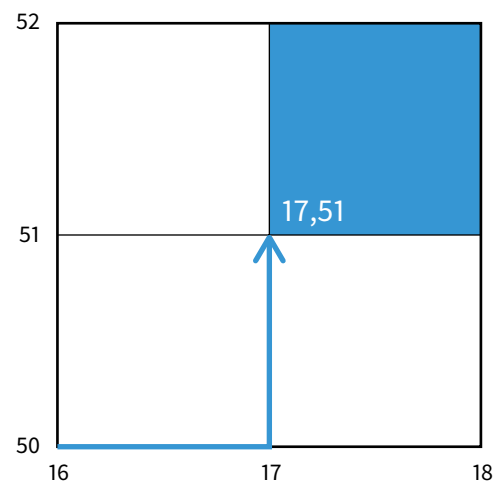Ordnance Survey

Quick guide to grid references

This sheet is a quick guide to grid references. It should help you when you are asked to find something on a map, such as a town, or even an individual building.

The grid lines on an OS map are called eastings (along the corridor) and northings (up the stairs).

Four-figure grid references

Each square has a grid reference which you get by putting together the numbers of the easting and northing that cross in its bottom left hand corner.

Six-figure grid references

In your head, you should be able to divide all sides of the square into ten equal sections. By doing this, you can pinpoint locations within the square – these are called six-figure grid references.