

Using Maps

Maps are drawings or models that help you find where you are and where you are going.

Maps contain several features that help us to better understand the information presented about a specific place.

- A title
- Compass Rose
- Map Key
- Map Scale
- Lines of longitude and latitude

Compass rose:

A compass rose is a cross-like figure that shows direction. Compass roses display the four cardinal directions – north, east, south and west – as well as the ordinal directions: northeast, southeast, northwest, southwest.

Lines of longitude and latitude

The meridian lines of longitude and parallels of latitude create a grid on the map. The coordinates, specific numbered points, on this grid make it easier to find an exact place on the map.

Title: Each map has a title that describes what the map represents.



Key: Most maps use symbols and colours that represent certain things, so they have map keys, also called legends, which tell you what the symbols mean.

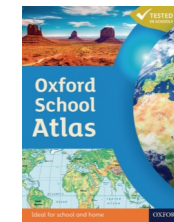
Map scale: A map has to 'shrink' a large area of land to represent it at a much smaller size. To demonstrate how much they have had to 'shrink' things, cartographers use a map scale. A map scale, which looks like a tiny ruler in the corner of the map, shows the relationship between the distance on the map and the distance in real life.

An atlas is a collection of maps. It contains:

Contents—Tells the reader what maps are inside the atlas.

Glossary—A list of terms with definitions.

Index—Helps the reader find the page for specific information.



Some maps also have a **grid system** to help users locate places with greater accuracy.

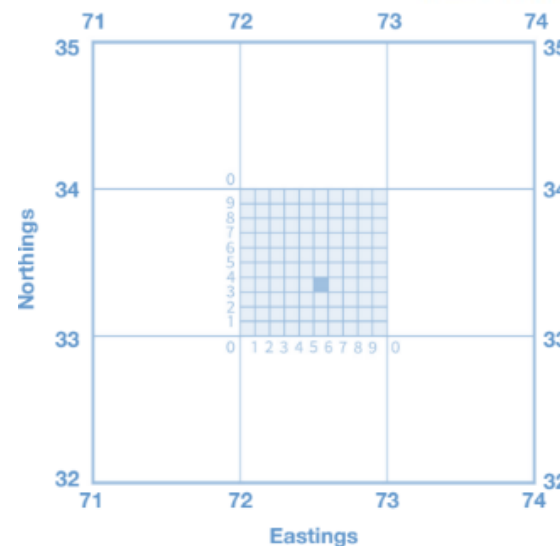
Eastings—Horizontal lines that divide the map

Northings—Vertical lines that divide the map

These are labelled with numbers that can be seen on all four edges of the map.

A grid reference is created by taking the eastings number, followed by the northings number.

Grid references can be four-figure, or six-figure for greater accuracy.



Six-figure Grid Reference

First find the four-figure grid reference for the square that the location is in and write it down with a space after each set of numbers: 72_ 33_

Then imagine this square is divided up into 100 smaller squares with 10 squares along each side.

Still remembering to go along the corridor and up the stairs, work out the numbers to indicate the bottom left-hand corner of the smaller square and put them into your four-figure grid reference: 725 333.