

brain¹

S2 W2

/breɪn/

noun

1 ORGAN **organ** [countable] the organ inside your head that controls how you think, feel, and move:

Messages from the brain are carried by the central nervous system.

the chemistry of the brain

the human brain

the right/left hemisphere of the brain (= the right or left side of the brain)

Emotional responses are a function of the right hemisphere of the brain.

*She died of a **brain tumour**.*

brain tissue/cell

2 **intelligence** [countable usually plural, uncountable] **INTELLIGENT** the ability to think clearly and learn quickly:

If you had any brains, you'd know what I meant.

The job requires brains.

*Something's **addled** your **brains** (= made you confused) .*

*Come on, **use** your **brain**, John.*

3 PERSON **person** [countable usually plural] (**informal**) **INTELLIGENT** someone who is intelligent, with good ideas and useful skills:

Some of our best brains are leaving the country to work in the US.

→ BRAIN DRAIN

4 **food** [uncountable] (*also* / **brains**[plural]) the brain of an animal, used as food

5 have something on the brain (**informal**) **THINK ABOUT**
to be always thinking about something:

I've got that song on the brain today.

6 be the brains behind/of something DEVELOP

to be the person who thought of and developed a particular plan, system, or organization, especially a successful one:

Danny's definitely the brains of the project.

7 brain dead

a)

in a state where your brain has stopped working properly, even though your heart may still be beating

b) STUPID/NOT INTELLIGENT (informal)

in a state in which you seem stupid or uninteresting, especially because you live a boring life or are very tired

8 something is not brain surgery (informal)

used to say that something is not difficult to do

→ BIRD-BRAIN,
HARE-BRAINED,

→ **beat your brains out** AT BEAT¹ (22) ,

→ **pick somebody's brains** AT PICK¹ (7) ,

→ **rack your brain(s)** AT RACK² (2)

COLLOCATIONS – Meaning 2 verbs

have brains *You should have more brains than to smoke.*

use your brain *It's easy if you just use your brain.*

rack your brains (= try very hard to think of something) *If we all rack our brains we should come up with some ideas.*

pick somebody's brains (= ask someone for ideas) *I thought I'd pick Greg's brains about what to take with us.*

it takes/requires brains to do something *It takes brains to think of a plan like that.*

something addles your brain (= makes you unable to think clearly) *The alcohol had addled his brain.*

adjectives

a good/ quick brain *It was obvious that Ann had a good brain.*

Word origin

Language: Old English

Origin: *brægen*

brain²

verb

[transitive] (informal)

HIT to hit someone very hard on the head – used humorously:

I wanted to brain him.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

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