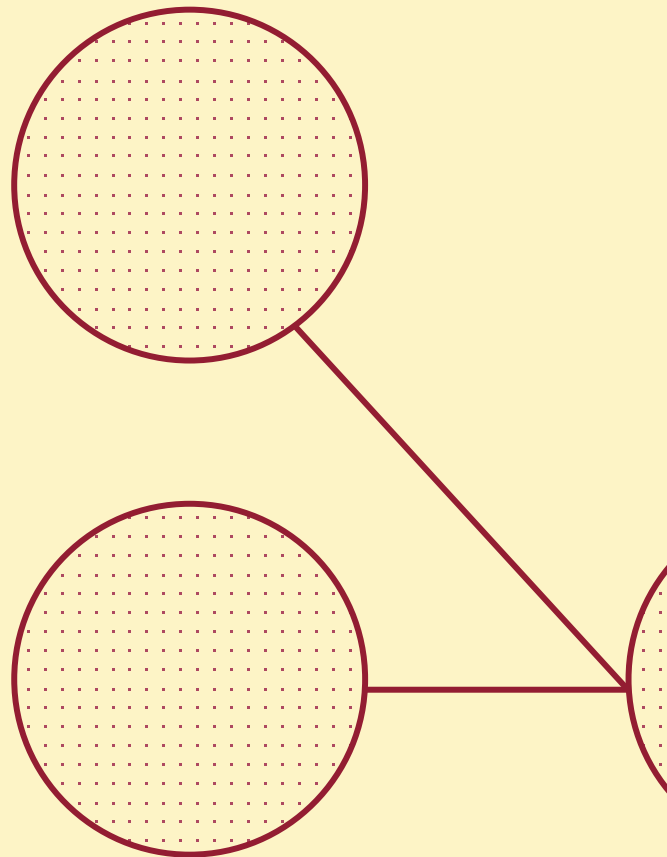


Step 4: Add sub-keywords that are associated with the keywords.

Now that you have keywords, it is time to add sub-keywords. These sub-keywords should also be simple and associated with a specific keyword. Similarly to the focal point and keywords, sub-keywords should be placed in a box. If you are working with a team on your mind map, now is the time to ask for the sub-keywords they are brainstorming.

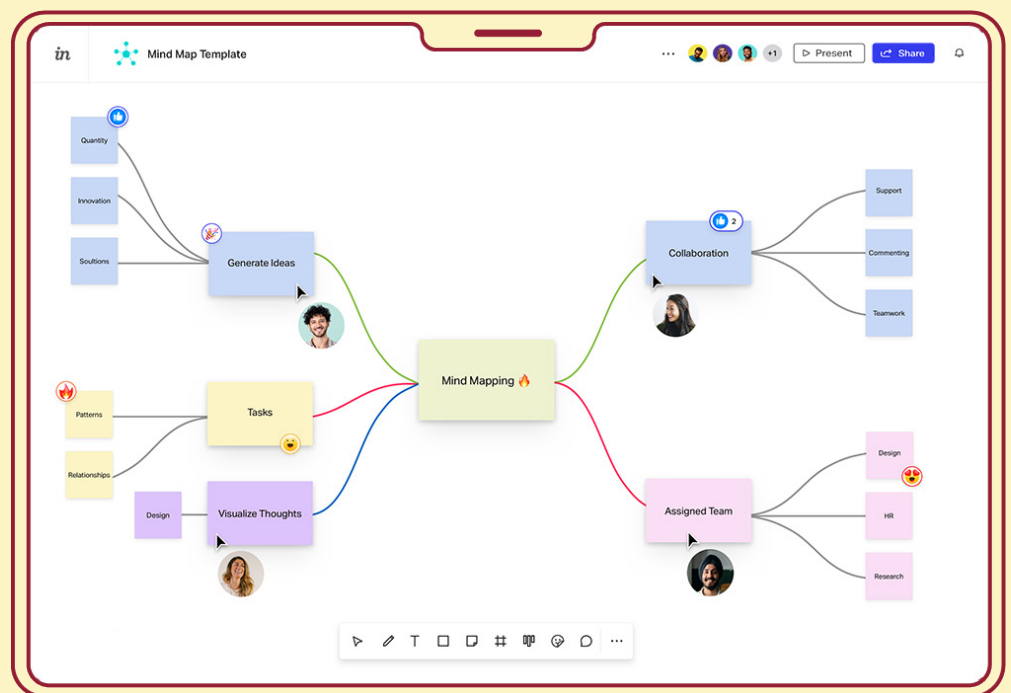
Step 5: Connect those sub-keywords with the keywords they have a relationship to.

After you complete your sub-keywords, connect their boxes with lines to the keywords that they are associated with.



Step 6: Play with color coding, font, and more visual aspects to coordinate the mind map.

Step up your mind map game by color coding lines, your diagram and/or boxes. For example, you can color boxes one color and lines to indicate a certain meaning.



3. What happens after your mind map is complete?

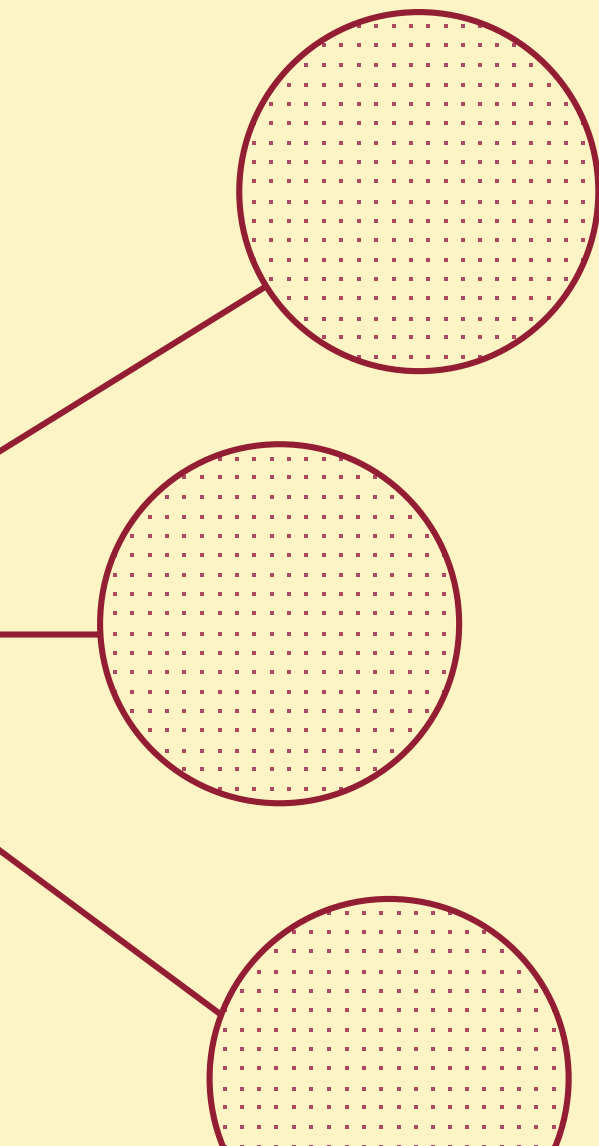
Mind maps can act as a single source of truth. Once you complete your mind map, it should be a reflection of key relationships to a main idea, problem, or goal.

After your mind map is complete, you can collaborate and share with cross-functional teams for alignment. An example of teams that may find your mind map helpful include:

- Designers may look to a finished mind map to reference and solve for a problem identified as the main point in a user experience.
- A marketing team can look back to a completed mind map to recognize relationships amongst certain ideas for a better understanding of their customer.


- Engineers working with product teams to better understand their ideas and clarify their goals.
- A product manager will be able to use a finalized mind map to visualize their teams correlating ideas for an upcoming project.

No matter how you use it, whether to solve a problem or find common ground on ideas with your team, once it is complete, it is a great reference for alignment with other teams.



How to mind map in Freehand?

The appendix is here to help. Find informative, user-friendly instructions below to create your mind map in Freehand.

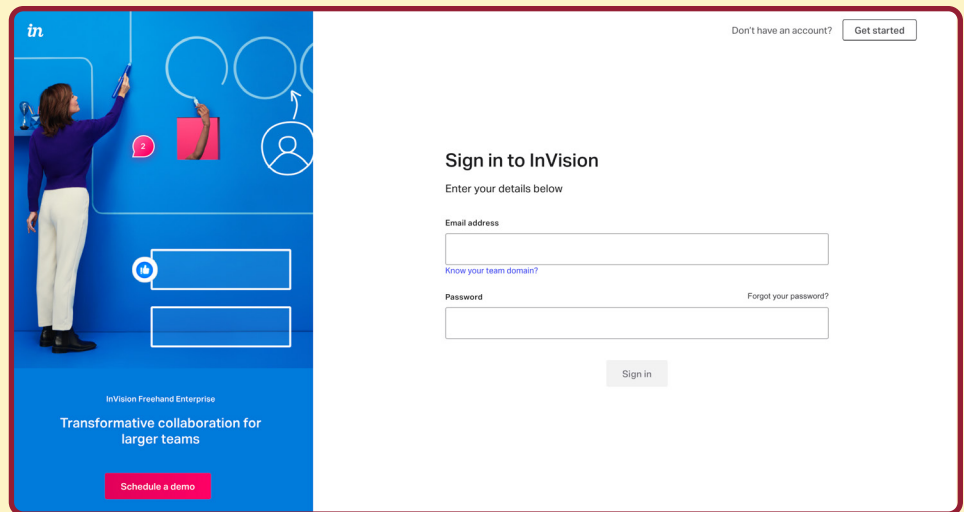


To create a mind map in Freehand:

1. Open your freehand document.
2. Click the add-ons menu (•••) and click templates.
3. Scroll through the free templates and find the Mind Map template. From there, decide what components to use, or use the example to get started.
4. Click and drag components within the map together. To resize a component, click and drag the handles to the desired size. You can edit an object as needed. To edit text, double-click the component and enter your text and enter your text

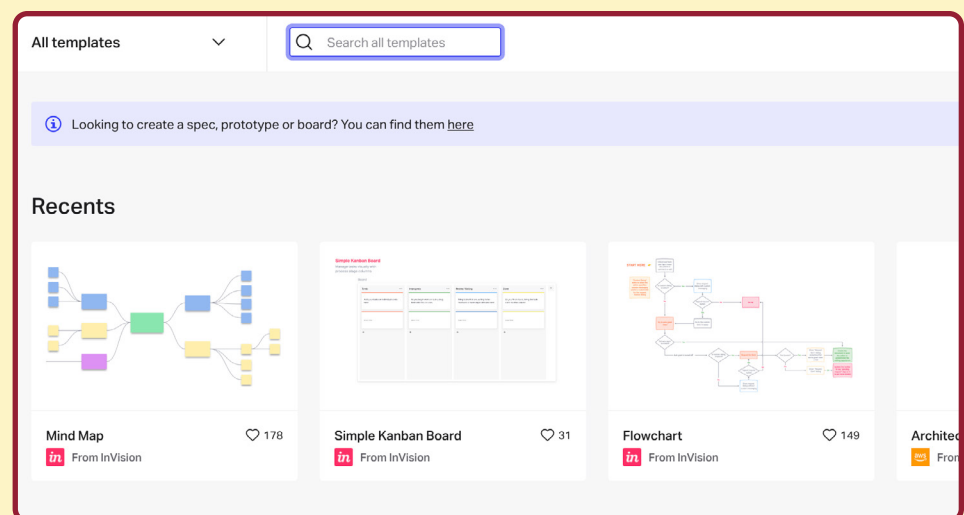
Step 1: Log onto Freehand or sign up for Freehand to access mind map templates

The easiest way to start your mind map is to sign up for Freehand or into your account.



Step 2: Create your workspace with Freehand

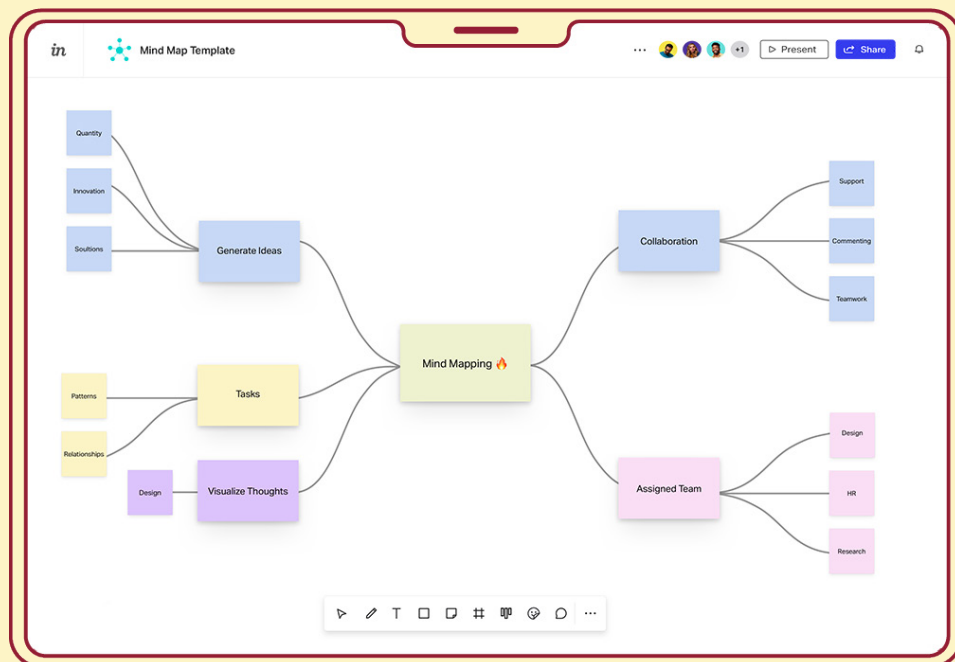
Once you are logged into Freehand, navigate to the upper right hand corner of the page where you can click the Create button and choose View All Templates. From there, InVision Freehand has access to hundreds of templates. This is where you can find a Mind Map Template. From there you can edit and manipulate the components and elements of the template.



Step 3: Create your mind map

You can also opt to forego the template and create your own mind map with Freehand. If you prefer starting from scratch, check out the steps below.

- In your Freehand workspace, click the rectangle shape tool and select the shape you desire. Click on the shape to drag it to where you want it and to enlarge it, etc.
- Double click on the shape to add text and type away your main focus of your mind map (just click outside the shape when you're done).
- Add another rectangle shape near your center rectangle with your focal point. From there, double click the rectangle to add a keyword. Continue this step with all your keywords.
- After adding all keywords, connect your keywords by using the pencil tool to draw lines from your keywords to the center most rectangle with your main focus.
- Add rectangle shapes around your keywords and double click within the rectangles to add sub-keywords.
- Once done adding sub-keywords, connect your sub-keywords by using the pencil tool to draw lines from your keywords.
- Eventually, you should be complete after adding all sub-keywords to create your mind map.



Step 4: Collaborate with your team

If you would like to start a brainstorming session with a mind map, we suggest bringing in your team ahead of step 3. But, if you are sharing a mind map with your team after you have created your mind map with important notes, share it with the team after step 3 so you can collaborate on any keywords, sub-keywords, and other components of your mind map.

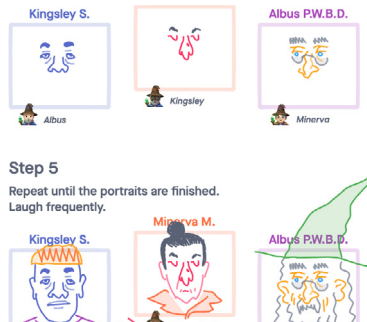
Mind map in Freehand now

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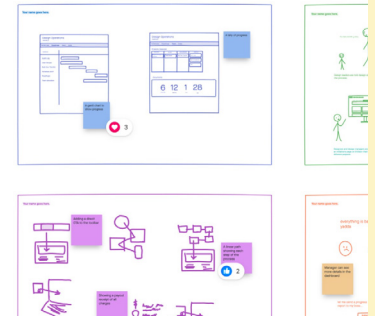
Ice breakers Template

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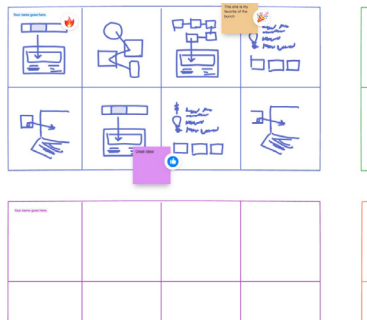
Brainstorming Template

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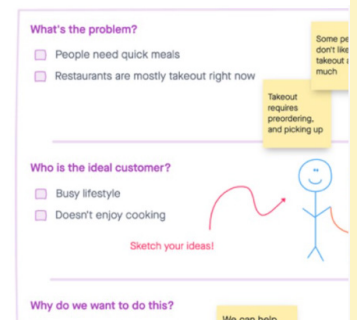
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Product Planning Template

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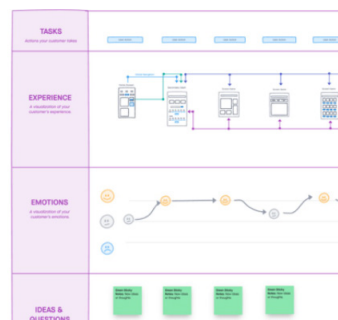
Design Sprint Template

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Customer Journey Map Template

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Flowchart Template

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