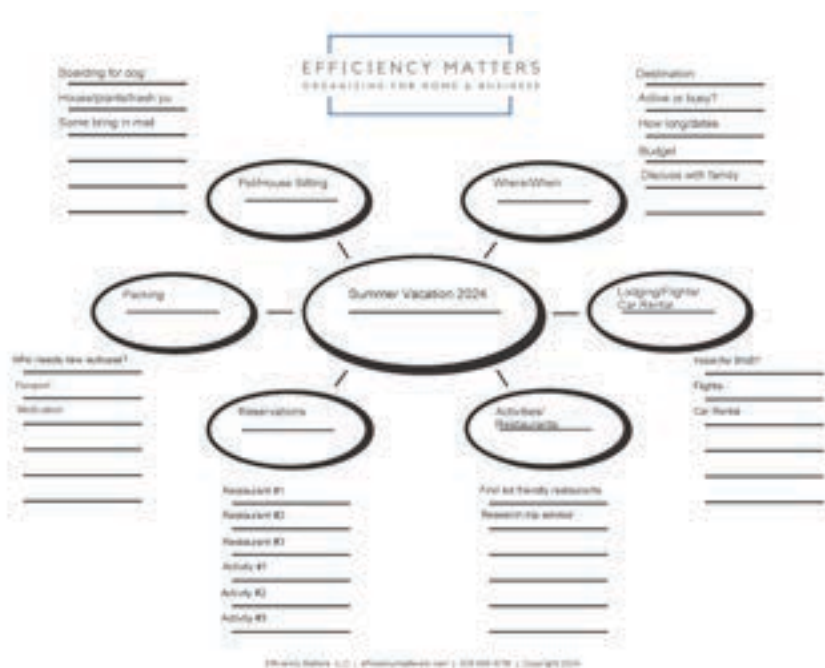


# Mind Maps: A Powerful Organizing Tool for Planning

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Here is an example of how a mind map might be used to plan a family vacation.



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In the main subject circle, I have written “summer vacation”. Starting with the top right, I have listed my subtopics (prioritizing them clockwise).

Here are the subtopics and tasks I created for this example:

**WHERE-WHEN** Fill the lines with questions to discuss with the family such as:

Destination choices, relaxing or active vacation, how long do we want to stay, what is our budget, coordinate all family members schedule to decide on a date that works for everyone (good luck with that).

**LODGING-AIR-CAR RENTAL** This is where you will start researching flights, hotels/airbnb, and car rentals.

**ACTIVITIES/RESTAURANTS** Make a list of possible activities that are available at the destination. You may want to put detailed notes here such as websites, street address, costs involved.

**RESERVATIONS** Now that everyone has decided on the activities and restaurants you want, you will make the actual reservations. This can be added to the itinerary (if you are the type of person who puts together an itinerary).

**PACKING** Make notes of the items you want to make sure you don't forget. These items are special to this trip and wouldn't necessarily be on a typical packing list. You might want to make a separate mind map for this subtopic to help with packing.

**PET/HOUSE SITTING** You will want to make plans for your pets, house (plants) and mail. Having this on your mind map will help you remember all these important details.

The benefit of the mind map is that you transfer all of the many thoughts from your brain when you write it down in an organized way. Otherwise, all these details are swimming around your brain all the time and inevitably important things get missed.

Another way to use the mind map is to fill one out at the beginning of the week. It might look something like this:

**MAIN CIRCLE:** WEEK OF JANUARY 29, 2024

**CIRCLE TOPIC #1 - ERRANDS** - grocery shopping, dry cleaning, post office, return packages.

**CIRCLE TOPIC #2 - KIDS** - Susie needs new basketball shoes, Joey needs supplies for school project.

**CIRCLE TOPIC #3 - WORK** - Finish presentation, follow up client leads, create 9 closet designs.

**CIRCLE TOPIC #4 - FAMILY ACTIVITIES** - Start vacation conversations, plan date night, sign up for family pickleball, make sure everyone's schedules are coordinated.

**CIRCLE TOPIC #5 - HOUSE PROJECTS** - Call electrician to fix outlet, put away holiday decor, cover outdoor furniture.

**CIRCLE TOPIC #6 - LONG TERM PROJECTS** - Call about summer camps, start researching a new car, start planning a garage organization project.

Here is a link to the version of a mind map that I use and I give to all of my clients; [www.energymattersllc.com/mindmap](http://www.energymattersllc.com/mindmap).

Send me an email at [jennifer@energymattersllc.com](mailto:jennifer@energymattersllc.com) if you have any questions. I'm always here to help!

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals.

She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. [jennifer@energymattersllc.com](mailto:jennifer@energymattersllc.com), 925-698-3756 [www.energymattersllc.com](http://www.energymattersllc.com)

