

## How do contours show height and relief?

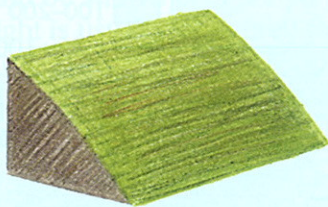
Lines on a map that join places of the same height are called **contours**. Contours show the height of the land and what shape it is. The shape of the land is called **relief**. The difference in height between contours is chosen by the map maker. On most Ordnance Survey maps they are drawn at every 10 metres. This difference in height is called the **contour interval**. Several contours together make up a pattern. By looking carefully at these patterns you can work out how steep the slopes are and what shape the land is.

Contour lines are drawn on maps by map makers. You cannot see them on the ground. In diagram A the contours have been drawn on the main sketch. You will see that they make up different patterns. An important thing to remember is that:

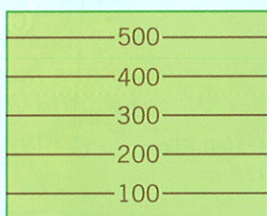
- ◆ *the closer the contour lines are together, the steeper the slope will be.*

A

Landform sketch

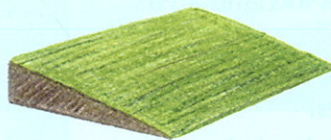


Contour pattern

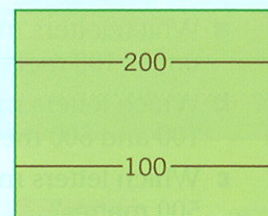


A **steep slope** has contours that are close together.

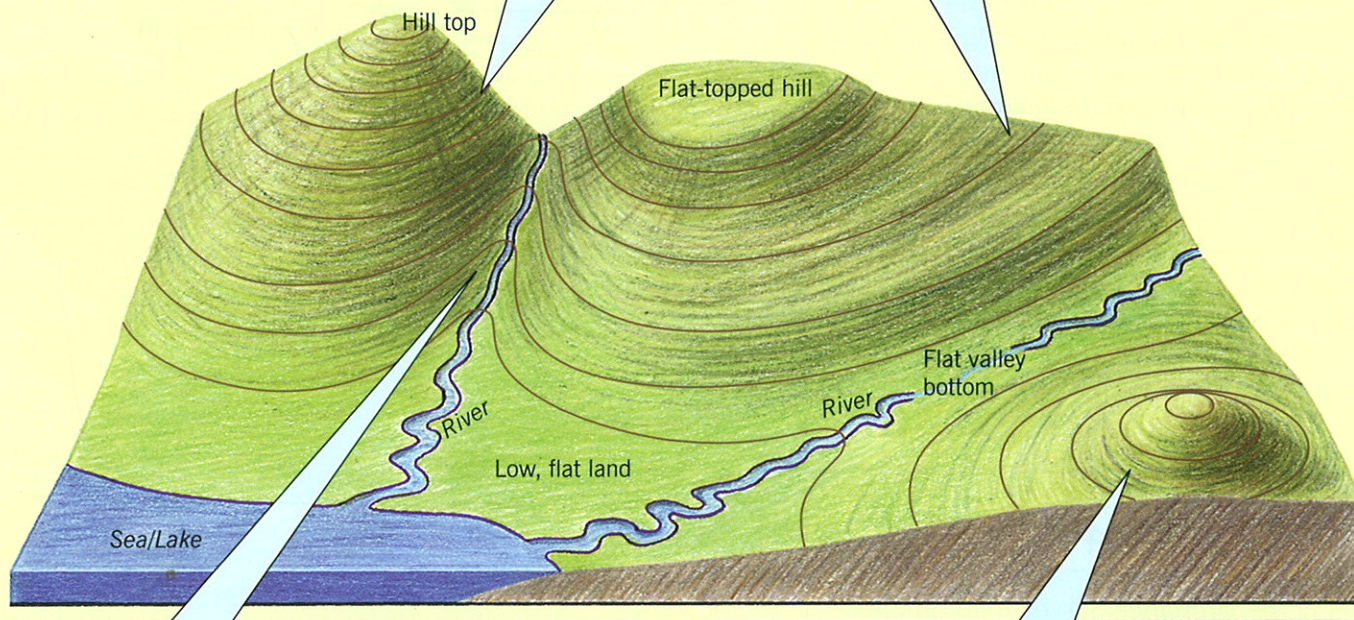
Landform sketch



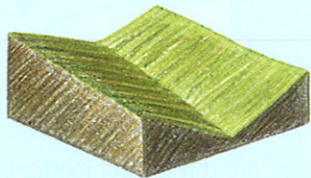
Contour pattern



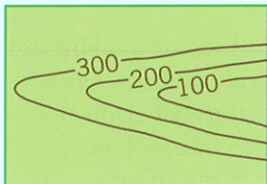
A **gentle slope** has contours that are far apart.



Landform sketch



Contour pattern



A **valley** has contours drawn in a V-shape. The arrow of the V points up the valley.

Landform sketch



Contour pattern



A **round cone-shaped hill** has circular contours with the highest one at the centre.

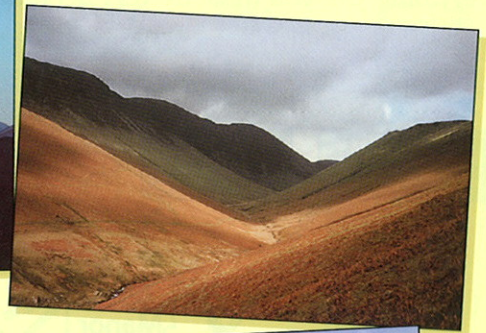
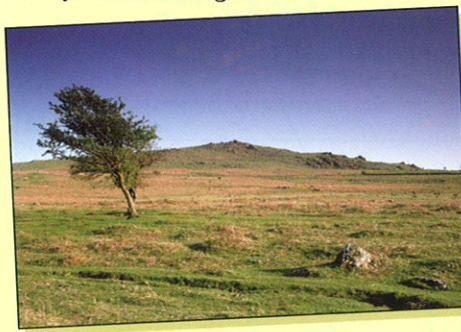
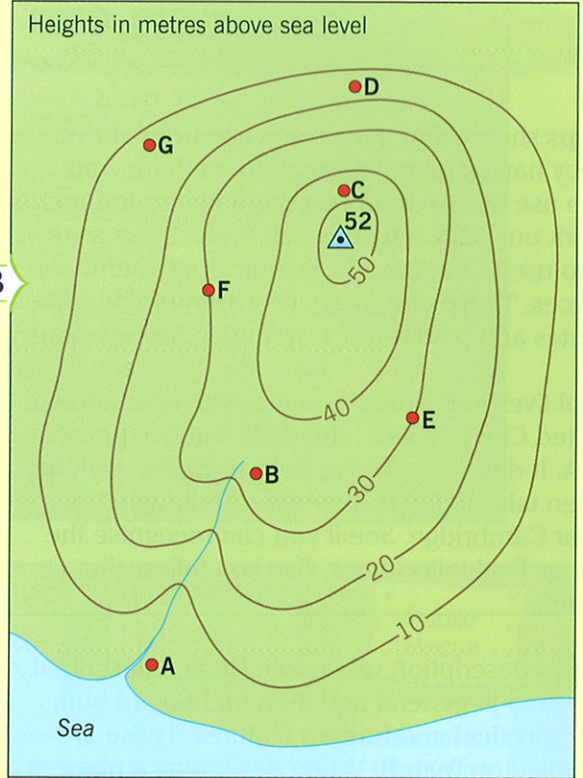


# Activities

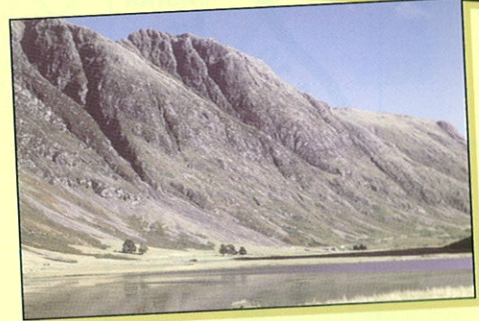
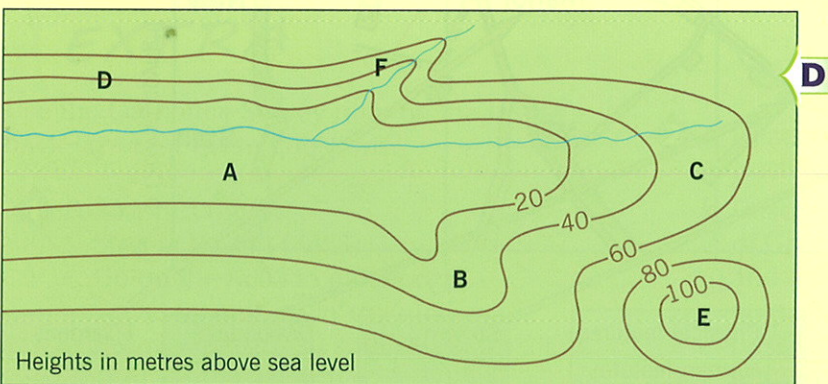
- 1** From map **B** give the heights of the following places. Choose your answers from those in the brackets.
- a** The highest point is (22, 48, 52, 40, 60) metres.
  - b** Place **E** is (8, 42, 30, 20, 16) metres.
  - c** Place **B** is (30, 20, 26, 46, 34) metres.
  - d** Place **A** is (15, 10, 34, 6, 21) metres.
  - e** Place **D** is (28, 10, 12, 22, 8) metres.

- 2** Look at map **B** and say if the following statements are TRUE or FALSE.
- a** **E** and **F** are at the same height.
  - b** **D** is higher than **F**.
  - c** **B** is higher than **E** but lower than **C**.
  - d** **A** is the lowest place marked with a letter.
  - e** **D** to **C** is steeper than **A** to **B**.

- 3** The photos in **C** show some landscape features.
- a** Draw a simple contour pattern for each of the photos.
  - b** Write a description of the feature next to each of your drawings.



- 4** Look at the six letters on map **D**. Match the letters to each of the following:
- |                         |                                     |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> A gentle slope | <b>4</b> A flat valley floor        |
| <b>2</b> A steep slope  | <b>5</b> A valley with a stream     |
| <b>3</b> A hill top     | <b>6</b> A valley without a stream. |



## Summary

Contour lines are a good way of showing height and relief on a map. Contours that are close together show steep slopes. Contours that are far apart show gentle slopes.