Map Room Guide

Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................................................ 1
Location ........................................................................................................................................................................... 1
Location ........................................................................................................................................................................... 1
Floor plan ....................................................................................................................................................................... 2
Access .......................................................................................................................................................................... 2
Opening hours............................................................................................................................................................... 2
What’s in the collection ............................................................................................................................................... 2
New Zealand material .................................................................................................................................................... 2
International material ................................................................................................................................................... 2
Borrowing .................................................................................................................................................................... 3
Arrangement of the collection .................................................................................................................................... 3
Plan of Map Room ....................................................................................................................................................... 3
New Zealand maps ....................................................................................................................................................... 4
Digital geospatial resources ...................................................................................................................................... 9
Contact ....................................................................................................................................................................... 9

Introduction

The Map Room holds a large collection of sheet maps, atlases, aerial photographs, gazetteers and other reference material associated with maps. The coverage is worldwide but with an emphasis on New Zealand and the Pacific region.

Maps provide information about the environment, both physical and human, and about relationships and distributions of a wide range of phenomena. Maps are essentially a portrayal of place, in diagrammatic form, and are second only to the spoken and written word as a means of communicating what places are like.

Online resources and digitised maps are increasingly available; please check the Geospatial data guide.

Location

Room M05, Level M, General Library.

Two PCs are available to access a variety of cartographic datasets and have ARCGIS and Google Earth loaded.

Top of document
Access

All are welcome to use the Map Room collection. Assistance in using the collection is given in the first instance to staff and students, and Associate Members, of the University of Auckland.

Opening hours

8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

What’s in the collection

Nearly 50,000 map sheets, covering most parts of the world.

New Zealand material

A comprehensive collection of New Zealand maps including basic topographical series, urban plans, and a wide range of thematic mapping. Mostly the material dates from 1945 onwards, but a small amount of earlier material is held, and if it is not held, library staff can guide users to other print or digital repositories. The New Zealand collection is strongest for Auckland and Northland material, weakest for Otago and Southland material.

The Map Room staff can offer assistance in locating maps which form part of bulletins and reports which are shelved in other parts of the library system.

International material

A collection is also maintained for the Pacific islands. For Australia, east and southeast Asia the Library attempts to provide a balanced collection of topographical and thematic maps, usually small-scale, and urban plans for important cities. For other parts of the world there is a collection of small scale topographical and tourist maps, and town plans, designed to enable a general overview of an area. The Library maintains a 1:1,000,000 topographical coverage for the world, a 1:250,000 coverage for the United States, and a 1:50,000 coverage for Great Britain.
Borrowing

Some New Zealand maps may be borrowed for one week, non-renewable, and requires a Campus Card (ID). Some New Zealand maps may not be borrowed, usually due to the physical condition of the material. Maps from the vertical cabinets may not be borrowed - there is often a borrowing copy in the flat cabinets. Foreign maps may not be borrowed, except by teaching staff for teaching purposes. A large format (A0) printer/scanner/copier is available for those with a Campus Card (ID). Maps are issued from the Map Room, and should be returned there. Exceptions are pocket maps which have a barcode - these are issued from the Lending Services Desk on Level G of the General Library and should be returned there.

Arrangement of the collection

Most of the maps are stored flat in horizontal plan cabinets and are divided into two sequences.

The sequence closest to the entry to the Map Room includes maps of the world as a whole, and for parts of the world excluding New Zealand, Australia, the Pacific, and the Arctic and Antarctic regions. This sequence starts with maps of the whole world, followed by continent (Europe, Asia, North America and then South America) subdivided by country.

The sequence nearest the windows is the New Zealand, Pacific, Australia and Polar Regions collection.

Plan of Map Room
New Zealand maps

Tier 1

- General maps of New Zealand at small scales (New Zealand on one or two sheets)
- NZMS 3 mosaic series. (Incomplete NZ coverage, these mosaic maps are sheets made up of aerial photographs. Our collection includes all the sheets published for Auckland and areas north, and a reasonable collection for other parts of the North Island).
- NZMS 1 inch to the mile topographical maps. (Published 1939 to 1989, the different editions of the NZMS 1 sheets provide a good picture of the changing landscape. An archival set of the NZMS 1 sheets is held in the first of the vertical map cabinets).

Tier 2

- Continuation of NZMS 1NZMS 262 metric 1:250,000 series (18 sheets cover New Zealand)
- Topographical maps (various scales and dates)—NZMS 2 (replaced in 2009 by NZ Topo50), 18, 19, 28, 83, 84, 86, 232, 242, 260, 262, 265, 266, 267, 268.
- NZ caves by name (A-Z)

Tier 3—start of the sequence of thematic maps

- Hydrological and catchment
- Geology (small scale plus 1:250,000, 1:63,360 and 1:50,000 series). Note that most of the geological maps can also be found as “pocket maps” on the shelves adjacent to the library staff office, and these are borrowable for seven days.
- Coastal bathymetry and sediments (the coastal bathymetry at a scale of 1:200,000 series is complete, the equivalent coastal sediments series is not complete)
- Hydrographic
- Magnetism (apart from their intended purpose, these maps appeal to Fine Arts students because of their colourful swirls) and Gravity
- Ecology and Vegetation
- Climate
- Pre-European Māori
- Recreation and Tourism
- Census
Tier 4

- Counties and districts—NZMS 10A territorial series  (The NZMS 10A series dates from the early 1920s, and show county boundaries, but is also useful for locating place names for small localities not named on current maps).

- Electoral boundaries

- Land inventory worksheets. (The inch to the mile land inventory worksheets, published by the Ministry of Works and Development for the National Water and Soil Conservation Organisation, provide detailed information about land slope, erosion and vegetation cover. There is a drawer of "extended legends" which provide detailed information about the symbols used on the worksheets. Metric second editions of the sheets covering Auckland and Northland are held in one of the drawers. Note that these sheets do not map urban areas, only rural areas.)

- County

- NZMS 290—regions

- NZMS 13 cadastral maps for North Auckland and South Auckland land districts (Cadastral maps show property boundaries)

- Land ownership

- Land tenure

- National Parks

- Industry and minerals

- Soil and erosion

- Agriculture

- Forestry and fishing

Tier 5

- Technology and Engineering (including power generation)

- Transport and Roads

- Street maps (See also the regional sequence of maps for more detailed road maps of particular areas.)

- Commercial Roads

- Military

The regional sequence of New Zealand maps starts here, with Northland, and includes a variety of thematic, topographical, tourist and street maps, and urban plans. There are some detailed local land inventory maps, showing land cover, land tenure, land use, geology, soils, land slope, and the like. (Remember that what you are looking for may best be covered by one of the sheets in the national coverages of New Zealand, which the sheets in the national coverage of New Zealand, to be found in Tiers 1 to 3).
Tier 5 – continued.

- Maps covering the whole (or most) of the North Island
- Auckland Province
- Northland
- Auckland

Tier 6

- Continuation of the Auckland maps. A detailed listing of types of maps relating to Auckland is located on top of the map cabinets.
- Franklin and Papakura
- Thames—Coromandel

Tier 7

- Continuation of the regional maps, starting with Waikato and working south to the Wellington region
- South Island
- Stewart Island
- Chatham Islands
- Sub-Antarctic Islands (See Tier 13 for maps of the Ross Sea Dependency and Antarctica.)

Vertical map cabinets

Maps from the vertical map cabinets are for use in the Map Room only, and are non-borrowable. Please take care when removing a map from these cabinets.

Vertical Map Cabinet 1

- NZMS 1 1:63,360 topographical maps - North Island. A virtually complete set, most of the sheets can also be found in Tier 1.

Vertical Map Cabinet 2

- NZMS 1 1:63,360 topographical maps - South Island. A virtually complete set, most of the sheets can also be found in Tier 1.

Vertical Map Cabinet 3

- NZMS 260 1:50,000 topographical map. A nearly complete set, most of the sheets can also be found in Tier 2.
Vertical Map Cabinet 4

- NZ topo50 topographical series. First published in 2009, replacing the NZMS 260 series. Also available electronically, using NZTopoOnline.

Vertical Map Cabinet 5

- NZMS 2, 2A 2B, 18 and 86 topographical maps.

Vertical Map Cabinet 6

- Aerial mosaic maps, covering Waitemata and Auckland cities

Vertical Map Cabinet 7

- NZMS 177 Cadastral map 1:63,360, published 1960s and 1970s

Vertical Map Cabinet 8

- NZMS 261 Cadastral map 1:50,000, published 1970s and 1980s
- Soil map of the South Island 1:250,000

Vertical Map Cabinet 9

- New Zealand geological maps, 1:2,000,000, 1:1,000,000 and 1:250,000
- Soil map of New Zealand 1:1,000,000
- Soil map of the North Island 1:253,440
- Soil map of the South Island 1:250,000

Pocket Maps and QMap Vector Data

Pocket maps are folded maps issued with a protective cover, sometimes a booklet of text is enclosed as well. GNS Science recently completed publishing a 1:250,000 QMap Series which appears as a booklet with a map enclosed in a pocket at the back of the booklet. All these maps are classified in the Library’s catalogue as Pocket Maps, and are kept on the shelves between the two public PCs in the Map Room and the staff office. They may be borrowed, and are issued from the Lending Desk on the Ground Floor.

The Map Room also holds the vector data for the QMaps. This data is available on a series of CDs, and may be borrowed. Please ask at the Map Room office for them.
Catalogues and indexes

Many maps are not listed in the Library Catalogue. There are hard copy indexes for many of our maps. Some of these are filed with the maps, others are in booklet form and kept on the shelves in the Map Room with the gazetteers, dictionaries, and other tools that we have. Please ask a librarian for help in locating these.

The Lands and Survey Catalogues

Most of the government mapping in New Zealand has been carried out by the Department of Lands and Survey (known subsequently as the Department of Survey and Land Information and now as Land Information New Zealand or LINZ). These catalogues were designed to indicate what maps were available for purchase from the Department at any one time, they are not a complete record of what was published. Nevertheless, they provide useful information about the maps being produced by the Department.


Other map catalogues and finding aids

A detailed listing of the sheets in the NZMS 1 inch to the mile topographical series was made by William H. Cutts, and is held in the Map Room: 016.91295 C99.

Another prolific publisher of New Zealand maps was the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, mainly the New Zealand Geological Survey, the Soil Bureau, the New Zealand Oceanographic Institute, and the Geophysics Division. These organisations subsequently became the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences (GNS Science), NIWA, and Landcare, their map catalogues can be found in a box labeled Map catalogues—New Zealand, on the shelves adjacent to the large format printer.

The Royal New Zealand Navy and LINZ have issued catalogues of their hydrographic (nautical) charts. The catalogues are kept on the shelves near the large format printer, and are essential for identifying chart numbers. The hydrographic charts are arranged by chart number and are accompanied by an explanation of the symbols used. (Please see the Charts and Hydrographic Services section of the LINZ website.)

A Union List of Archival, Manuscript, and Theses Geological Maps of New Zealand (Science Reference Collection: 559.50223 K46) was published by the Geological Society of New Zealand in 1996. The listing, compiled by Claren Kidd, describes and lists the location of unpublished and early geological maps. Many of the maps are those which have appeared in theses. Arrangement is alphabetically by the author of the map. There is a subject index, which includes place names, and an index based on the sheet numbers for the Department of Lands and Survey NZMS 260 (1:50,000) and 262 (1:250,000) map series. Library holdings for each map are also included.

A Guide to Finding New Zealand Historical Maps is available from the Map Room or the pamphlet display area on Level M.
Digital geospatial resources

Libraries and Learning Services has an increasing collection of electronic geospatial data eg. GIS files, aerial and satellite imagery, maps and other location-based resources.

Please check the Geospatial data guide for current information, support and links for accessing geospatial resources and using GIS - go to Library and Learning Services > Subject Guides > Science > Geospatial data (www.library.auckland.ac.nz/guides/geospatial-data).

Subject specific maps, imagery and data are often listed on subject guide pages eg. Geography and Environmental Science, available from Libraries and Learning Services > Subject Guides > Science > Geography and Environmental Science.

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