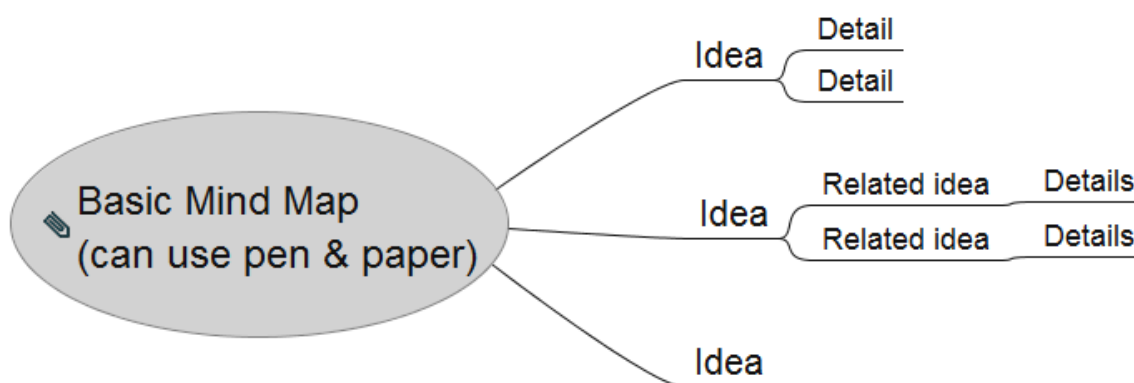




Author Academy eCourse Video 3 Exercise 2

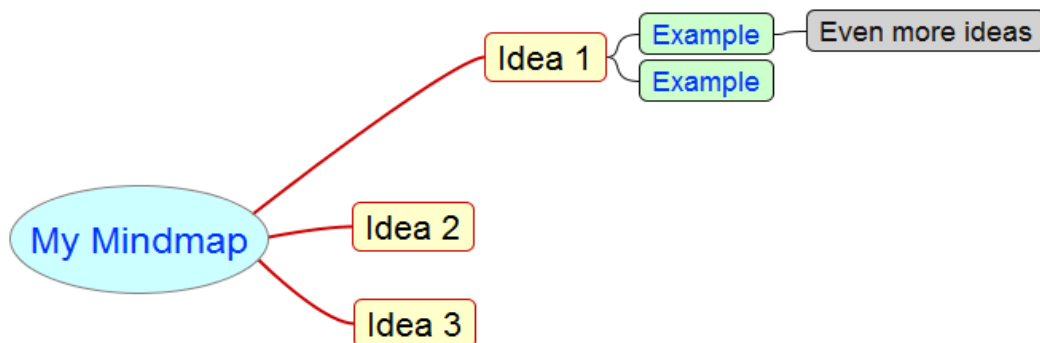
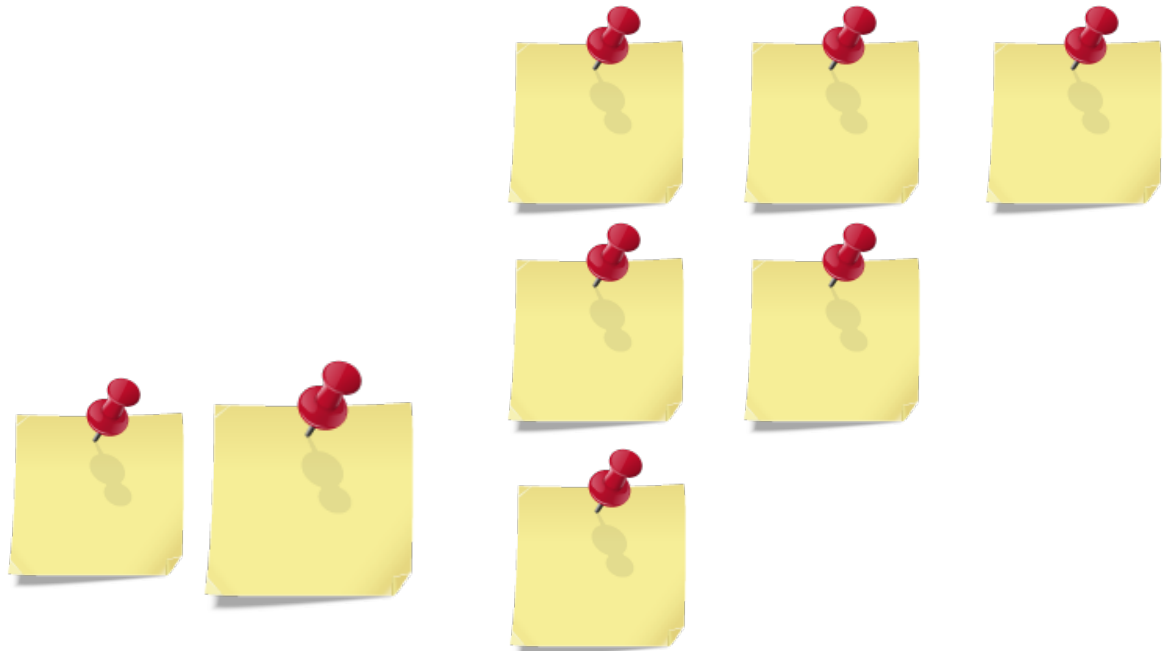
Mind Mapping with pen and paper is a great place to start. Take a piece of paper no larger than a letter or A4 sheet. Start by writing down the central idea or problem in the middle. Draw each related idea as a branch that comes out from the centre. Write the idea and circle it, and then draw a line connecting it to the main idea. Take each of your related ideas and then jot down ideas related to them in the same way. Keep working outward like this until you feel you've written everything down, at least for now.



Here are 3 ideas of different ways to map out your ideas:

1. A different way to make mind maps using simple tools is to use Post-It notes or stickers. The advantage of this method is that you can move the stickers around easily. Instead of writing down each idea and circling it, write each idea down on a Post-It and stick it where appropriate. You can create a mind map on a wall or whiteboard using this technique as well.
2. Another option is to use a whiteboard. This is a good method because it's easy to erase and move things. Put the topic in the middle of the board and then branch out from there.
3. There are several software programs and apps that you can use for mind mapping. Once you've done a little mapping with your pen and paper, you'll have the experience to judge which program is best for you. There are plenty of free programs and premium programs with free trials as well. Simply Google mind maps and test run different ones.





Some best practices for mind mapping is to free associate and write down ideas as quickly as they come to you. Don't try to explain each idea. Simply jot down a word or short phrase that indicates the idea. A mind map shouldn't be cluttered with text. Remember that it all needs to be taken in at a glance. You can expand your maps to include more details. Then once you complete the first steps, you can bring in the bigger picture.

In addition to words and phrases, you can draw images that remind you of concepts. The point is to communicate the main idea, not the details.

Keep branching out until you run out of ideas. You may find yourself adding something later on. This is one of the things that make mind maps so useful. You may find it best to create rough draft mind maps on paper and then create more complete digital versions after. This





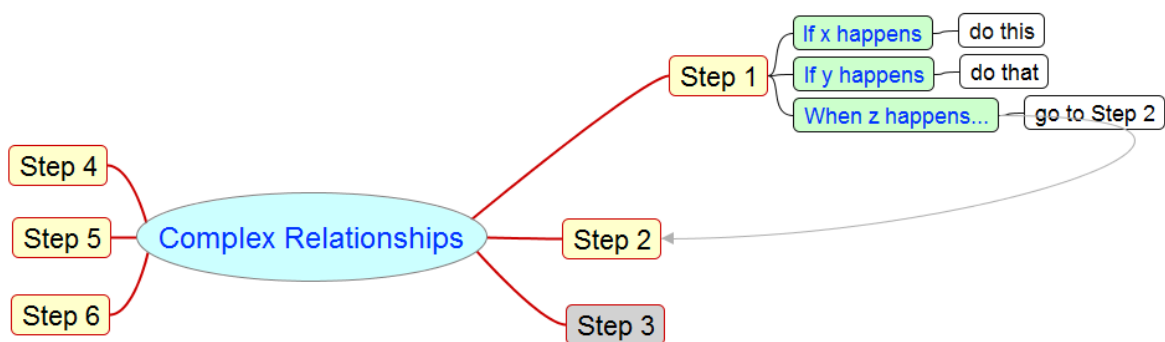
way, you have a chance to map everything out once and see where it goes before you create the official map.

The best tip for managing and organising information with mind maps is to have as little text as possible. Don't go into detail and if there is more information that needs to be added, either create a new branch for this information or put a link to it.

Colour coding, symbols, and graphics are especially useful for organising information. They're more visually appealing and also communicate relationships in a more immediate way. When note taking, they also speed up the process of getting everything down.

A good technique for informational mind maps is to create floating topics for things that are difficult to place on the map. If you have a new piece of information and you're not sure where it goes, set it aside and connect it later. Don't spend time trying to figure out where it goes.

Planning with mind maps is especially good for a book strategy as it is such a huge topic that it's usually a good idea to create one general mind map and then create other mind maps to cover main points (your characters, the story line and, your chapters). For example, each branch on your general mind map is a chapter in your book. Make a general map and then go back and create a more detailed map for each of these sub-topics.



When planning a project, make sure that each branch ends with an action plan and a deadline for getting that action plan done. You can then easily understand exactly what needs to be done as you move through the project by looking at the map.

After making a project mind map, go back and see if it's complete. There is often something you've forgotten that needs to be added later. Also, keep in mind that the project will change as you move through it.

