

How to Label a Map



Cartography is the art of drawing accurate, easily readable, attractive maps.

LABELLING

- Should be as **NEAT** as possibly
- Should be printed in pencil first, then neatly copied in ink (erase pencil lines)
- Should be spelled accurately
- Printed parallel to the base of the map
- River names should curve to follow the course of the river
- A **DOT (.)** should be used when labeling cities, placing the name of the city as close as possible
- The size of labels depends on the amount of information need on the map
- Larger features usually have larger labels
- Labels for similar features (capital cities) should be the same size
- Labels should not block other information on the map
- **DO NOT** underline labels

COLOURING/SHADING

- Maps should be properly colour coded using different colours to show the different areas on the map
- Shade consistently avoiding light and dark patches
- Use solid colours only
- White or black are not to be used as colours on map
- Grey should only be used for areas not important to the map
- Blue is only to be used for water: lakes, rivers, oceans, sea, bays
- When shading large water bodies, ‘feathering’ around the edge is acceptable
- Ensure the colours used on the map match the colours used in the legend

Mapping Checklist



Be sure to follow the mapmaking expectations below when completing all maps in this course.

Feature	Map Making Expectations
Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should be within the map frame or border• Should be at the TOP of the map• Should be UNDERLINED or BOXED• Should not block any of the map's information• Should include: what, where, when
Legend	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All maps MUST have a legend• A legend should not block any other map information• Place a BORDER around the legend information• All legends must have an UNDERLINED TITLE• Direction and scale can be included in the legend
Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a scale, either linear, statement or representative fraction• Use a ruler
Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All maps MUST have a direction arrow• North should always be at the top of the page• Use a ruler
Border	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be around the entire map• Must be of equal proportions All title, legend, & labeling must be within the border
Date of Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicate when the map was produced• Indicate who produced the map

A map is a simple illustration of material. Keep your map neat and make sure that it illustrates what your title indicates. DO NOT clutter it with unnecessary material.