

Topographic Maps



Introduction

- A. Topographic maps are essential tools in geologic and engineering studies because they show the configuration of Earth's surface in remarkable detail and permit one to measure horizontal distances and <u>vertical</u> elevations. This is accomplished by means of carefully surveyed <u>isolines</u> connecting points of <u>equal elevation</u> to represent elevations of hills and valleys. They are also used by the military, hikers, hunters, campers, and anyone who for whom knowledge of the three-dimensional nature of the land surface is useful.
- B. Topographic maps are also called **contour maps**____



II. Representing Elevation



A. Contour Lines

- 1. Connect points of equal elevation with respect to sea level
- 2. Represent <u>vertical</u> distance (altitude can also be used).
- 3. Contour lines are plotted in **brown**



a. Show the shape and slope of the <u>ocean bottom</u> surface (Depth !)
b. Shown in <u>blue or black</u>, depending on their location.

Crater Lake



• Bathymetric contours are also used for lakes and other bodies of water.

4. Index Contours



a. **Dark** brown lines with elevations printed on them.

- b. Usually every <u>fifth</u> line.
- c. Not used if the map area has low <u>relief</u>.

Topographic Relief





Digital Relief Map of Salt Lake City

- (1) Relief is the difference between the <u>highest</u> and <u>lowest</u> elevation.
- (2) A region with low relief will be relatively <u>flat</u>.
- (3) In areas with low relief, few contour lines will be required and all will be labeled



- a. The difference in elevation between two <u>consecutive</u> contour lines.
- b. Specified on the bottom margin of a map as either <u>feet</u> or <u>meters</u>.



Elevations are in meters

- c. Maps use the smallest contour interval that will allow easy readability and provide as much detail as possible.
 - (2) **Large** intervals are used if there is a high relief.
 - (3) **Small** intervals are used for low relief.

Rules for Contour Lines

a. Every point on a contour line is of the exact same elevation



- (1) Contour lines always close to form an irregular <u>circle</u>
- (2) Sometimes part of a contour line **extends beyond** the mapped area.
- (3) This is why the entire circle formed can't be seen.

Contour lines never cross one another С. Vertical Cliff **Overhanging Cliff**

- (1) A map location can't have <u>two</u> elevations.
- (2) A rare exception is where an <u>overhanging cliff</u> is present. In this case the hidden contour lines are dashed.
- (3) If the cliff is vertical the contour lines will merge to form a **single** contour line.

d. Gradient (Slope)



- (1) Gradient is a measure of the <u>steepness</u> of a slope.
- (2) Gradient is determined by finding the <u>change in elevation</u> over a <u>horizontal</u> distance. Expressed as:
 - (a) Feet per mile
 - (b) Meters per kilometer (for metric maps)

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Find the Gradient Between Points X and Y



]		gradient = $\frac{\text{change in field value}}{\text{distance}}$
	• (Gradient = change in elevation (m)
		Horizontal Distance (km)
	•	First find the change in elevation
		– Contour Interval = 20 m
		 Elevation of Point X = 300 m
l		– Elevation of Point Y = 340 m
l		– Change in elevation = 40 m
	•	Next measure the distance from X to Y
		– Distance = 3 km
	•	Finally substitute into the equation
		- Gradient = 40 m
		3 km
	• /	Answer: 13.3 m/km





(3) Can be inferred by the **spacing** of the contour lines.

- (a) A steeper gradient will be shown by **closely spaced** contour lines.
- (b) The more gentle the gradient, the <u>farther apart</u> the contour lines will be spaced.



- (1) Contour lines form a <u>V Pattern</u> when crossing a stream.
- (2) The apex of the V always points <u>upstream</u> towards the <u>higher</u> elevation.

Hills



 f. A concentric series of circular close contour lines represents a <u>hill</u>.



- (1) Depression contour lines have <u>hachure</u> marks on the downhill side.
- They represent <u>closed</u> depressions.

Repeating Contour Lines



- (3) Contour lines <u>repeat</u> on opposite sides of the depression.
- (4) This means that the <u>first</u> contour line inside the depression has the <u>same</u> elevation as the last contour line outside

A Depression on a Slope



 If the depression is on a slope, the contour lines will repeat on <u>only the lower</u> side.

B. <u>Vertical Control Points</u>

 These are symbols on a map that indicate the <u>exact elevation</u> at that location.

2. Some types of vertical control points:

a. Bench Marks

- (1) A <u>permanent brass plate</u> set into the ground.
- (2) Its <u>vertical</u> position has been surveyed as accurately as possible.
- (3) Abbreviated "BM."
- (4) Shown as a <u>triangle</u> with the elevation if latitude and longitude coordinates are certain.

Example: BM 6016





Bench Marks



(5) If **VABM** is next to a triangle symbol it indicates the elevation was determined by a surveying technique that used a vertical angle (hence, the letters VA).





- (5) If shown as by an ${}^{BM}X$ symbol with the elevation.
- (6) The horizontal position has been surveyed as accurately as possible, but exact coordinates haven't been determined.
- (7) Instead of a brass plate, the marker is a concrete tablet with the numbers etched onto the top (like a gravestone).

b. <u>Recoverable Mark</u>

- (1) Naturally occurring <u>landmark</u> whose horizontal position has been surveyed as accurately as possible.
- (2) Shown by an X symbol with the elevation.
- (3) Referred to as a **spot elevation**

III. Latitude and Longitude onTopographic Maps







- Topographic maps <u>rectangles</u> whose borders are lines of <u>latitude</u> and <u>longitude</u>.
- 2. Because most maps cover <u>small areas</u> of Earth's surface whole degrees aren't used.
- 3. Maps are published in sizes using <u>minutes</u> and <u>seconds</u> of latitude and longitude.





(1) 7 ¹/₂ minute quadrangle

- (a) Covers <u>7.5 minutes</u> (7' 30") of latitude and longitude.
- (b) Most common map published by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS.)

(2) 15 minute quadrangle

- (a) Covers <u>**15 minutes**</u> (15' 00") of latitude and longitude.
- (b) Covers <u>four</u> times the area of a 7 ½ minute quadrangle.
- (c) This size is no longer published by the USGS

3. The Direction to North

- (a) North is always at the <u>top</u> of the quadrangle grid
- (b) Longitude lines (meridians) form the <u>east</u> and <u>west</u> borders of the map.
- (c) They aren't parallel because meridians <u>converge</u> toward the north.
- (d) Grid North (<u>GN</u>)
 - (1) At the top of the quadrangle grid.
 - (2) Based on a grid constructed on the map.
 - (3) About the same as true north (<u>geographic North Pole</u>) on the actual Earth

Note: The north and south borders of The map are parallels of latitude.



Using the Corners of the Map







B. Magnetic North is not the same as True North



1. <u>Magnetic North (MN</u>)

(a) The direction in which Earth's magnetic lines of force **converge**

b. This is <u>not</u> in the same location as true north and moves 10 to 40 km per year



 It's currently about 1,000 km from the true North Pole, in Hudson Bay, Northern Canada (at 82.7° N, 114.4° W in 2005).

Compasses Are Unusable Near the North Pole



- The horizontal force of the magnetic field
 - Responsible for the direction in which a compass needle is oriented
 - Decreases in strength as it approaches the North Magnetic Pole, where it is zero.
- Close to the pole, an area is reached where the frictional forces in the pivot are comparable to the horizontal forces of the magnetic field.
- The compass starts to behave erratically
 - Eventually, as the horizontal force decreases even more, the compass becomes unusable


- a. The <u>difference in degrees</u> between <u>compass north</u> (MN) and <u>true north</u> (shown by a star).
- b. Because magnetic north is continually changing, this is good only for the year of the map.

Magnetic Declination



Finding Declination on a Map



16 degrees East Declination

12¹/₂ West Declination

- Most maps use an angle symbol shown at the bottom of the map.
 - Use the number with only the degree symbol.
 - Ignore the other numbers. They were for military use.
- Some newer maps simply state the value.

IV. Map Scale A. <u>What is meant by scale</u>?



- 1. Maps are <u>scale models</u>.
- 2. Scale is the <u>proportion</u> by which the real distance has been reduced.
- 3. All scales are shown on the bottom of the map

B. Ratio Scale

- 1. Expresses how much a certain distance on the map equals on the *real* Earth.
- 2. Units are in inches (centimeters if the contour lines are in meters).
- 3. Samples
 - (a) <u>1:24,000</u>
 - (1) One inch on the map represents <u>24,000 inches</u> in *real distance* on Earth's surface.
 - (2) Used on 7 ¹/₂ minute quadrangle maps
 - (b) <u>1:62,000</u>
 - (1) Once inch on the map represents <u>62,000 inches</u> in *real distance* on Earth's surface.
 - (2) Used on 15 minute quadrangle maps.
 - (c) <u>1:100,000</u>
 - (1) One centimeter on the map represents <u>100,000 cm</u>(1 km) in *real distance* on Earth's surface.
 - (2) Used on metric maps.

C. Fractional Scale

- Indicates that map has been reduced to the <u>fraction</u> of it's actual size.
- 2. Ratio Scale can easily be expressed as Fractional Scale
 - a. 1:24,000 equals a fractional scale of 1/24,000.
 - b. 1:62,000 equals a fractional scale of 1/62,000.
 - c. 1:100,000 equals a fractional scale of 1/100,000.

D. Bar Scale

Note the zero mark on each scale



- 1. Printed in the lower margin.
- 2. Four types:
 - (a) Miles
 - (b) Feet
 - (c) Kilometers (subdivided into Meters)

V. Map Symbols and the Use of Color page A17 Lab Book

A. Features and Symbols

- 1. Shown as points, lines, or areas, depending on their size and extent.
- 2. Individual houses may be shown as small black squares. For larger buildings, the actual shapes are mapped.
- 3. In densely built-up areas, most individual buildings are omitted and an area tint is shown. On some maps, post offices, churches, city halls, and other landmark buildings are shown within the tinted area.
- 4. Various point symbols are used to depict features such as buildings, campgrounds, springs, water tanks, mines, survey control points, and wells. Names of places and features are shown in a color corresponding to the type of feature. Many features are identified by labels, such as "Substation" or "Golf Course.

Prin	nary highway, hard surface	_
Seci	ondary highway, hard surface	-
Ligh	it-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unir	mproved road	
Roa	d under construction, alinement known	
Prop	oosed road	5
Dua	l highway, dividing strip 25 feet or less	-
Dua	l highway, dividing strip exceeding 25 feet	_
Trai	L	
Rail	road: single track and multiple track	
Rail	roads in juxtaposition	
Nar	row gage: single track and multiple track	
Rail	road in street and carline	
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Tun	nel: road and railroad	
Over	pass and underpass	===
Sma	ill masonry or concrete dam	
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Tele	phone line, pipeline, etc. (labeled as to type)	
Well	s other than water (labeled as to type)	• Gas
Tani	ks: oil, water, etc. (labeled only if water)	Water
Loca	ated or landmark object; windmill	8
Ope	n pit, mine, or quarry; prospect	x
Sha	ft and tunnel entrance	Y
Hori	zontal and vertical control station:	
Т	ablet, spirit level elevation	653
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Primary highway, hard surface	Boundaries: National		
Secondary highway, hard surface	State		
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	County, parish, municipio		
Unimproved road	Civil township, precinct, town, barrio		
Road under construction, alinement known	Incorporated city, village, town, hamlet		
Proposed road	Reservation, National or State		
Dual highway, dividing strip 25 feet or less	Small park, cemetery, airport, etc.		
Dual highway, dividing strip exceeding 25 feet	Land grant		
Trail	Township or range line, United States land survey		
	Township or range line, approximate location		
Railroad: single track and multiple track	Section line, United States land survey		
Railroads in juxtaposition	Section line, approximate location		
Narrow gage: single track and multiple track	Township line, not United States land survey		
Railroad in street and carline	Section line, not United States land survey		
Bridge: road and railroad	Found corner: section and closing		
Drawbridge: road and railroad	Boundary monument: land grant and other		
Footbridge	Fence or field line		
Tunnel: road and railroad			
Overpass and underpass	Index contour Intermediate contour		
Small masonry or concrete dam	Supplementary contour Depression contours		
Dam with lock	FillCut		
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Power transmission line with located metal tower	Perennial streams		
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Horizontal and vertical control station:	Exposed wreck		
Tablet, spirit level elevation	Rock bare or awash: dangerous to navigation		
Other recoverable mark, spirit level elevation Δ 5455			
Horizontal control station: tablet, vertical angle elevation VABM \$\Delta 95/9	March (swamp)		
Any recoverable mark, vertical angle or checked elevation $$\Delta3775$$	marsh (swamp)		
Vertical control station: tablet, spirit level elevation BM × 957	Wooded marsh Mangrove		
Other recoverable mark, spirit level elevation ×954	Woods or brushwood . Orchard		
Spot elevation x 7369	Vineyard		
Water elevation	controlled inundation Urban area		

B. Color

- 1. The used colors usually indicate similar classes of information.
- 2. Colors used:

a. **Brown** : Contour lines



b. <u>Green</u>: Vegetation (e.g., woods, orchards, and vineyards)



c. <u>Blue</u>: Water features such as lakes, swamps, rivers, and drainage





Blue is also used for the contours of a glacier (Ice is water.)



d. <u>Red</u>: Classifies cultural features ("manmade"), such as populated areas, main roads, and boundaries



e. Black Cultural features (e.g., buildings, roads, railroads, mines, towers, etc.)



f. **Purple**: At one time, purple was used as a revision color to show all feature changes. Currently, purple is not used in the USGS revision program, but purple features are still present on many existing maps.





Start Lab 1-6

VI. Public Land Survey System (PLS)

- In the original 13 colonies, land grants and property lines were laid out on the basis of "metes and bounds."
 - This used landmarks and directions
 - It proved inadequate because some objects used to mark boundaries were not permanent (e.g., trees, boulders) and some, such as mountains, were too large to make accurate surveying possible.
 - Also, the resulting divisions had irregular boundaries



Public Land Survey System

- The United States Public Land Survey System (PLS) was instituted in 1785 when lands west of the Appalachians were being settled because a more accurate system was necessary.
- Except for the original 13 states and a few other states, all states are covered by this system.

PLS (Township and Range)

These Township and Range Lines, crossing each other form squares which are called "Townships" or "Government Townships," which are six miles square.



VII: Universal Transverse Mercator System (UTM)



- Rectangular and Measured in decimal-based metric units (meters)
- Global military grid and coordinate system
- Developed in 1947 by the U.S. National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA)
- Zones
 - 60 North-South strips of longitude
 - Each is 6 degrees of longitude wide
 - Consecutively numbered from
 - Zone 01 between 174° and 180° east longitude at the east margin
 - Zone 60 at the west margin (between 168° west and 180°)

Eastings and Northings

Easting Coordinate

- Location of a point within a zone
- Measured from west to east in meters
- Tick for eastings written on maps are printed in green.



Reading UTM Coordinates on Maps



Reading UTM Coordinates on Maps



Construction of a Profile and Vertical Exaggeration



• The End!

Lab 1-6 Topographic Maps Get ready for the lab questions. so lets review... What did we talk about yesterday?

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Hills



 f. A concentric series of circular close contour lines represents a <u>hill</u>.



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- 1. The used colors usually indicate similar classes of information.
- 2. Colors used:

a. **Brown** : Contour lines



b. <u>Green</u>: Vegetation (e.g., woods, orchards, and vineyards)



c. <u>Blue</u>: Water features such as lakes, swamps, rivers, and drainage





Blue is also used for the contours of a glacier (Ice is water.)



d. <u>Red</u>: Classifies cultural features ("manmade"), such as populated areas, main roads, and boundaries



e. Black Cultural features (e.g., buildings, roads, railroads, mines, towers, etc.)



f. **Purple**: At one time, purple was used as a revision color to show all feature changes. Currently, purple is not used in the USGS revision program, but purple features are still present on many existing maps.





Start Lab 1-6