

Marginal Information

Introduction

Before using any map with which you are not familiar, the first essential is to have a good look at the information contained in the margins, the "margins" being the area of paper surrounding the map. The margins give much information essential to the full understanding and use of the map, and deserve more attention than is frequently paid to them.

Marginal Layout

On military land maps produced under allied international agreements the layout of the marginal information is to a large extent standardised so that users may become accustomed to finding the different types of information they seek in the same part of the margins on all maps, even though the maps are produced by different countries and on different scales. However not all maps (including those produced by the Ordnance Survey) conform to these standardisation rules, and users must be prepared for variation in layout, though, in general, the more essential items of information are placed in common positions.

Types of Information Shown

Certain information shown is essential to all users of the map either to identify it correctly or to interpret its basic information.

The remaining information is useful to certain types of user or on occasions when it is necessary to examine the source of information and reliability of the map.

This information should be known and understood by all competent map reading instructors, but it is not essential for those who are concerned only with basic map reading.

Languages

When a map is designed for use by allied nations the text of the essential marginal items is written in at least two, but not more than three, languages, one of which must be English. The user will therefore find the essential marginal information explained in English, even though the map is produced by another allied nation.

Common User Information

Map Identification

The essential elements required to identify a particular map sheet are:

- a. Map Series Number.
- b. Sheet Number (or name, if there is no number).
- c. Edition Designation.

The elements appear together in a panel at the top right corner and at the bottom left corner of the map. Typical panels are shown below.

SERIES	M 726	SERIES	1501	SERIES	GSGS 5204
SHEET	184	SHEET	NM 32-2	SHEET	200-3
EDITION	1-GSGS	EDITION	2-GSGS	EDITION	1-GSGS

The map series number identifies both the area and the scale of the map: the series number can be found from the map catalogue. All operational map series are shown in the Ministry of Defence Map Catalogue, and indexes to series show all sheets published, though some may not be available from stock. Overseas commands may produce separate map catalogues in which special purpose mapping of local interest will be included.

The edition number identifies the up to datedness of the information shown on the map. The edition number increases at each revision, i.e. Edition 4 are later than Edition 3. The letters following the edition number indicate the authority under whom the edition has been prepared, e.g. GSGS = Geographical Section, General Staff (UK), AMS = Army Map Service (USA), etc.

When indenting for a map, only the series number and the sheet number should be quoted. It is the responsibility of the map store to provide the latest current edition. If the series number is not known, the area covered and the scale required must be stated; correct identification however should include the series number as well as the sheet number. See Joint Services Publication 323-"Supply of Land Maps and Air Charts".

In some cases maps are identified by a sheet name instead of by a sheet number. This is however rare.

Scales

The scale of the map, e.g. 1:50,000, is shown prominently at the top of the map, and also in the bottom margin, usually above the graphic scales.

The graphic scales are placed in the centre of the bottom margin and are normally expressed in kilometres and in statute miles, with the addition of metres and yards when the map requires it.

Unit of Elevation

Each map must carry in a conspicuous position, normally in the bottom margin, a note "ELEVATIONS IN METRES" or "ELEVATIONS IN FEET" as appropriate. In the present period of change from feet to metres, it is vitally important to check from this note the unit of elevation used on that particular map.

Contour Interval

A note stating "Contour Interval ...metres/feet" is shown in the bottom margin near the graphic scales.

Conventional Signs

A table showing the conventional signs used on the sheet in their correct colours with their descriptions is shown in the bottom or side margin. Sometimes, if space does not permit, a few signs may be omitted, but the road symbols and classification are always shown.

Instructions on the Use of the Grid

These are shown in a panel in the lower or side margin and are normally in the colour used for the grid on the face of the map. The notes explain how to give a grid reference.

Information on True, Grid and Magnetic North

Each map contains the information necessary to determine the true, grid, and magnetic bearing of any line within the sheet. This information is given in the form of a diagram with explanatory notes. The diagram may be in the bottom or in a side margin.

Index to Adjoining Sheets

A diagram showing the position of the map sheet in relation to adjoining sheets is shown near the bottom right corner. The diagram shows the sheet numbers (or names) of the adjoining sheets and accentuates the sheet in question. From this diagram it is simple to determine the sheet number of any neighbouring sheet required.

Glossaries

Some maps carry glossaries of geographical terms and of abbreviations used on the map, with translations into different languages as necessary. They are usually in the lower margin.

Security Classification

The Security Classification, if any, is shown in the top and bottom margins in a prominent colour, usually red.

Specialist Information

Technical Information on Grids, Projections, Geodetic and Levelling Datum

Information is given on the grid or grids on the map to which lines, ticks, figures, etc refer. Projection, spheroid(s), datum, origin and false co-ordinates of origin are stated for each grid, printed in the colour of the figures of the grid to which they refer. The information appears in the lower or right margins: it is required only for specialist users.

Information on Map Revision and Reliability

A history note is given in the bottom margin to show by what unit or establishment the map was produced, the date and the information from which it has been compiled. When the map has subsequently been revised, the date of revision, the extent of the revision, and the source of the information is also stated.

When a map has been compiled from several sources, a compilation diagram may be provided in the bottom margin to show the extent of coverage of the basic sources for each portion of the sheet.

On some sheets a reliability diagram may be included to indicate the degree of reliability of different parts of the sheet. Such a diagram will be found only when the reliability is below the standard which is normally expected at that scale and in that area.

Geographical Co-ordinates of Sheet Corners

These are shown in degrees, minutes and seconds to an appropriate accuracy (not more accurate than the equivalent of 10 metres) in terms of the geodetic datum used for the military grid, e.g. European datum.