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Oxford International Primary Atlas

Written by

Patrick Wiegand

Published by

Oxford University Press

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Oxford International Primary Atlas

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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP
Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
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First published 2011

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ISBN: 978 0 19 848022 8

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Printed in Singapore by KHL Printing Co. Pte Ltd.

Acknowledgements

The publisher and authors would like to thank the following:

P5r John Tomaselli/Alamy; **P5l** PlanetObserver/Science Photo Library; **P8t** Robert Harding Picture Library Ltd/Alamy; **P8tc** The Photolibrary Wales/Alamy; **P8c** geogphotos/Alamy; **P8bc** Ivan J Belcher/Worldwide Picture Library/Alamy; **P8b** Chinch Gryniewicz/Ecoscene/Corbis; **P9tr** Jonathan Dorey - Scotland/Alamy; **P9tl** Britain On View/Photolibrary.com; **P9bl** Graham Oliver/Alamy; **P9br** Realimage/Alamy; **P10tl** Kevin Allen/Alamy; **P10tr** Peter Harrison/Photolibrary.com; **P10br** Travel Pix/Robert Harding Travel/Photolibrary.com; **P10bl** Carole Castelli/Shutterstock; **P11tr** /NASA; **P11tl** Planetary Visions Ltd/Science Photo Library; **P11bl** NASA/age fotostock/Photolibrary.com; **P11br** /NASA; **P12-13** PlanetObserver/Science Photo Library; **P16** Peter Adams/The Image Bank/Getty Images; **P17tr** Igor Plotnikov/Shutterstock; **P17bl** NPA/Stone/Getty Images; **P17br** Image Makers/The Image Bank/Getty Images; **P20cl** mediacolor's/Alamy; **P20tl** Radius Images/Photolibrary.com; **P20tr** Ron Watts/Corbis; **P20bl** ashfordplatt/Alamy; **P20br** Charles & Josette Lenars/Corbis; **P21tl** John Warburton-Lee/Photolibrary.com; **P21tr** Richard A. Cooke/Corbis; **P21bl** Wolfgang Kaehler/Corbis; **P21bc** Galen Rowell/Terra/Corbis; **P21br** Frans Lemmens/The Image Bank/Getty Images; **P22l** Jan Krimmer/imagebroker.net/Photolibrary.com; **P22r** Christian Heinrich/imagebroker RF/Photolibrary.com; **P23bl** Ben Osborne/Stone/Getty Images; **P23br** Fawzan Husain/Photolibrary.com; **P23t** Neale Clarke/Robert Harding Travel/Photolibrary.com; **P24** Claudio Zaccherini/Shutterstock; **P30bl** Ingolf Pompe 5/Alamy; **P30br** Simon Margetson/Alamy; **P30cr** Simon Margetson/Alamy; **P31** David Ball/Terra/Corbis; **P32** mikeuk/iStockphoto.com; **P35t** Joel Saget/AFP/Getty Images; **P35b** Pepeira Tom/Iconotec/Photolibrary.com; **P37br** Superstock/Photolibrary.com; **P37bl** Oso Media/Alamy; **P37t** Albert Kerstna/iStockphoto.com; **P39t** Kristian Peetz/Shutterstock; **P39bl** Eye Ubiquitous/Photolibrary.com; **P39br** Josef Beck/imagebroker.net/Photolibrary.com; **P41b** S. Greg Panosian/iStockphoto.com; P41t David Trood/The Image Bank/Getty Images; **P42** CNES, 1995 Distribution Spot Image/Science Photo Library; **P43t** yanta/iStockphoto.com; **P43b** John Frumm/Terra/Corbis; **P47t** Sipa Press/Rex Features; **P47b** Tim Wright/Alamy; **P48** Jagadeesh/Reuters/Corbis; **P51** Emma Sklar/Rex Features; **P52** Robert Francis/Robert Harding Travel/Photolibrary.com; **P53** Peter Parks/AFP/Getty Images; **P57tl** Gregory Dimijian/Science Photo Library; **P57tr** Tom Brakefield/Flirt/Corbis; **P57bl** Keith Shuttlewood/Alamy; **P57br** Lite Productions/Photolibrary.com; **P58** Yann Arthus-Bertrand/Encyclopedia/Corbis; **P59** Alex Bartel/Digital Light Source/Peter Arnold/Still Pictures; **P63** James Randklev/Photographer's Choice/Getty Images; **P64r** Don Hebert/Taxi/Getty Images; **P64l** Alvaro Leiva/age fotostock/Photolibrary.com; **P65t** Jane Sweeney/Encyclopedia/Corbis; **P65b** Frans Lanting/Latitude/Corbis; **P69l** Pascal Rondeau/Stone/Getty Images; **P69c** Julia Rogers/Alamy; **P69r** Thomas Schmitt/The Image Bank/Getty Images; **P70** Pete Niesen/Shutterstock; **P71l** Chris McLennan/Photolibrary.com; **P71c** John Lamb/Stone/Getty Images; **P71r** Chris Ballentine/Paul Thompson Images/Alamy; **P72t** Zeebra/Cusp/Corbis; **P72c** Paul A. Souders/Encyclopedia/Corbis; **P72b** Wildtrack Media/Rex Features; **P74t** Roberto Rinaldi/Tips Italia/Photolibrary.com; **P74bl** Calvin W Hall/Alaskastock/Photolibrary.com; **P74br** Keith Levit Photography/Photolibrary.com; **P75t** Robert Harding Picture Library Ltd/Alamy; **P75bl** Galen Rowell/Corbis; **P75br** Fritz Polking/Peter Arnold Images/Photolibrary.com

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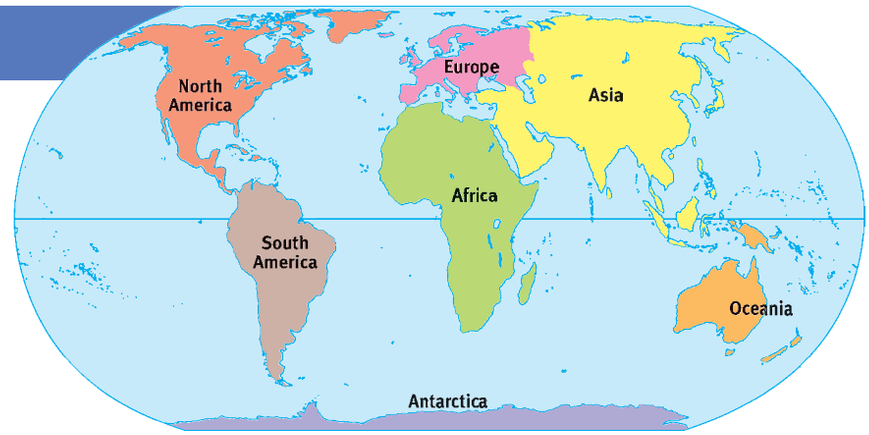
Illustrations by:
Mark Brierley p18 (icons); Mark Duffin p5 (compass), Gary Hincks p8, p9; Harry Venning p18

Cover photo by Cliff Wassmann/iStockphoto. Cover globe by Jan Rysavy/iStockphoto

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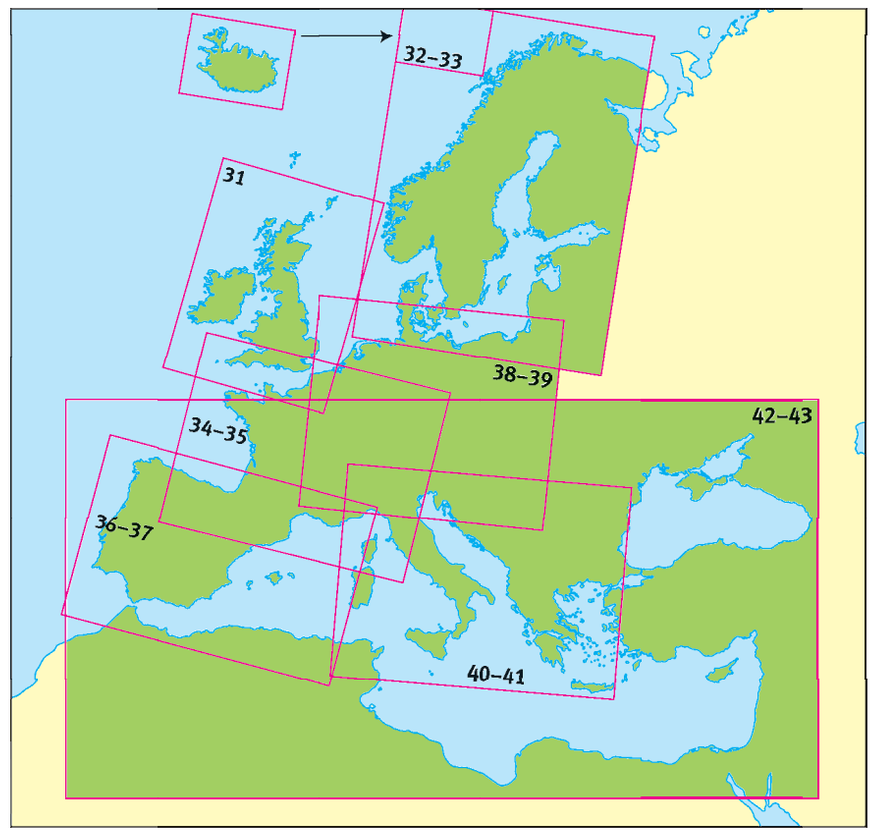


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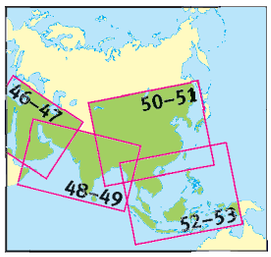


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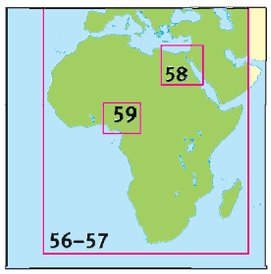
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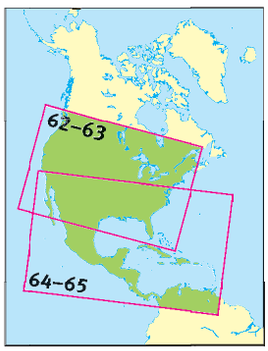
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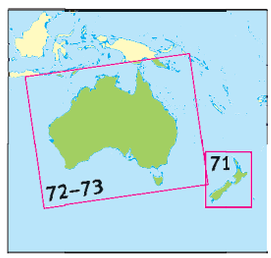
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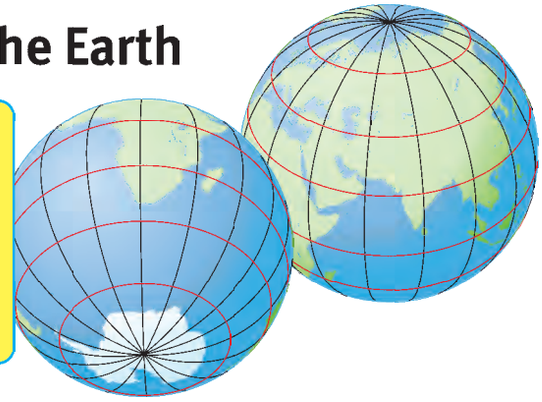
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Understanding the Earth

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.

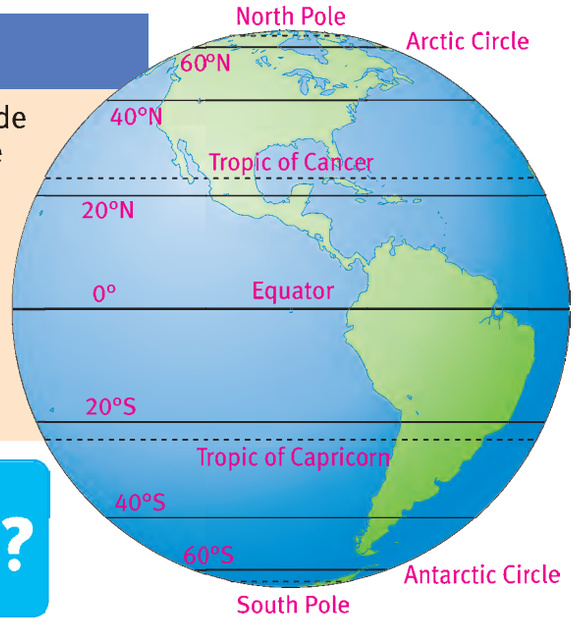


Latitude

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.



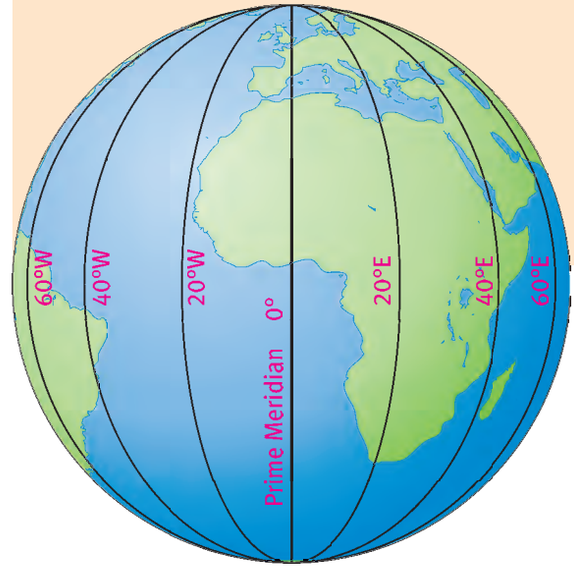
Can you find the **Equator**, the **Prime Meridian** and the **International Date Line** on a globe?

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°.

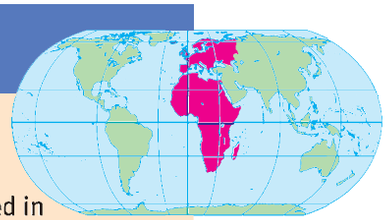
The **International Date Line** (on the other side of the Earth) is based on longitude 180°.



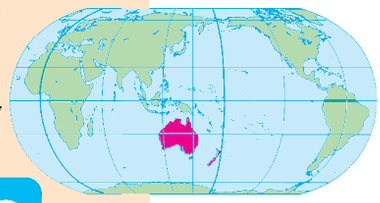
There are many ways of showing the spherical Earth on a flat world map.

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.

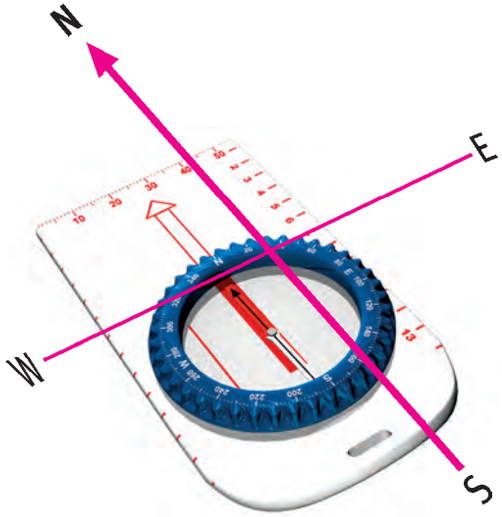
Numbers and letters together make a **grid code** that can be used to describe where places are on the Earth.

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

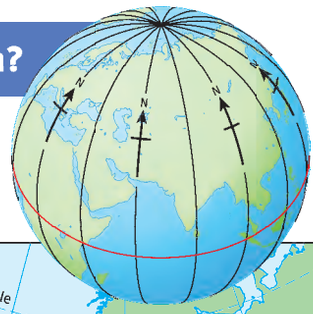


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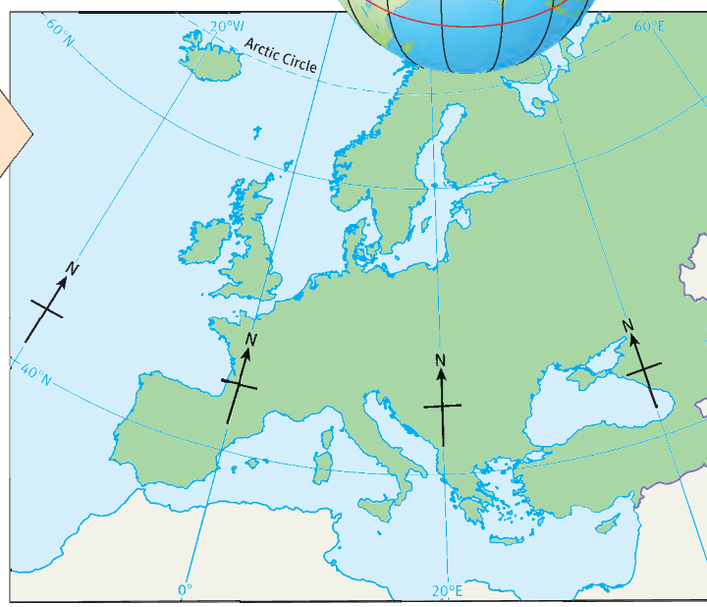
A compass is used for finding direction. The needle of a compass always points north.

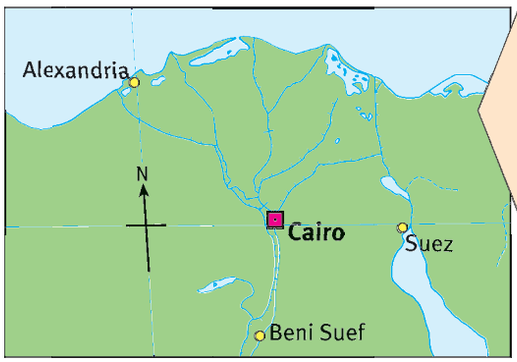


Which way is North?



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.

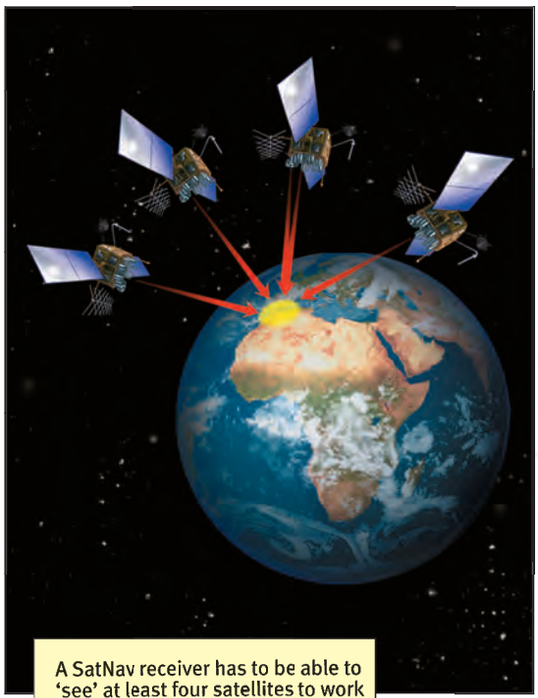
Using a compass, can you find which direction north is from where you are? ?

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.

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