



M1 Physical map

How to Read a Physical Map

There are many different kinds of maps in an atlas. You may already know road maps or street maps of a town.



M2 Boy reading a street map

A very important map is a physical map. It shows:

- the height (elevation) of the land;
- the location of cities, borders, mountains;
- the depth of the sea;
- the location of rivers and lakes.

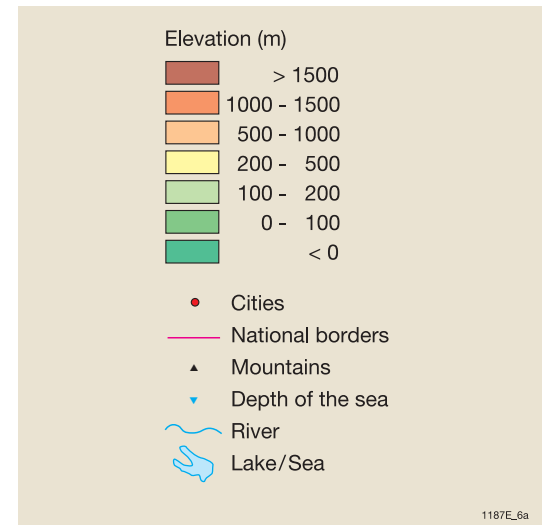
You can also see lines of longitude and lines of latitude.

Every map has got a title. It often says which part of the world the map shows and what kind of map it is (M1).

On a physical map the colours green, yellow or brown show how high the land is. The colours white or blue stand for rivers, lakes, and seas. You find this information in the key (M3).

A map has got a scale. Map M1 has got a scale of 1 : 25,000,000, which means 1 cm on the map is 25 million centimetres (250 km) in reality.

A scale line makes it easier to measure distances.



M3 Map Key: Maps use symbols and colours for many physical facts

Tasks

- In M1, the distance from Madrid to Bern is 5 cm. What is the distance in kilometres?
- Take a ruler and measure the distance from
 - Dublin to Stockholm
 - London to Warsaw.
 What is the distance in kilometres?

Summary

Maps have got a title, a scale or scale line, and a key. They help us to read a physical map.

Key terms:

- bar
- depth
- elevation/height
- key
- physical map
- scale (line)