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Opening extract from
**Oxford International
Primary Atlas**

Written by
Patrick Wiegand

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Oxford International Primary Atlas

Editorial Adviser
Dr Patrick Wiegand

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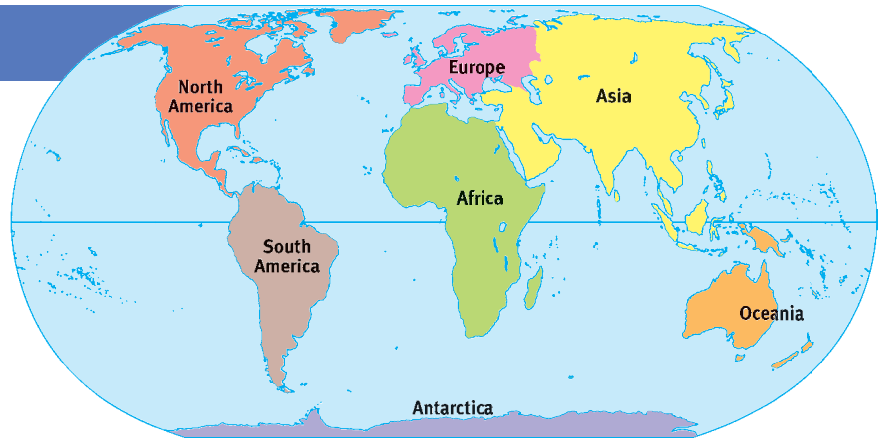
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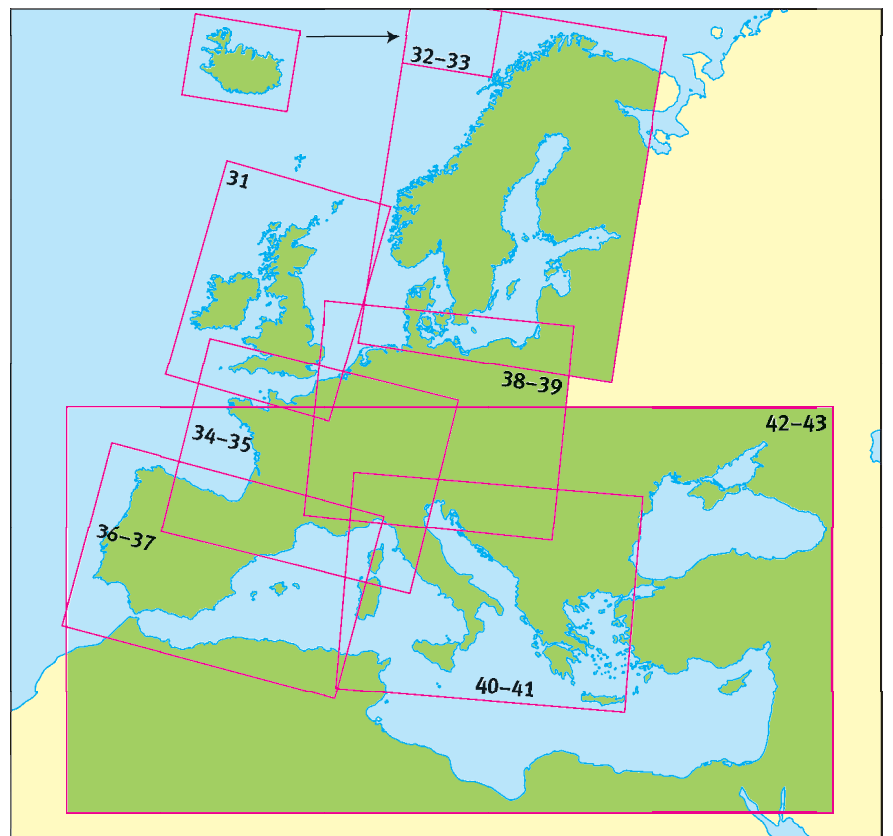
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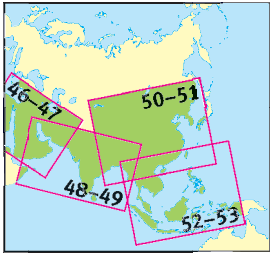
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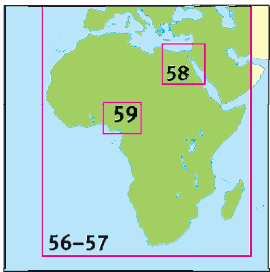
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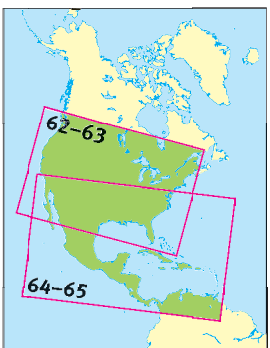
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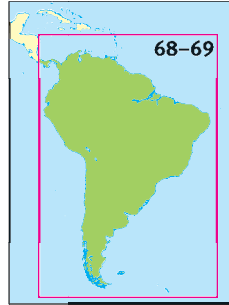
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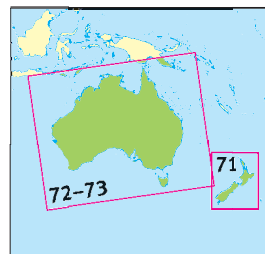
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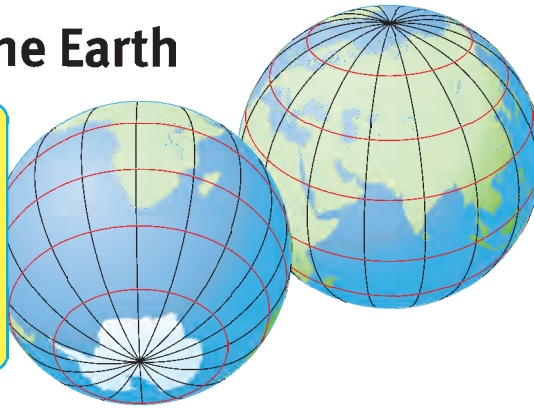
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4 Understanding the Earth



The Earth is a planet in space. It is a sphere. Two sets of imaginary lines help us describe where places are on the surface of the Earth.

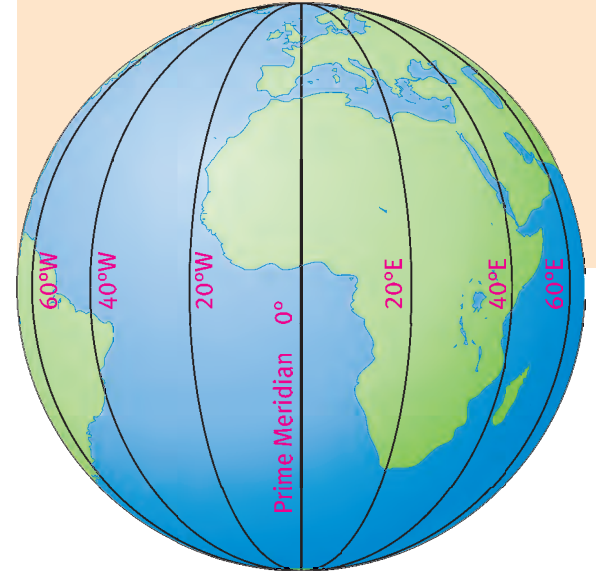


Longitude

Lines of longitude measure distance east or west of the Prime Meridian.

The **Prime Meridian** (also called the Greenwich Meridian) is at longitude 0°.

The **International Date Line** (on the other side of the Earth) is based on longitude 180°.

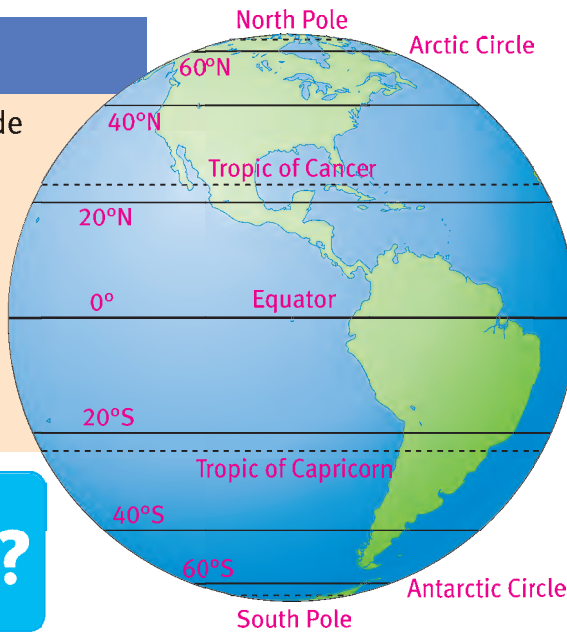


Latitude

Lines of latitude measure distance north or south of the equator.

The **Equator** is at latitude 0°.

The **Poles** are at latitude 90°N and 90°S.



Can you find the **Equator**, the **Prime Meridian** and the **International Date Line** on a globe?



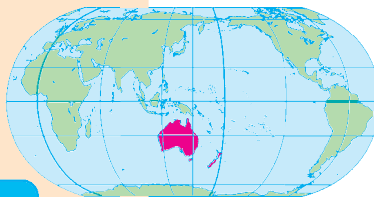
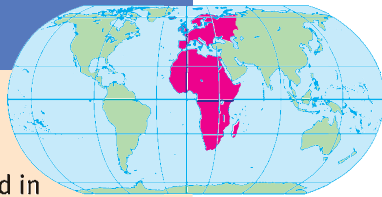
There are many ways of showing the spherical Earth on a flat world map.

Map projections

How a world map looks depends on where it is going to be used.

World map used in Europe and Africa

World map used in Australia and New Zealand



Can you find Antarctica on a globe and compare how it looks on a world map?



Grid codes

In this atlas, the lines of latitude and longitude are used to make a grid.

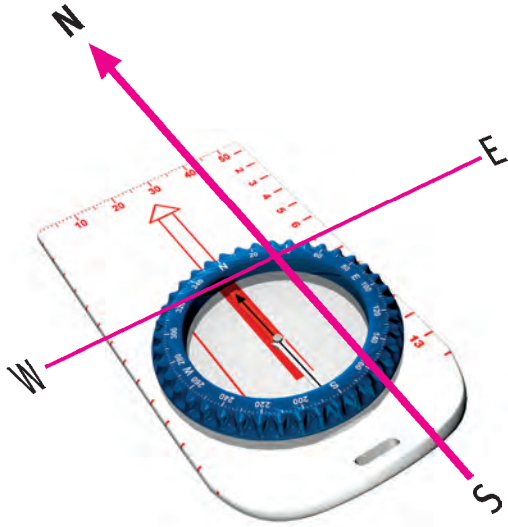
The columns of the grid have letters.

The rows of the grid have numbers.

Numbers and letters together make a **grid code** that can be used to describe where places are on the Earth.

Can you name the city at gridcode **B2**?

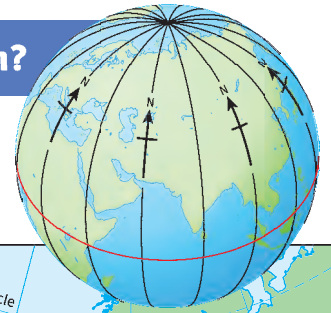




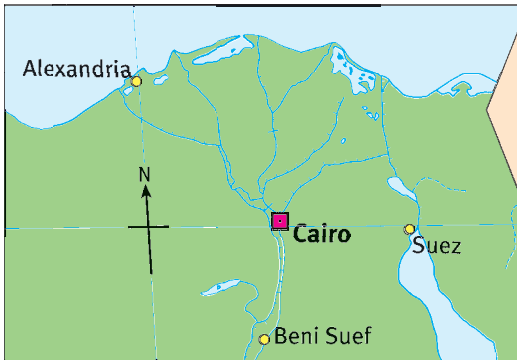
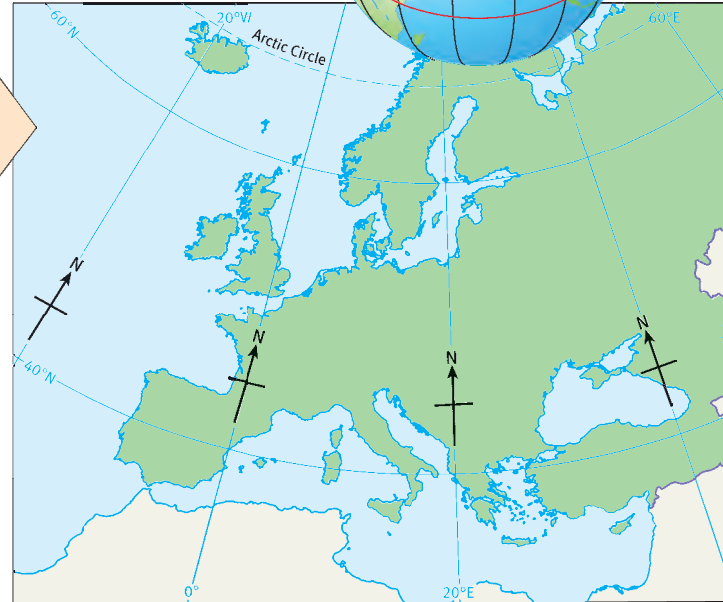
A compass is used for finding direction. The needle of a compass always points north.



Which way is North?



North on atlas maps follows the lines of longitude.



Cairo is **north** of Beni Suef.
Beni Suef is **south** of Cairo.
Suez is **east** of Cairo.
Alexandria is **north west** of Cairo.

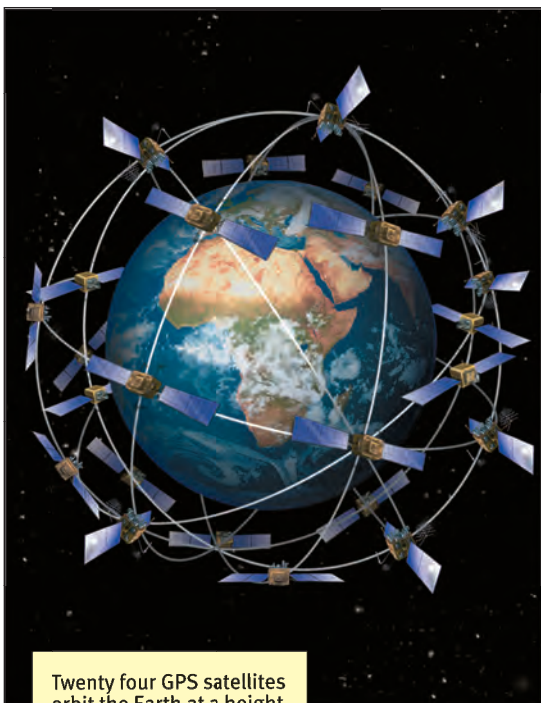
Using a compass, can you find which direction north is from where you are?



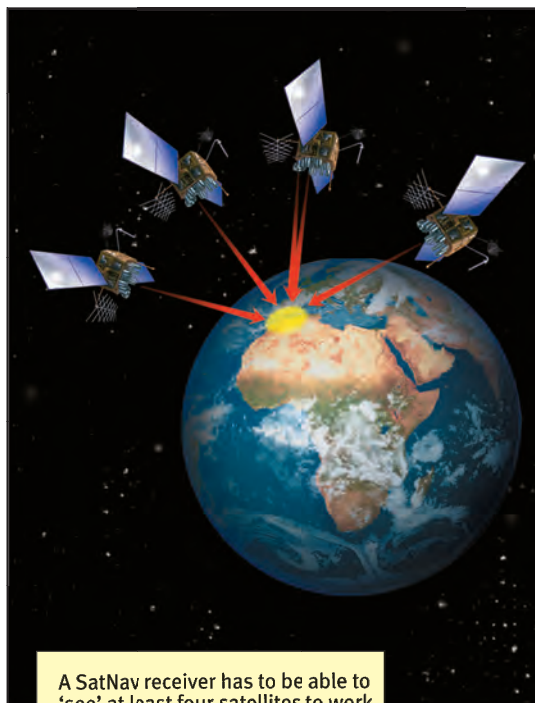
Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites send signals to equipment on the ground. When a GPS receiver, such as SatNav in a car, picks up signals from several satellites it can work out where it is and give directions to where you want to go.



How does SatNav work?



Twenty four GPS satellites orbit the Earth at a height of 12 000 miles.



A SatNav receiver has to be able to 'see' at least four satellites to work out where it is.



Tell SatNav where you want to go and it gives you directions. This one has a moving map as well as voice instructions.