

## **Reading a TMAP**

Note: These instructions will work best for maps of a standard grid environment. You may have more difficulty following these directions if your map contains areas that are not on a grid (for example, many new housing subdivisions feature winding streets that make loops, curves, and other non-grid shapes).

### **Exercise 1 – Establishing Directions**

1. Orient the map so that the staple is in the top left corner.
2. Look for a capital letter N and an arrow in the top right corner of the page. This is your compass arrow.
3. Establish all four compass positions, using the edges of the page as reference points. The top edge of the page is north; the bottom edge of the page is south. The left edge of the page is west; the right edge of the page is east.
4. Establish all four intercardinal directions, using the corners of the page as reference points. The top left corner where the staple is located is northwest; the top right corner is northeast. The bottom right corner is southeast; the bottom left corner is southwest.

### **Exercise 2 – Locating the Street That Your Destination Is On**

1. Using two flat hands, explore the entire page briefly. Here, you are scanning to obtain an overview. Note whether the map lines appear to run primarily up/down and left/right or if the map lines appear to be on an angle. Not all city streets are oriented along compass lines, so the map grid may appear to be slanted when viewed while facing due north. If the map does not appear to represent a grid at all, your destination may be located in an area that is not built on a grid;

orientation in these areas can be notoriously difficult, so be patient with yourself and recognize that the remainder of these exercises may present unique challenges.

2. Find the landmark symbol near the center (a filled circle). This is your destination.
3. Locate the nearest street (represented by a line).
4. Using both hands, track the street to each end. Your hands will be moving in opposite directions, either simultaneously or sequentially. Tracking with a light touch and smooth, controlled movements will make the task easier.
5. Locate the name abbreviation near the end of the line. Note that only one end may be labeled, or you may have abbreviations on each end (these may be the same or they may be different on each end). Not all streets will be labeled, and the street that your destination is located on may not be labeled.
6. Check the Map Key on the second page to find the street name and directional information about this street. In some instances, the Map Key may include more than one page.
7. If the street name that you just located does not match the street name in the address that you requested, go back to Exercise 2, Step 2 and repeat the entire exercise for each street adjacent to your landmark. Stop when you locate a street whose name is contained in the address that you requested when you ordered your map (or when you have explored all possibilities, if your street is unlabeled).
8. Your destination is located on this street. If your landmark does not appear to be close to the street that it is located on, there may be other environmental features between the destination and the street (for example, a large parking lot in front of a building).

### **Exercise 3 – Locating Cross Streets**

1. With one finger on the landmark symbol, use the other to locate the street on which your destination is located. If necessary, reorient the page so that this street runs from left to right.
2. Using both hands, scan to the left and right of the landmark, looking for two roads that appear parallel to one another. These roads will be running vertically.
3. Track both streets simultaneously to their top ends. Your hands should be moving in the same direction. Note that some streets may not continue all the way to the edge of the page; if one street does not continue all the way to the top, keep your finger on its end and continue to track the other street to its end. Streets that do not extend to the edge of the page will not be labeled.
4. Locate the adjacent name abbreviations and use the Map Key to locate the full street names and directional information about these streets. Note that not all streets will be labeled and that you may need to temporarily re-orient the page in order to read.
5. Track both streets simultaneously to their bottom ends and check for labels, as in Steps 3 and 4 above. If the street name labeled at the bottom is different than the label at the top, make note that somewhere along this street, its name changes and that the map does not reflect where the name change occurs. Again, note that not all streets will continue all the way to the bottom edge and not all streets will be labeled. You may need to re-orient the page to read.
6. Your landmark is located between these two streets.

## **Exercise 4 – Locating the Intersection Nearest Your Destination**

1. Place both fingers on the landmark symbol with the staple in the top left corner of the page.
2. Scan for the two nearest streets that run perpendicular to one another. To do this, one hand will scan up or down and the other will scan to the left or right.
3. Track each street to whichever end contains a label. Your hands should be moving in different directions (for example, one up or down and the other to the left or right). You may track both streets simultaneously or track each one sequentially, but be sure to use different hands for each task.
4. Locate the adjacent abbreviations, if present, and refer to the Map Key to locate the full street names and directional information.
5. Your landmark is located near the intersection of these two streets.

### **Summarizing Your Findings**

After you have completed these four exercises, list the facts that you know about your destination based on the map. You know whether your destination is located in a grid or non-grid area, which direction the streets in this area run, whether or not your destination is close to the street that it is located on, the two nearest cross streets, and the nearest intersection. Congratulations! You have just read your first TMAP.