

How to use this book

The purpose and structure of the book.

This book is structured to mirror the mapmaking process itself—it's non-linear! Rarely would you make a map in an order that goes from projections, then symbols, then colour, then typography, and then layout—with one practical component applied after the other. Making a map is a process that requires you to think simultaneously about the interplay of the concepts and decisions that underpin your map. Yet most books on cartography are written linearly. Being able to dive into the book to learn a little about a specific aspect is, I feel, more relevant and useful than trying to create an artificial grouping of topics. Sure, some topics are more related than others but I hope this fresh approach to the subject gives you a way of accessing what you need to know, rapidly.

The book is organised alphabetically, and individual cartographic topics are given their own double-page spreads. On the left side of each spread you see the title at the top, followed by a short summary line that succinctly describes the scope of the spread. The remainder of the left side of the spread is, in the main, devoted to words. The left, wider column of writing presents the core essence of the topic in about 300 words or less. That was the task in writing—to subdivide cartography into topics of around the same size. Each paragraph leads with an opening phrase, set in bold.

The main writing is supported by a narrower column to the right. This column of text is presented in a smaller point size. This styling is deliberate. Maps contain visual structure to enable you to read them. I wanted to visually structure the words to support the idea that the right column contains detail that is supportive but not core. You'll find interesting historical facts, detail about key people, or simply a little more detail to illuminate what you've read in the left column.

Every topic has one spread. No more, no less. But you can find connected topics using the 'see also' links below topics. These links alert you to the spreads that are most closely related.

See also: [Anatomy of a map](#) | [Cartographic process](#) | [Defining map design](#) | [Defining maps and cartography](#) | [Globes](#) | [Graphicacy](#) | [Types of maps](#)

Colour is used throughout the book to group related concepts. The title of each spread is presented in the colour that, conceptually, it belongs to. These colours are intended to provide a subtle (as in not visually overbearing) way to make connections between topics and also provide a way to navigate the book.

The colour theme is carried through to a small stroke on the left edge of the page. This use of colour provides a way to perhaps peruse the book and immediately see topics that are related. You'll also see colour used for the 'see also' links at the foot of the page. So, for example, this page is coloured as if it belonged to the Foundations category with relevant links to related topics.

Given the book is alphabetically structured I wanted to ensure there were clear breaks between each letter. To achieve this, I invited colleagues to contribute a short description about a classic map. Each of the 25 maps has its own spread with the short description to the left. These words add different voices to the book and provide a way to enjoy other ideas and views. I might have selected different maps but that's the point—this isn't a list of my top 25 maps. It's a collated set from the wider community that act as examples from which to explore and learn.

The righthand page of each spread is reserved for illustrations. I've deliberately avoided a consistent stylistic treatment so each page is different. There are original diagrams and maps made by myself, Wes, and John. There's also external content interspersed. Some classic and familiar examples. Some new and unseen. I've tried to make each spread unique and offer a visually enticing look at the subject through different visual lenses. This is a book I hope is as visually interesting as much as it is useful.

Opposite (left): book category information.
Opposite (right): some of what cartography is about and what a cartographer does.

