How to Label a Map

Cartography is the art of drawing accurate, easily readable, attractive maps.

LABELLING

- Should be as NEAT as possibly
- Should be printed in pencil first, then neatly copied in ink (erase pencil lines)
- Should be spelled accurately
- Printed parallel to the base of the map
- River names should curve to follow the course of the river
- A DOT (.) should be used when labeling cities, placing the name of the city as close as possible
- The size of labels depends on the amount of information need on the map
- Larger features usually have larger labels
- Labels for similar features (capital cities) should be the same size
- Labels should not block other information on the map
- DO NOT underline labels

COLOURING/SHADING

- Maps should be properly colour coded using different colours to show the different areas on the map
- Shade consistently avoiding light and dark patches
- Use solid colours only
- White or black are not to be used as colours on map
- Grey should only be used for areas not important to the map
- Blue is only to be used for water: lakes, rivers, oceans, sea, bays
- When shading large water bodies, ‘feathering’ around the edge is acceptable
- Ensure the colours used on the map match the colours used in the legend
Be sure to follow the mapmaking expectations below when completing all maps in this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Map Making Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Title                    | • Should be within the map frame or border  
• Should be at the **TOP** of the map  
• Should be **UNDERLINED** or **BOXED**  
• Should not block any of the map’s information  
• Should include: what, where, when |
| Legend                   | • All maps **MUST** have a legend  
• A legend should not block any other map information  
• Place a **BORDER** around the legend information  
• All legends must have an **UNDERLINED TITLE**  
• Direction and scale can be included in the legend |
| Scale                    | • Provide a scale, either linear, statement or representative fraction  
• **Use a ruler** |
| Direction                | • All maps **MUST** have a direction arrow  
• North should always be at the top of the page  
• **Use a ruler** |
| Border                   | • Must be around the entire map  
• Must be of equal proportions  
All title, legend, & labeling must be within the border |
| Date of Publication      | • Indicate when the map was produced  
• Indicate who produced the map |

A map is a simple illustration of material. Keep your map neat and make sure that it illustrates what your title indicates. **DO NOT clutter it with unnecessary material.**