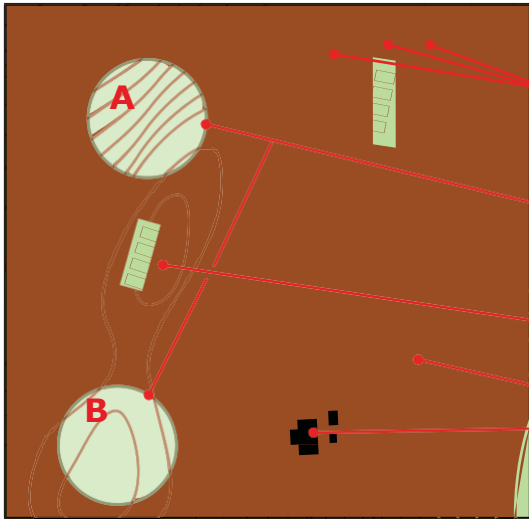


Topographic Maps: Contour Lines

Topographic maps show how flat or steep the land is. They show this with a series of lines that are labeled with the elevation, or height, of the land. These lines are called contour lines.

A simplified topographic map



Topographic maps show:

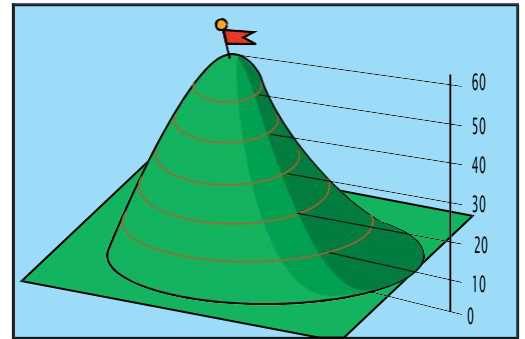
Contour lines, which represent changes in elevation, or height. The closer they are together, the steeper the land.

Here, the map shows that Area A is steeper than Area B because there are more lines and they are closer together in A.

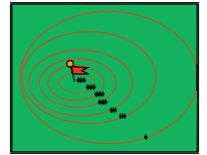
Elevation indicator, which tells the height in feet or meters.

Details such as water,

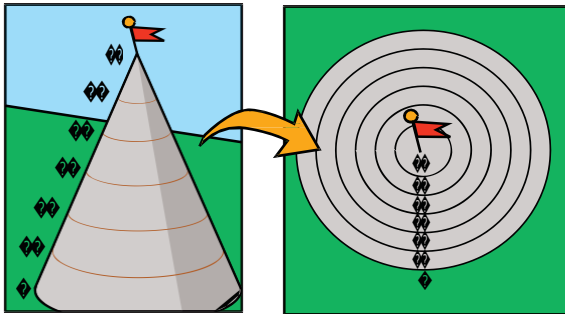
Buildings



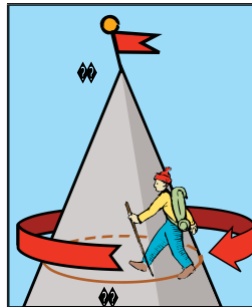
Contour lines show the elevation. Here the land is steeper on the left side and a gentler slope on the right.



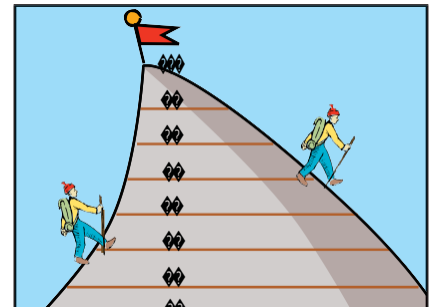
A topographic map of a cone is a series of circles.



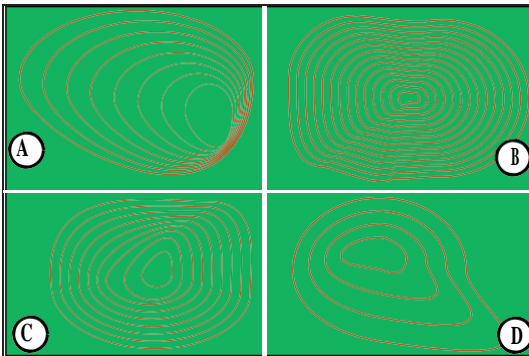
If the hiker stays on the same contour line, he'll stay at the same elevation, or height.



If the hiker crosses contour lines, he'll either be climbing up or going down in elevation.

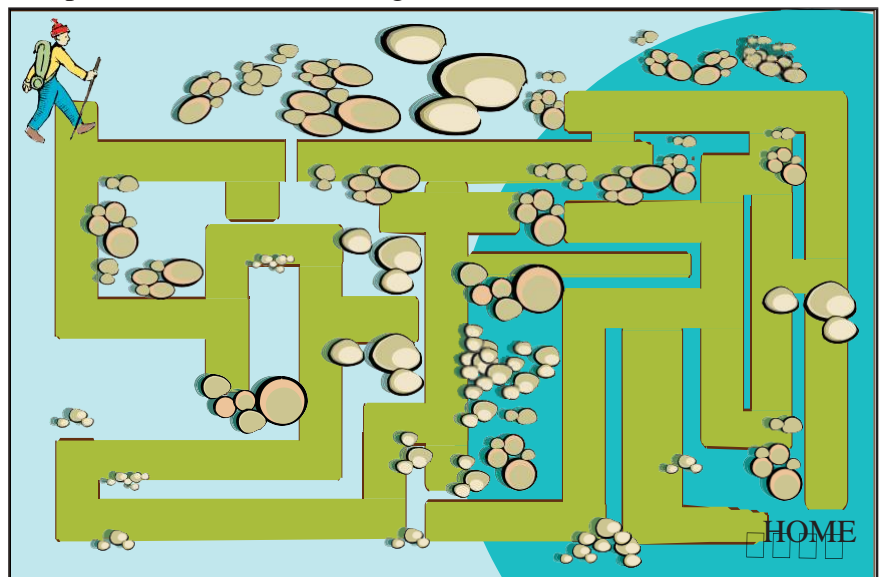


Which land is...



tallest? _____ steepest? _____
flatest? _____

Help Howie hike home through the hills...



Map Reading Activity: Topography

Topography is the study of elevations on land in relation to each other. It includes all valleys, mountains, and any sort of rise or dip in the ground.

Topography is shown on a map with lines radiating out from sea level. The more lines in between sea level and any point, the higher in elevation it is. These lines are generally called contour lines.

For the activity below, draw a line from the contour image of the mountain range on the left to the correct side view of the mountain range on the right.

