



Creating maps for Research Requests

In most cases, creating maps and will be fairly straight forward but when one needs aerial photos for large areas it is helpful to know a few basics about creating a map. The 2 main methods for making quick and easy maps with boundaries or for large areas and that meet the specifications for research submission are outlined here:

In order to provide maps with boundaries one can use the 2 methods below:

Method #1

Most mainstream map sites such as, [MapQuest](#), [Terraserver-USA](#), [MSN live maps](#), [Maptech](#), etc..., allow the user to save the imagery and then manipulate the file in a separate application such as MS PowerPoint, MS Word and Windows Paint. *See below for step by step.*

In most cases use these steps after getting the map you want on screen:

1. Use the site's print feature
2. Cancel the print dialogue
3. Right click the image
4. Save Image As...to a known folder.

Method #2

One can draw on a map within a web browser and share it via the web, such as Google's "My Maps". [Google maps](#) prevent the user from saving any of the displayed imagery. However, Google maps allow the user to manipulate their maps and save them remotely by using "[My Maps](#)", a personalized account for making, sharing, collaborating, etc... with maps. If one has a Gmail account you can encourage them to make a map via "My Maps". See instructions via this link → "[My Maps](#)"

Different search criteria to use for finding maps on the web

Common ways of expressing location

1. Street address (e.g. 123 S. Main St. Normal, IL) – almost all provide this functionality
2. Place name (e.g. Alton Baker Park, Lane County Fairgrounds, Goodman Creek, etc) Google maps, Maptech, and USGS map locator are mediocre at recognizing less common place/feature names but if the county is included in the search you may get better results. GNIS is the best place to plot less common place/feature names. *See below*
3. [Latitude Longitude](#) ← *use link to read about this.* GNIS, MapQuest, Maptech and others will plot lat and long. MapQuest has this feature in the "[Map](#)" section. If one has Township, Range and Section (PLSS) for a given location, one can convert this to lat long at [Earth Point](#). There is less and less on the web where you can search via this coordinate system.

[GNIS](#) is a simple text search for geographic features. The great advantage to GNIS is that the results offer a link to the mapped feature as a Google map. If one wishes to get the lat long for a known location, one can simply move the place mark and the lat long will update instantaneously.

Making a map in a separate applications

Making a map in MSWord

1. Open a new MS Word doc
2. Drag the image file icon into the program window and drop it
3. The suggested drawing tools are under Insert tab.
4. Select shapes button
5. Choose the arrow.
6. Click near the location, a line appears with “handles” on either end.
7. Reposition the “handles” to how you like.
8. *(optional)* Right click the arrow and choose format shape. Thicken the line and change it to a bright color
9. Save, send as an attachment, and/or print the file

To make the boundaries of a large site repeat steps 1 and 2 but choose the line or the rectangle from the shapes menu.

Making a map in MS PowerPoint

1. Open a new MS PowerPoint presentation
2. Drag the file icon and drop it into the slide
3. The suggested drawing tools are under Insert tab.
4. Select shapes button
5. Choose the arrow.
6. Click near the location, a line appears with “handles” on either end.
7. Reposition the “handles” to how you like.
8. *(optional)* Right click the arrow and choose format shape. Thicken the line and change it to a bright color
9. Save, send as an attachment, and/or print the file

Making a map in MS Paint

The Paint program can be opened by going to the Start menu → Programs → Accessories → select Paint

1. Drag the file icon and drop it within Paint interface.
2. Using the tools on the left, select either the line or the square
3. Thicken the line by clicking on the medium thickness scale
4. Choose a bright color so it's visually prominent on the map
5. Make a square or a series of lines by holding your left mouse button as you draw.
6. Save, send as an attachment, and/or print the file.

Note: Paint has the convenient feature of being able to undo a handful of moves.