

Navigation on Foot – Countryside walking

Recap on topics:

- The available options – paper and screen.
- Reading the 1:25,000 map. Symbols and conventions.
- Comparison of alternatives / supplements
- The shape of the landscape – contours and all that.
- Where am I?
- Which way is which?
- How far is it?
- Using the map while walking.
- Find a walk, or plan a walk.

Choosing a Map

Convenient Format

- Paper sheet
- Paper book
- On screen

And also:

- Area involved – type of terrain
- Scale
- Focused on Area or Route
- Style (largely personal preference)

Ordnance Survey 1:25,000

- For me still the basic “must-have” outside towns.
- Buy folded sheet maps (£13), or an online OS Maps subscription (£35pa)

The 1:25,000 map.

- Revision date.
- Communications
 - Public Rights of Way: Footpaths, Bridleways, Byways
 - Roads and Paths: (Not necessarily rights of way)
 - Other Road, Drive or Track – fenced and unfenced.
 - Path (Very limited. 2 types??)
 - Bridges and Underpasses. Not always at all clear. [\[Link\]](#)

- Other Public Access
 - Other routes with public access (Selected)
 - Recreational Routes (Selected. Longer distance and/or waymarked)
 - Cycle routes (Usually walkable)
 - Permissive footpaths & bridleways (Rare)
- Access Land
- General Information
 - Field boundaries, Fence/Wall/etc. – not mentioned.
 - Boundaries (Can be mistaken for footpaths)
 - Useful landmarks. (Churches, Buildings, Golf courses, Turbines, etc)
 - Trig Points (not common)
 - Woods & vegetation
- Heights and Natural Features
 - Spot heights, Contours
 - Cliffs and rocky bits
 - Water
- Leisure Information
 - E.g. Parking, Pubs, Toilets (PC), Visitor Centre, etc.
- Beware:
 - Green lines v. paths on the ground
 - Boundaries
 - Power lines
 - General change (e.g woods, field boundaries, pubs)
- Exercise 1 – Find these features

Shape of the landscape

One of the more difficult things to get right, especially in field conditions.

Basics:

[Link]

- Contours are lines at constant height round hills, along hillsides. Heights shown at intervals – may be 5m or 10m separation.
- Spot Heights are measurements at particular spots. Trig points.
- All heights are in metres.

How steep – how far?

- Contours close together – steep. Far apart / None – flat.
- More contours – further up/down to go. (Watch 5m v. 10m separation.)
- Count contours.
- Find a marked height at/near the top and bottom.

Top or Bottom?

- Find which way the slope is going.
- Spot heights – at the top (but also along roads – neither top or bottom).
- Contours forming loops, round the top.
- Rivers are at the bottom of a slope.

Slope up or down?

- Find the top or bottom.
- Heights on contours – upright on hillside, or often several together.
- Difference between any two heights.
- Beware crossing a ridge/valley without realising that the slope has changed.
Look for the V's.

Exercise 2 – Top or Bottom; Up or down?

Exercise 3 – Would you choose to walk these routes?