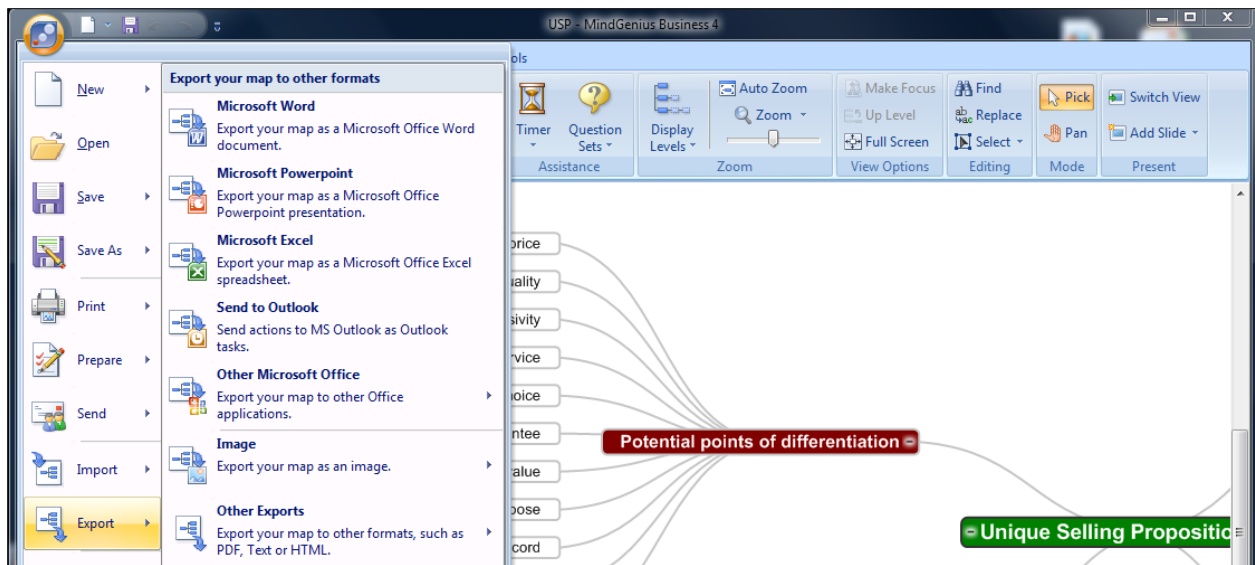# Master guide to mind mapping software import and export formats

Mind mapping software programs need to offer extensive options for importing information from and exporting it to different applications. Why? Because often the mind map is simply a way to brainstorm and organize your thoughts; it's not the final destination of your information. In other cases, when you're working on a project in your favorite mind mapping program, you may find that you need to pull in data from other sources, such as Word documents or project files. The best mind mapping programs enable you to do so, without getting in the way.

Here is a helpful summary of the import and export capabilities of each of the 10 most popular mind mapping programs. Where a software developer offers different options for different versions of their programs (free vs. paid, for example), I have spelled this out clearly, so you can make an informed decision on which programs best meet your needs, based upon the types of information you typically work with.

This report will help you to understand more about the features and functionality of today's mind mapping software. If you're planning to invest in a program, ask yourself these questions first:

- How will you use it in your work?

- In which formats will you need to output information? Chances are, a mind map will not be the final form in which your information is shared. It will probably be exported to another format for inclusion in reports, presentations and so forth. What formats will those be?

- Will you be utilizing your software to organize information for reports?

- Will data from your maps be incorporated into project management software?

- Will you share your mind maps as images on web pages or in reports?

Unless your needs are truly unique I would consider the export features of these programs to be significantly more important than their important features. For most people, the mind map is the starting point of information gathering, organizing and distillation. A small percentage of you may need the capability of importing existing information into your mind maps. But my gut feeling is that such a usage scenario is in the minority.

ConceptDraw MINDMAP 7

Imports
- Microsoft Project
- MindManager
- Text outline
- OPML

Exports
- Microsoft Project
- MindManager
- PowerPoint – outline or map images
- PDF
- Bitmapped image – JPG, BMP, GIF, TIF, PNG
- HTML– map or outline
- Plain text
- RTF

- OPML

Notes

- The PowerPoint export gives you the option of selecting one of several PowerPoint themes built into ConceptDraw MINDMAP. You can also browse your computer's hard drive for any other PowerPoint themes, which ConceptDraw MINDMAP will apply to the exported file. It also offers many other options to customize your output.

- Image export enables you to select which topics you want included in your export file, and gives you several controls over the size of your output.

FreeMind 0.9.0

Imports

- MindManager
- Explorer favorites
- Folder structure

Exports

- HTML – indented text
- Branch as HTML
- XHTML – clickable image map and outline
- Java applet – interactive map with links
- Flash
- Open Office Writer document
- Bitmapped image – JPG, PNG
- Vector image – SVG
- PDF

Notes

- FreeMind offers an impressive array of HTML export options. Also, it's not surprising that the program supports exports to Open Office Writer, considering that both programs are open source.

iMindMap 5.5

Imports

- FreeMind
- MindManager
- NovaMind

- iMindMap 4
- OPML
- Word

Exports

- PDF
- HTML image
- Word
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- Bitmapped image – PNG, JPG
- Vector image – SVG
- Open Office Calc
- Open Office Presentation

Notes

- The basic (free) version of iMindMap can only open native iMindMap files (IMX, IMM formats)
- Expanded export formats are only available in the iMindMap 5 Ultimate version.

MindGenius 4

Imports

- Microsoft Project
- Word
- Plain text
- RTF
- MindManager

Exports

- Bitmapped image – BMP, JPG, PNG
- Vector image – EMF
- MindGenius version 1 file
- Visio process diagram
- HTML – map or website based on map
- PowerPoint – bulleted slides or images

- PDF
- Microsoft Project
- RTF
- Plain text
- Word

Notes

- For Word import, you can select whether to retain the heading styles used in the Word document or discard them and apply the settings from the default MindGenius template.
- For plain text and RTF imports, MindGenius recognizes 3 hierarchy definition methods: tabs, numbers and custom (other delimiter – you specify)
- For image and Visio exports, you can specify how much of your map you want included. Options are full map, current view, and only expanded branches
- Maps exported to the 3MRT format must be viewed in the 3MRT viewer. They can be edited in MindGenius.
- Most exports offers numerous options for customizing the program's output.

MindManager 2012

Imports

- Word
- MPX (Microsoft Project Exchange)

Exports

- Static PDF
- Dynamic PDF
- Bitmap image - BMP, GIF, JPEG, PNG with choice of color depth, size and resolution
- Vector image – EMF or WMF
- Spreadsheet (CSV)
- HTML web page (as text or as a hot-spotted image)
- Microsoft Word - choice of outline settings, map elements, Word template, link, graphics and header/footer options
- Microsoft PowerPoint - Single slide or complete presentation with topics as an outline with bullet points, or as PowerPoint objects
- Microsoft Project

Notes

- Using a command that MindManager installs into the Word add-ins toolbar, you can send selected paragraphs to MindManager. First, select the topic to which you want this content sent, then invoke the command in your Word document.

- The dynamic PDF format is unique to MindManager. It enables you to view your mind maps in a Flash-enhanced PDF format, which means you can expand and collapse branches, zoom and click on hyperlinks. These maps are not editable, however.

- The export as an HTML web page with a hot-spotted image (so that links are clickable) is unique to MindManager

- For static and dynamic PDF export formats, topics hidden by a filter will not be exported.

MindMapper 2009

Imports

- Word
- PowerPoint
- Microsoft Project

Exports

- Word
- PowerPoint
- Microsoft Project
- Excel
- Microsoft OneNote

Notes

- MindMapper is the only mind mapping program that exports maps to Microsoft's note-taking and personal information management program.

MindView 4

Imports

- MindManager
- FreeMind
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- Microsoft Project
- Word

- XML

Exports

- Bitmapped image – BMP, JPG, PNG

- Vector image – EMF

- HTML

- Microsoft Project

- XML

- Word

- PowerPoint

NovaMind 5 for Windows

Imports

- NovaMind 3/4

- MindManager

- XMind

- FreeMind

- iMindMap

- Plain text

- OPML

- MS Project XML file

Exports

- Static PDF

- Image file – PNG

- Microsoft Word

- Microsoft PowerPoint

- MindManager

- Plain text

- OPML

- Microsoft Project XML file

Notes

- Import/export options vary, depending upon whether you have a NovaMind Express, Pro or Platinum license.

- Importing mind maps created in previous versions of NovaMind strips out the existing formatting and layout settings, to make it easier to apply the powerful theme and color settings in NovaMind 5.

Visual Mind 11

Imports

- Microsoft Project
- Pocket PC
- MindManager

Exports

- PowerPoint
- Word
- Project
- Pocket PC
- Plain text
- RTF
- PDF
- XML
- Image - BMP

Notes

- Visual Mind 11 is the only mind mapping program that exports to the Pocket PC format. I'm not sure why this is still supported, because one look at the Pocket PC website shows that the program hasn't been updated in a long time. The last reference guide dates from 2006, and the latest version of the program available for download is from 2009. The other issue is that the Pocket PC format has all but gone away in favor of smart phone platforms. So this PDA-based mind mapping program has become an orphan during the last few years.

XMind 3

Imports

- FreeMind
- MindManager

Exports

- MindManager

- PDF map

- PDF document

- Image - BMP, JPEG, GIF and PNG

- PowerPoint 2007-2010 presentation

- PowerPoint 97-2003 presentation

- RTF

- Text

- Word 2007-2010

- Word 97-2003

- XMind 2008 workbook

- HTML

Notes

- The basic free version of XMind only exports to plain text and XMind 2008 workbooks. For all other export formats, you will need to purchase the Pro version.

- For all export formats, XMind displays a thumbnail image of what the output file will look like.

- HTML export gives you 9 options to control which map elements (such as hyperlinks, images and notes) are exported along with your map topics.

- In addition to the export formats listed, XMind enables you to export custom markers (symbols, in the XMP file format) used in one mind map for use in other XMind maps

	ConceptDraw MINDMAP	FreeMind	iMindMap	MindGenius	MindManager	MindMapper	NovaMind	Mindview (ex-OpenMind)	Visual Mind	XMIND
Import Formats										
Microsoft										
Word			●	●	●	●		●		
PowerPoint						●		●		
Excel								●		
Project	●			●	●	●		●	●	
Mind map formats										
MindManager	●	●	●	●			●	●		●
Freemind			●					●		●
NovaMind			●							
XMind							●			
Text-based										
TXT	●			●						
RTF				●						
XML								●		
OPML	●		●							
CSV						●				

	ConceptDraw MINDMAP	FreeMind	iMindMap	MindGenius	MindManager	MindMapper	NovaMind	Mindview (ex-OpenMind)	Visual Mind	XMIND
Export formats										
PDF										
Static PDF	●			●	●			●	●	●
Flash-enabled PDF					●					
Microsoft										
Word			●		●	●	●		●	
PowerPoint	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Excel			●			●				●
Project	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	
OneNote						●				
Visio				●						
Open Office suite										
Writer		●								
Calc			●							
Presentation			●							
Web export										
Website	●	●		●	●			●		●
Image		●	●	●	●					
Clickable image map		●			●					
Bitmapped image										
JPG	●		●	●	●			●	●	●
BMP	●			●	●			●		●
GIF	●				●					●
TIF	●									
PNG	●		●	●	●			●		●
Vector image										
SVG			●							
EMF				●	●			●		
WMF					●					
Mind map formats										
MindManager							●			●
Freemind										
Text-based										
TXT	●			●			●		●	●
RTF	●			●					●	●
XML								●	●	
OPML	●						●			