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Interpreting contour lines answer key examples pdf document free

Interpreting contour lines answer key.

Those marks indicate a crater or depression at the summit. Discover the contour interval in two ways: Find the contour interval on the map margin or legend, or Calculate the contour interval between index contours, which are are the map margin or legend, or Calculate the contour interval in two ways: Find the contour interval in have 50-foot or 100-foot intervals. Topo Map Scales Map scale is important because it tells you how detailed a topo will be. Whether you're new to topo maps, like lines, numbers, symbols, and colors, so that you can read them with ease and confidence. This article covers: Contour Lines Contour Lines are also listed in the margins of most topographical maps. They show the shape of the terrain, including its hills, slopes, and depressions, by tracing a constant line of elevation on the map that corresponds with the landscape in the real world. Basic landforms on Thompson Peak, Idaho. The map on the right is a USFS large-scale map displaying township, range, and section numbers. There are four knobs (knuckles), a gentle slope (back of your hand), and four small ridges (fingers) separated by ravines (space between the fingers). USGS quad maps, scaled at 1:24,000, are still considered the industry standard. From the USGS Topo on Gaia GPS, the summit of Pu'umakanaka, Hawaii is a near-perfect cone as indicated by the evenly spaced and round contour lines. First, subtract the lower number from the higher number and then divide the result by the number of contour lines. You can also look up magnetic declination by using this nifty calculator. The contour interval is 100 feet. Basic topographic landforms (peak, saddle, ridge, drainage) and a comparison of relative steepness as seen on US Topo in gaiagps.com. Intervals set at 40-feet are common on 1:24,000 scale maps. Index contours are every 5th line, and there are 500 feet between index contours, so the contour interval is 100 feet. Find the spread out contours appear relatively flat—more like a 2-tier birthday cake. A large mountain appears as a dense group of lines with a small circle in the center that represents the peak—just picture looking down at a wedding cake from above. A flat meadow is void of contour lines. If you're holding the map in front of you, and the letters and numbers are right-side up, then the direction of true north is located at the top of the map. When the map is oriented to true north in the field all the surrounding features will line up with the contour lines on the map. View the nine most popular hiking maps at Gaia GPS to get an idea of which topo maps people use most. Colors on the Map Some legends define what different colors represents water in the form of creeks, rivers, and lakes. But you can use the lanyard of your compass, a guy line from your tent, or the shoelace from your boot to trace the lanyard against the linear bar scale. These diagrams show the declination for the area on the map. These are large scale maps and bring a lot of detail into focus. This is important because when you are in the field, you'll need to orient the map to true north to bring the map in line with the land features around you. A topo map provides a bird's eye view of those concentric circles, allowing you to "see" both the height and shape of the mountain, there is a good chance it's a field of talus. Map scales vary greatly across different topo maps, but the most common scale is 1:24,000 for topo maps created in the United States. Its wilderness maps cover an entire wilderness area and come in a small scale to fit on a single page. Map and compass navigators use the declination angle to adjust their compass to account for the difference between true north on the map and magnetic north, which lies some 400 kilometers south of true north. This is the time to practice picking out ridges and peaks on the maps. UTM Coordinates Some maps, like National Geographic Trails Illustrated, display the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system, which includes markings on the map's north-south line and east-west line. Some smaller companies make regional topo maps, such as Beartooth Publishing in Bozeman, Montana, and Tom Harrison Maps, based in San Rafael, California. Some maps display UTM grid lines, and others don't, leaving you to eyeball the exact measurement or use a tool to help calculate the exact measurement or use a tool to help calc may not accurately reflect the current declination. The areas by your fingers have contour lines that are close together, indicating steepness. With a premium membership, you can access and download the entire Gaia GPS map catalog, including the best backcountry maps and layers. When the slope is gentle, the contour lines are spread far apart. Reading Slope Steepness on a Topo Map Contour lines present in very predictable ways on the map. Contour intervals vary from map to map. Map Legend A map legend explains what the map's symbols, lines, and colors represent to map. Map Legend A map legend explains what the map's symbols, lines, and colors represent to map. Map Legend A map legend explains what the map's symbols, lines, and colors represent. Gaia GPS. You can also print and customize the maps from Gaia GPS and take them with you on the trail. Ridges are also shown by "V" or "U" shaped contours, but these "point" downhill, toward lower elevations. The United States Geological Survey quadrangle maps are scaled to 1:24,000. They present in the form of degrees, as shown in the picture below. You can pick out major land features on the map by the way the contour lines are shaped. What you need to know is that the bigger the number on the bottom of the ratio, the smaller region of land in intricate detail: 1:24,000 = a small scale map that depicts a larger area of land in less detail The map scale and contour intervals are usually found in the bottom margin or in the legend of the topo map. But, make no mistake about it, learning to read and understand topographic maps takes time and practice. National Geographic Trails Illustrated offers more than 250 titles for recreation areas in America. Drop down another quarter of an inch and repeat. The date of the last update varies by region. Whitney's west face is marked by low-angle slopes, as depicted by the wide-spaced contour lines. Knuckle Mountain Try this quick exercise at home to get a better understanding of contour lines. Make a fist with your hand, taking note of the "features" on your fist. Declination is the angle of deviation between the magnetic north and true north. On a larger scale 1:24,000 USGS quadrangle map, as referenced in the photo above, one inch on the map equals 2,000 feet on the ground. Find Topo Maps that cover the topography of the entire lower 48 states and Hawaii. Check out all the classics: USGS Topo Official topo maps from the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Through the use of contour lines, topo maps bring a 3-dimensional element to a 2-dimensional paper map. The FSTopo is the same large-scale map as the USGS quadrangle map and is available in hard copy at some of the Forest Service offices. Orient the Map Topographic maps are oriented to true north. The absence of vegetation can mean many things, including a desert landscape, a meadow, a scree field, a gentle grassy slope high above treeline, or a burn area. Identifying Features with Contour Lines Contour lines show more than just the steepness of a slope or the elevation of a peak. You'll find the map scale written as a ratio in the bottom margin of a topo map. The map on the left shows a large-scale USGS quadrangle map and the UTM "easting" and northing" measurements closer to the edge of the map. Learn how to orient the map from backpacking guide Andrew Skurka. On a 1:24,000 scale map, 1 inch on the map is representative of 24,000 inches, or 2000 feet, on the ground. It includes labeled trails, roads, and vegetation shading to help you plan hiking, backpacking, camping, off-roading, hunting, or fishing trips. Contour Intervals and Index Marker The contour line. California's Mount Whitney, at 14,505 feet, the tallest mountain in the lower 48 states, is steep on its east face as indicated by the closely spaced contour lines. Think of contour lines as imaginary horizontal planes sliced through the terrain surface. Green areas are sections of land covered with vegetation, like trees. Remember, water never runs along ridge tops. Saddle: A low spot between two peaks marked by hourglass-shaped contour lines. Large scale USFS recreation maps often include a robust legend with keys for recreation symbols, like campgrounds and restrooms. Notice the tick marks on the contour lines in the center of the map. Index contours on the NRCAN Canada Topo layer. This is the most up-to-date rasterized map available from the US Forest Service. Each box represents one square mile. These numbered boxes are called sections and originate from the township and range survey method that was used throughout the western United States, some midwestern states, and Alabama and Florida. The numbers on the east-west lines are "eastings" and they depict the number of meters east or west of a particular reference line. Use the contour lines are stacked on top of each other. For example, in a 1:63,360 map, one inch on the map equals one mile on land. Gaia Topo Gaia Topo Gaia Topo is the main map source in Gaia GPS, available to all Gaia GPS users—with or without a paid membership. Declination Topo maps are oriented to true north, while your compass needle is drawn to magnetic north. Topo maps allow you to visualize the rise and fall of the land and "see" the depths of canyons, the location of boggy meadows, and the height and shape of mountains. There may be a listing of points of interest, such as prominent peaks and glaciers, and a legend defining roads, trails, and manmade features like gates and power lines. Conversely, when the slope is steep the contour lines pack closely together. This quilt of digitized 1:24,000 USGS quadrangles covers the entire contiguous United States. Two ways declination is depicted on maps, in the margin or on the map face. Notice the "v" shaped topo lines where the ravines were between your fingers. This is important when you're out in the field because it places context to distance added by switchbacks and twists and turns of a trail. On gaiagps.com, click on the map's thumbnail in the layers menu to access the legend. She enjoys backpacking, skiing, and mountain biking in the mountains near her home in Montana. White areas outlined by a thin blue line indicate a year-round snowfield. White, or the color of the base map, represents land that lacks tall vegetation. Each square on the map represents one-square-mile on the ground, conveniently giving you the ability to assess distance without having to use the distance bar. These are smaller-scale maps, with less intricate detail. USFS 2016 Full, detailed topographic coverage of all 172 national forests and grasslands in the US. The measurements on the north-south lines are "northings" and represent the number of meters that point on the map is from the equator. Map Grids Township and Range Many maps have grid lines with the numbers 1-36 written in the middle of each box. If every fifth line is bold, then divide by 5. Visualizing Contour Lines It may be helpful to visualize contour lines as stacked "layers" of the landscape, similar to a layer cake. The U.S. Forest service maps, and maps throughout Alaska. Look for the legend in the margin or in the corner of a map. Map scale is defined as one single unit of measurement equal to a definitive number of the same number of units in the real world. Do that again and again, until you've mapped out your entire fist. Next, lay your hand flat with your palm on the table. Find an hourglass-shaped topo line for the saddle between your knuckles. Peak: A mountain or hill that is marked by concentric contour lines. The summit may be marked with a name, an "X", or an elevation. Valley: A landform with a depression in which water, if present, would flow down. Each quad covers 7.5 minutes of latitude. Index contours are the more prominent, bold colored lines with the elevation marked on them. This angle is often depicted in the bottom margin of the map or on the map itself, as seen in the photos below. For example, if the index contours elevations are 8000 and 7500 feet as shown in the picture above, the difference is 500 feet. These maps are referred to as the USGS quadrangle maps, with each map covering a 7.5-minute section of latitude and longitude on the globe. If the area is flat with no contour lines and a river flows through the non-vegetated area, then the white-shaded zone is likely a meadow. Declination varies with location on the earth, and in one part of the Country. Some National Geographic maps use a scale of 1:65,000, which allows a large area of land to be packed onto a single topo map. Knowing how to read a topographic map is the foundation of any backcountry adventure. Also know as gullies, drainages, ravines, and couloirs, valleys are indicated by "V" or "U" shaped contour lines that "point" uphill, toward higher elevation. Ridge: A landform with an elevated crest that slopes down on the sides. This will give you a more accurate assessment of distance than a straight-line measurement on the map's surface. With your other hand, mark an "x" on the knuckle that sticks up the highest to mark the "summit." Using a pen, drop down from the summit a quarter-inch and make a contour line around the mountain." without dropping or climbing, until you complete the contour line and close the circle. Private companies have delved into publishing topo maps too. Distance Scale in the margin identifies the distance on the ground in relation to a straight line on a map.

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