

Understanding map symbols

IN-DEPTH STUDY

When drawing a map, include a compass to establish the orientation, determine the scale of the area and use a few different line widths to establish different types of borders.

1 Answer the questions before watching the video.

1. Have you ever drawn a map of a place?
2. What kind of information can you get from the site itself?
3. What scale would you use to draw a map of a city?
4. What tools and equipment should you use to survey the area?



▶ How to Understand OS Map Symbols posted by Simon King Wildlife

All Ordnance Survey maps come with an astonishing amount of information and level of detail, especially the Explorer Series 1:25,000 scale. Some of this information is written on the map placement, of course, no getting around that. But if every single detail had a word for it, it would be a shambles, a complete mess; so instead, many of the details on the map are marked with symbols. Many of these symbols are very easy to understand. They look like the things they represent in the real world: trees, for example. The woodland is represented by a green patch, but here on the Explorer Series 1:25,000 scale, trees are further marked with ... with a deciduous or coniferous type and that's really great if you are a naturalist and interested in the habitat and the species of creatures that might live there. If I let my eyes scan around the moorland where I'm sitting, there are many other habitats marked: this is scrubland, open heath, even bracken – that's how much detail there is – I can see there's bracken around me here but I can see from the map how far it extends around the hillside. Some of the symbols are a little more cryptic but that's not a problem because every Ordnance Survey map comes with the legend – a key – and a quick glance will very quickly establish what it is you are looking at. Everything from public footpaths, bridle ways, a cycle paths and a great deal more besides is marked on here.

2 Listen to Simon King talking about the symbols used in Ordnance Survey maps today and fill in the missing information.

All Ordnance Survey maps come with an astonishing (1) of information and level of details. Many details on the map are marked with (2) They look like the (3) they represent in the real world. The (4) is represented by a green patch. There are many other (5) marked, this is scrubland, open heath. Every Ordnance Survey map comes with the (3)

3 Decide if the statements below are TRUE (T) or FALSE (F). Correct the false ones.

1. Every single detail has a word for it.
2. Many symbols are very easy to understand.
3. There are symbols that indicate the type of trees.
4. Naturalists are not interested in using the maps of the Explorer Series.
5. You can see from the map how far a habitat can extend.
6. You can use these maps if you like going cycling.

T	F
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