

Effective Note-taking and Citation Management with Obsidian

Kontakt

Name

E-mail address



Icons by Microsoft Power Point

Introduction Round

... name

... academic background (discipline)

... current research topic in one sentence

[insert tool for poll '1.2 Poll - Expectations of participants', see didactic table]

Training Objectives



Created by Wena Vega, sketchify
(canva.com)

Part 1: Personal Knowledge Management

- What is Obsidian?
- Reflect on your current system and explore how Obsidian can support your research workflow.
- Understand effective note-taking and self-organization techniques.

Part 2: Obsidian Basics

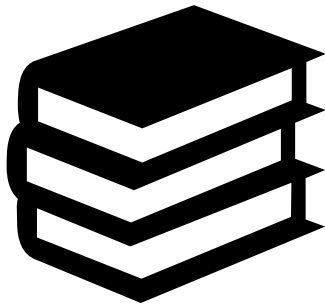
- Learn how to create, manage, and link notes using Markdown syntax.
- Explore features like graph view, tags, and metadata.
- Customize your workspace with plugins and themes.



Icons by Microsoft Power Point

Agenda

Obsidian Teaching Philosophy



Picture: icons by Microsoft Power Point

- Trainer is your guide, not your guru.
- Empowerment instead of convincing.
- Simple tools, deep work.
- Minimalism in style and plugins.



Questions

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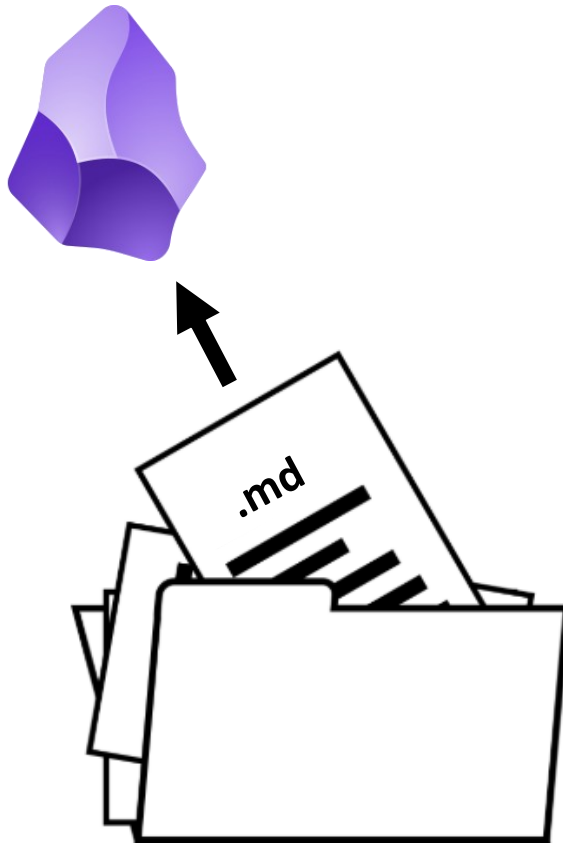
[insert tool for poll '2.2 Poll - Experiences with note taking', see didactic table]



Obsidian Logo

- Highly customisable (Community plugins)
- Free of charge (except Sync, Publish and commercial use)
- Cross-Platform (Windows, Mac, Android, iOS, Linux)
- Interoperable
- Easily import notes from other apps ([Obsidian Importer](#))

[insert short YouTube Video about Obsidian here, e.g. A Better Computer (2021)
This is Obsidian, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2FNqEDGc8g>]



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All Obsidian files...







- ... are stored locally in a folder.
- ... are .md files (Markdown).
- ... can be opened with other Markdown readers.

What is Obsidian?

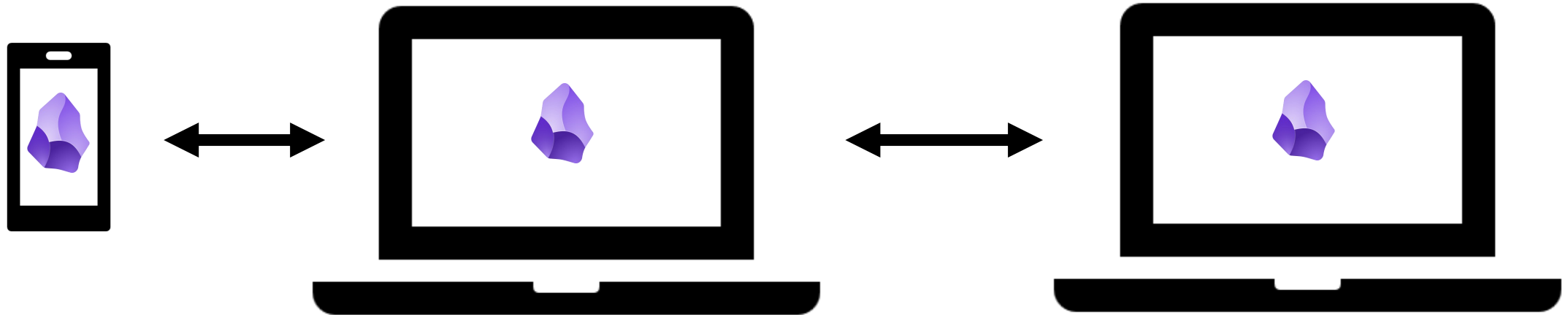
LOGO



=

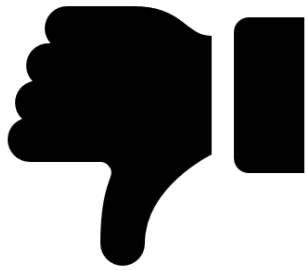
 .obsidian	4/29/2025 3:52 PM	File folder
 BACKEND	4/29/2025 2:47 PM	File folder
 ZEKA	4/29/2025 4:34 PM	File folder
 2025_paper_cats_gravity_v1.md	5/2/2025 8:37 AM	MD File
 Markdown Syntax.md	4/29/2025 12:02 PM	MD File
 Publication Idea Collection.md	5/1/2025 1:25 PM	MD File

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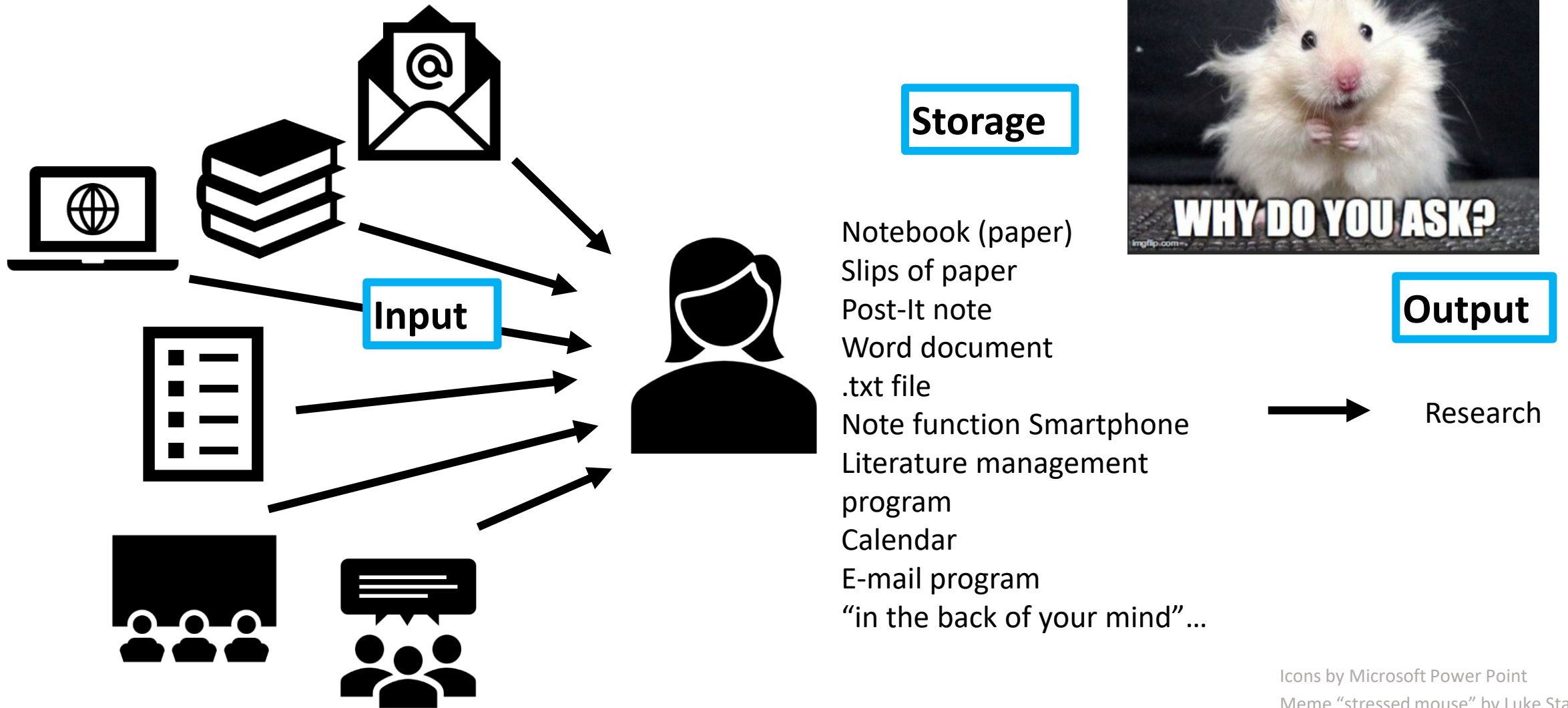


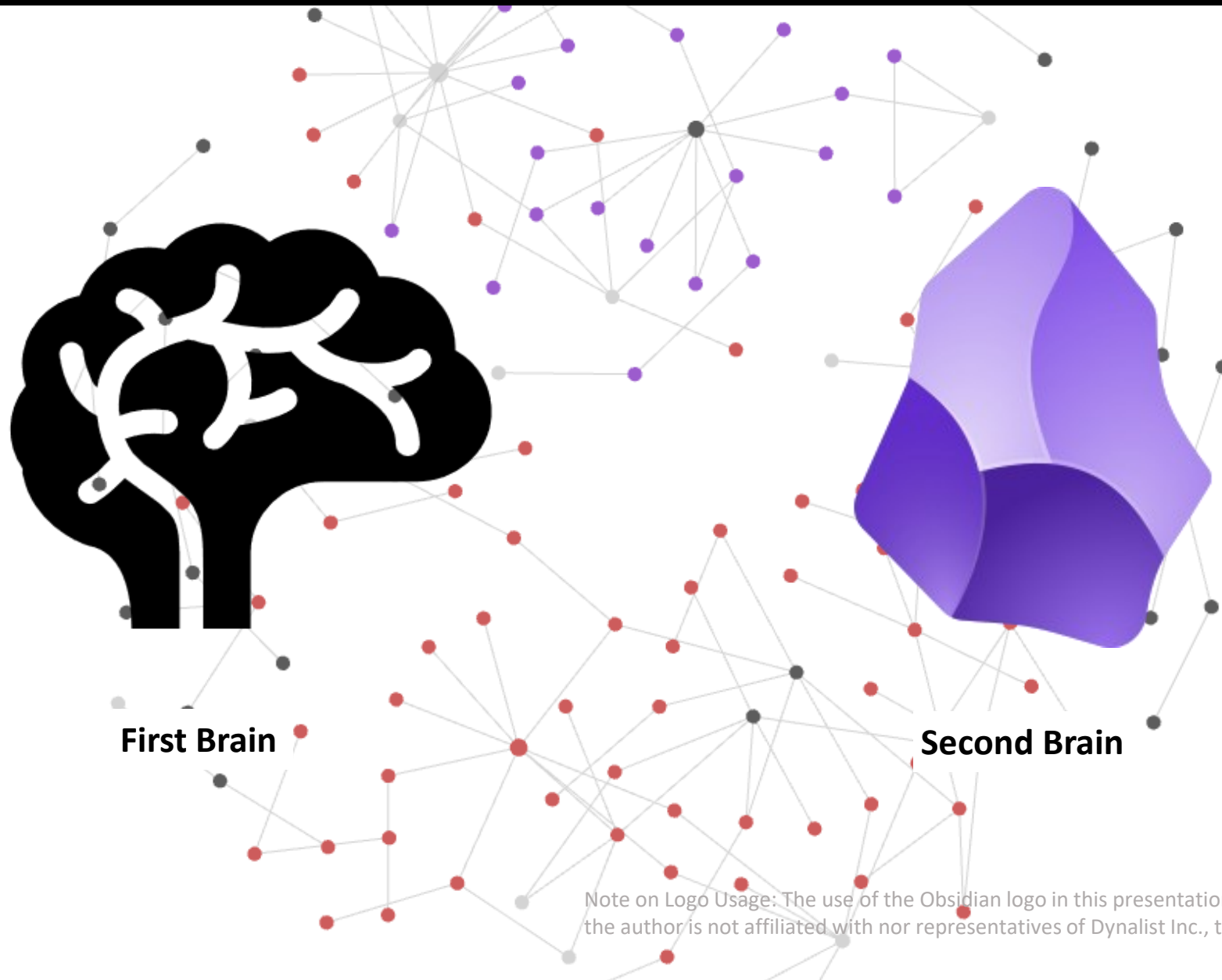
Chargeable, easy to set up, no maintenance = [Obsidian Sync](#)

Free of charge, complicated setup, maintenance required = e.g. [LiveSync](#)



- Does not support real-time collaboration.
- Data is stored locally, no integrated cloud storage.
- Mobile version often lacks functionality.
- Customization overload.
- Not completely Open Source.

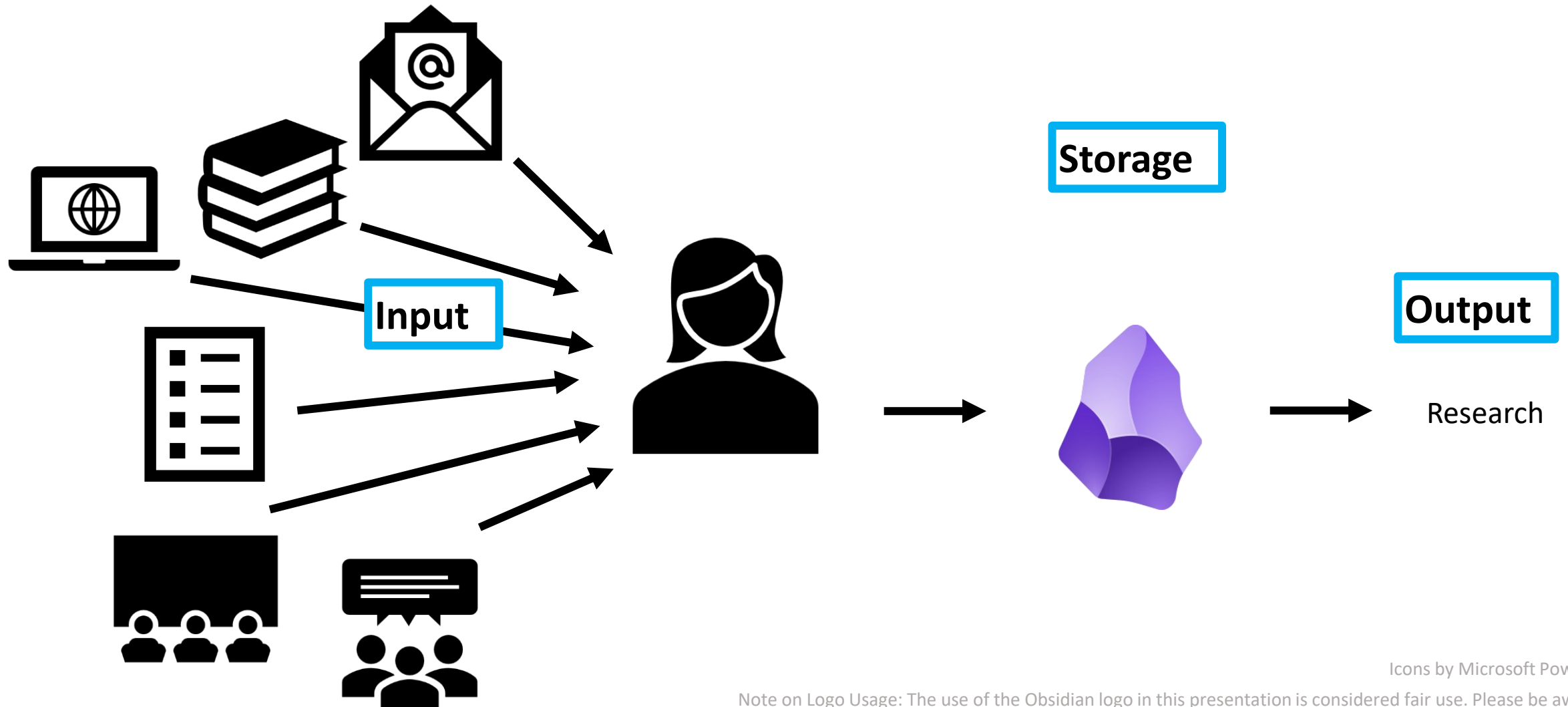




Graph view by Nele Fuchs CC0

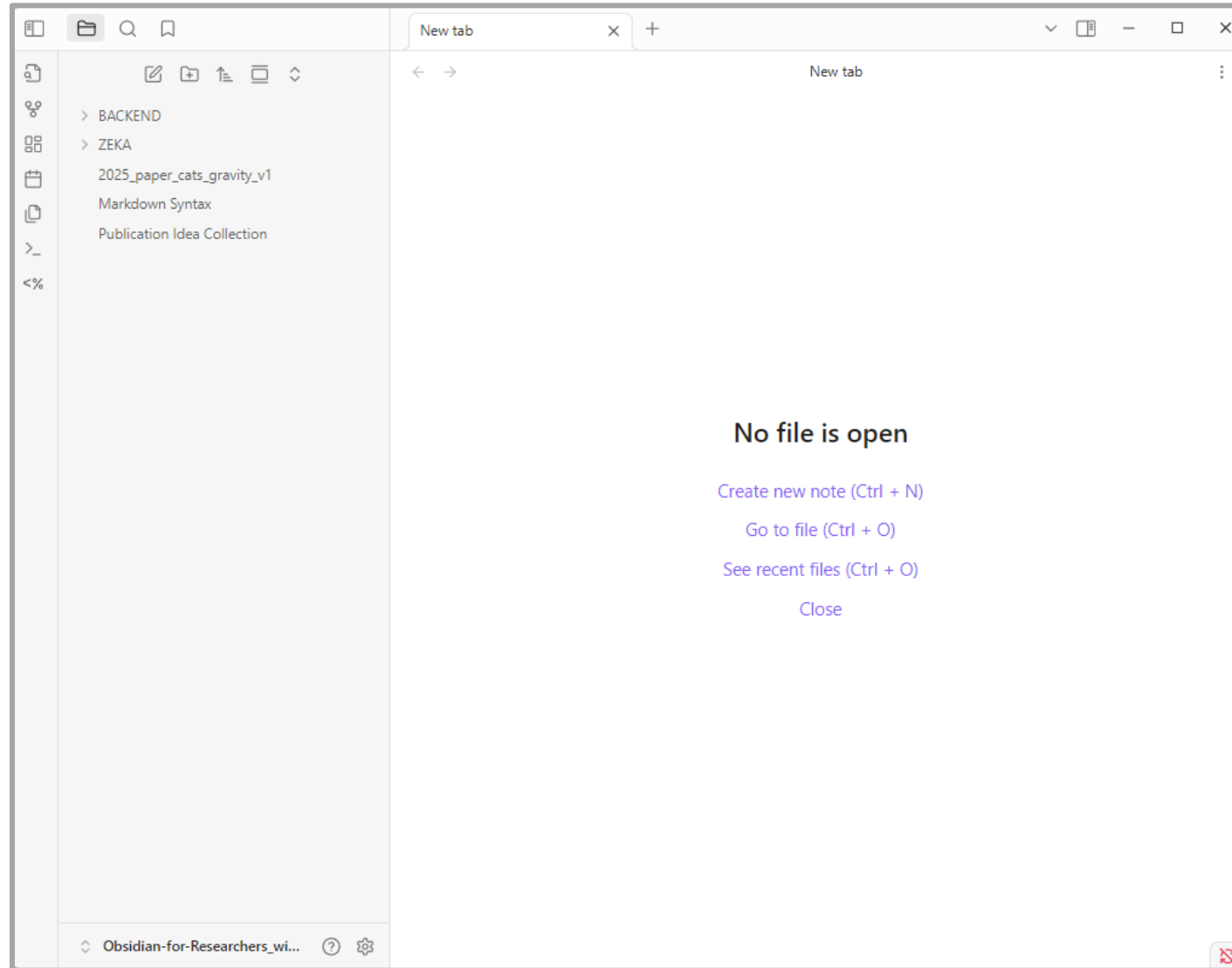
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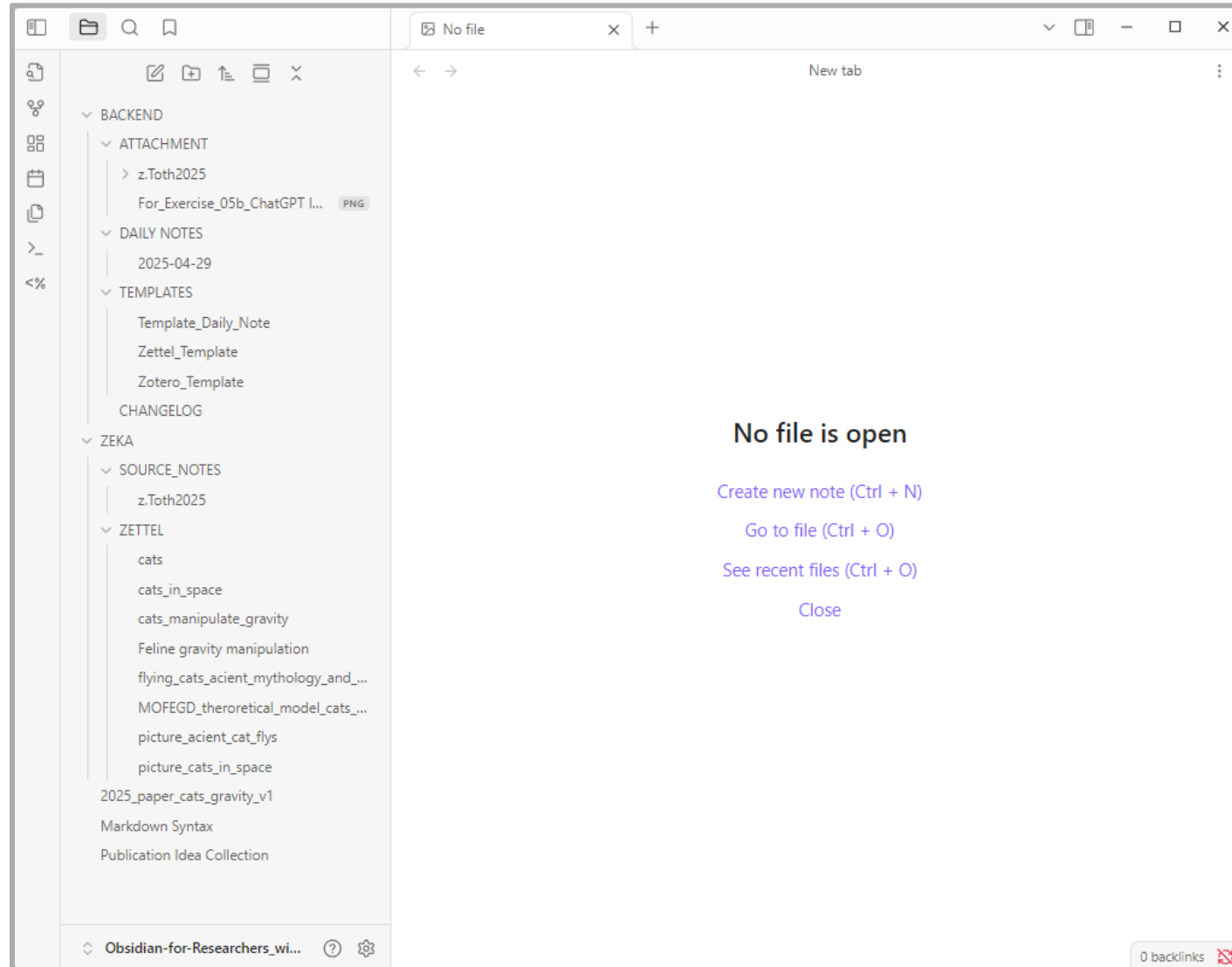
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[Show an example with a Vault that has implemented many features. Participants get an impression of what is possible with Obsidian. E.g. <https://github.com/DuskWasHere/dusk-obsidian-vault>]



Questions

Reflection Task: How Do You Take Notes?

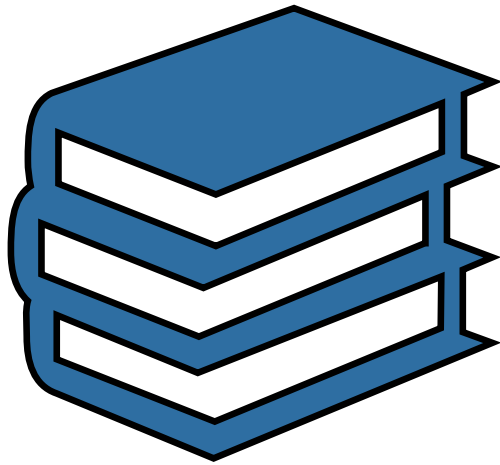


Step 1: Individual Reflection (5 min)

- Where, when, and what do you usually note down?
- Quickly jot down your thoughts.

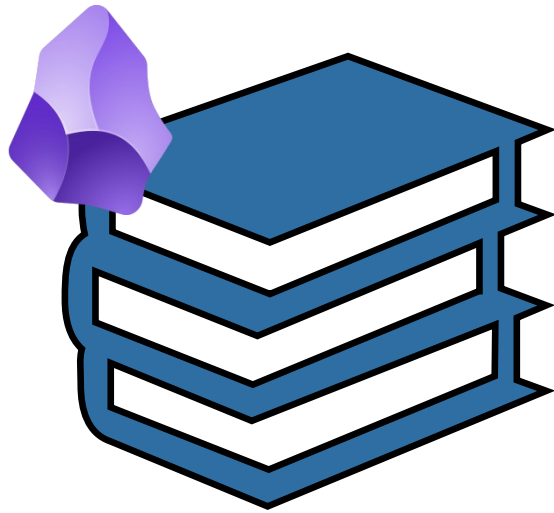
Step 2: Discussion (5 min)

- Talk with your neighbor:
 - For which project could Obsidian support you?
 - How might you use it in your workflow?



- “Obsidian for Researcher” set up is inspired by the Bullet Journal method (Carroll 2018).
- Main difference: For good reasons, Carroll recommends using a paper notebook:
 - Less distraction
 - Writing by hand has an effect on our learning process
 - Limitation of space
 - No copy-paste laziness possible

The main aim is not to increase productivity, but to be mindful with our time and capacities.



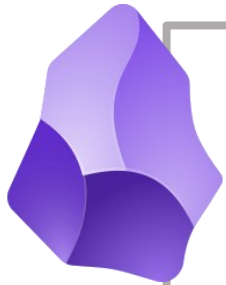
Adaptation of the bullet journal method in Obsidian

1. The Daily Log (Carroll 2018, 103)
2. Rapid Logging (Carroll 2018, 77)
3. How to take notes? (Carroll 2018, 93)

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Ryder Carroll (2018): The Bullet Journal Method: Track the Past, Order the Present, Design the Future. Penguin Publishing Group: New York.

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Thursday 1st May 2025

Daily Log

Document activities, focus for today, accomplishments, or key insights.

Tasks

New

Tasks that start today, tagged appropriately.

Due Today

Tasks with a deadline today.

Regular Tasks:

0 tasks

Recurring Tasks:

0 tasks

Scheduled Today

Tasks scheduled to start today.

0 tasks

Upcoming Tasks

All tasks with upcoming deadlines.

0 tasks

0 tasks

Done Today

Completed tasks for today.

0 tasks

Overdue Tasks

Tasks with deadlines before today.

0 tasks

Adaptation of the Bullet Journal Method in Obsidian

The Daily Log (Carroll 2018, 103)

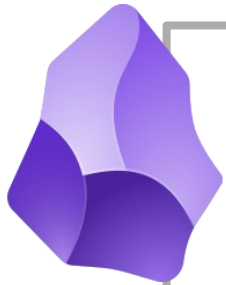
- Container for logging tasks and notes.
- Place for:
 - daily thoughts
 - reflection = learning (92)
 - set your agenda for the day (78)
- Not a place for endless to-do lists, but a place to reflect, sort to-dos and (importantly!) sort them out

Aim: to clear the mind.

Screenshot by Nele Fuchs CC0

Ryder Carroll (2018): The Bullet Journal Method: Track the Past, Order the Present, Design the Future. Penguin Publishing Group: New York.

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Adaptation of the Bullet Journal Method in Obsidian

Rapid Logging (Carroll 2018, 77)

- Write down to-dos and notes briefly but clearly.

Example:

✗ Call Keith back about where we want to go for dinner this weekend.

✓ Keith: call about restaurant Sat

Not a system that helps you create lists that grow endlessly.

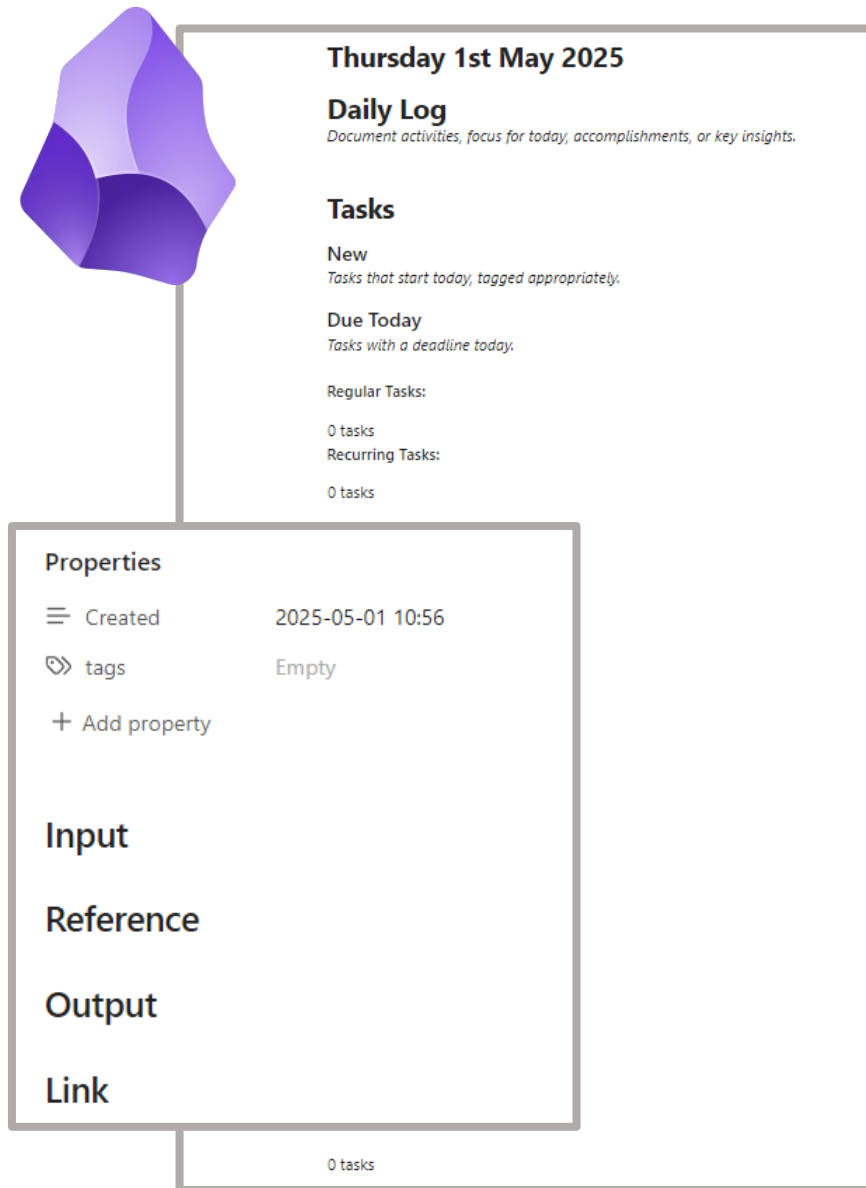
Sort out to-dos regularly.

Just because it could be done doesn't mean it has to be done.

Screenshot by Nele Fuchs CCO

Ryder Carroll (2018): The Bullet Journal Method: Track the Past, Order the Present, Design the Future. Penguin Publishing Group: New York.

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Adaptation of the Bullet Journal Method in Obsidian

- How to take notes? (Carroll 2018, 93)
 - Don't just write down the wording, but the meaning of it.

Example:

"The feline capacity for spatial memory and object permanence rivals that of some primates, suggesting advanced cognitive mapping in domestic cats."

— Dr. Jane Whiskers, *Journal of Comparative Cognition*, 2022 (source: ChatGPT made it up)

✗ Cats are smart and can remember things.

✓ **Summary:** Cats show spatial memory and object permanence comparable to primates (Whiskers, 2022). This suggests they build internal maps of their environment, which may explain their navigation skills in familiar territories.

Possible implication: Reconsider the cognitive abilities of cats in behavioral studies. Could be relevant for designing enrichment in animal shelters.

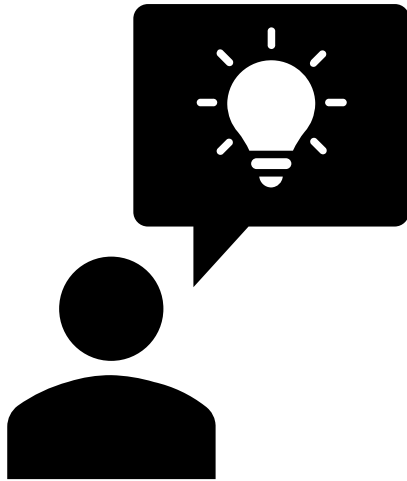
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[15min break]

[insert tool for poll '5.1 Poll - activation', see didactic table]



Learn the Basics of Obsidian

A step-by-step guide that introduces some of the fundamental features of Obsidian.

You'll learn how to:

- Set up your personal Vault
- Use templates to streamline your daily workflow
- Organize and track tasks efficiently

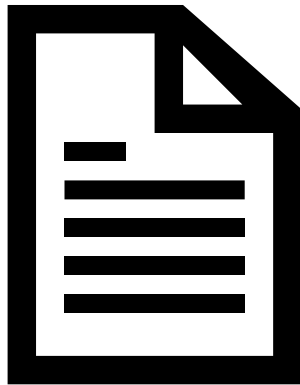
The resource is available in two formats:

- Step-by-step instructions – ideal for beginners who want to build understanding while creating their Vault
- A finished example Vault – recommended for advanced users who want to dive in and explore the setup right away

[create shortened link]



<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17978344>



Think about everything you heard and saw so far and have a look on your notes from the last personal reflection space:

1. For which project do you want to try using a digital note-taking-app like Obsidian?
2. Which part of your daily routine should be supported?
3. What are the parts which already went well in your organization method?



Questions

- The paper “Your Digital Research Assistant: An Open Educational Resource for Teaching the Basics of Obsidian” (Fuchs 2025) contains more detailed information.
- The slides can be used and adapted for your own purposes in research and teaching.

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<https://www.dsc-ub.de/index.php>

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