

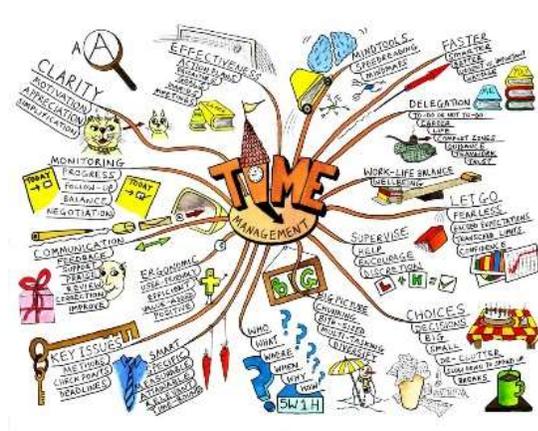
## An old technology made new again

The term ‘mind map’ was popularized by British psychologist and television personality Tony Buzan, but early thinkers such as Porphyry of Tyros (born in 234 CE or ‘before Christ’) was graphically visualizing Aristotle’s concept categories.

Buzan is still a giant in the mind mapping community but there are now hundreds of books, videos and training courses designed to “make you an expert” in mind mapping. Mind maps are commonly used to generate, visualize, structure, and classify ideas, as an aid to study and organizing information, solving problems, making decisions, and planning structure and content for various document types.

## What tool to use?

Before software, people used paper and pencil and chalkboards. Both make it easy to erase and move information around, which is a main feature of mind mapping. Now, the term is almost exclusively associated with software. There are scores of software programs, some free, some hundreds of dollars, some online, some you download.



Some people like the wildly colorful artistic sprawl that can be produced with some software, but in terms of cognitive science, it is distracting and interferes with thinking.

We have not used all the software on the market, but we have used quite a few and we recommend starting with iThoughts from toketaWare.

## Why we recommend iThoughts

With all software, there is a ‘sweet spot’ somewhere between ‘too many limitations’ and ‘too many features’. Too many limitations will be frustrating. Too many features are distracting. iThoughts is in that sweet spot and will keep you focused on the task without wandering off to change the line color or the shape of the box or add a cute icon.

iThoughts also allows you to export your map to MS Word or to MS PowerPoint and you can immediately start composing your document or scripting your PowerPoint presentation or video. This is a major feature in terms of streamlining your workflow so you can smoothly transition from planning to production.

iThoughts has a short learning curve, the maps are easy for other people to read and understand, and have a more professional look. Here is an example from one of our courses.

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