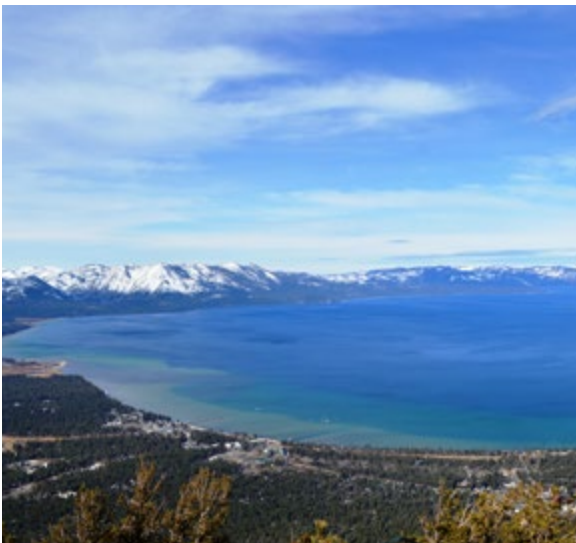


# What is a map?



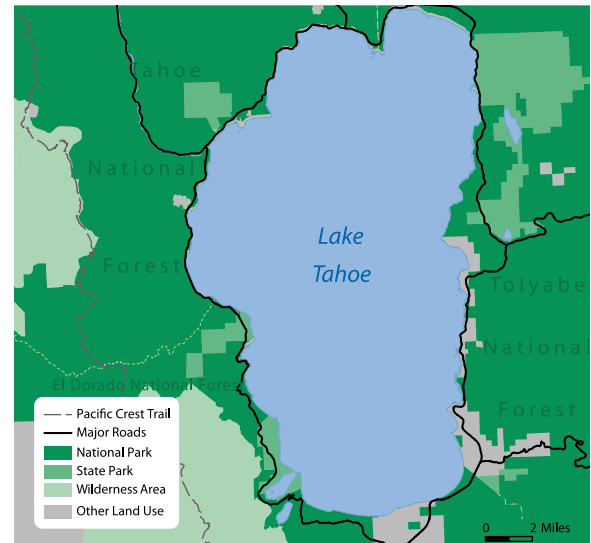
## Picture

A picture shows places as they appear in real life. This picture shows a view of Lake Tahoe that you would see if you went there yourself and looked at the lake from the same place the photographer stood.



## Aerial Photo

An aerial photo is a picture taken from an airplane or satellite looking directly down at the Earth. This photo shows Lake Tahoe from above.



## Map

A map is like an aerial photo because it uses an overhead perspective, or bird's eye view. Maps include labels and symbols to provide information about the area shown in the map.



**What is a cartographer?** A cartographer is a person who makes maps. The map maker uses colors, lines, symbols, and labels to represent the features that we would see in a photograph of the area.

## How Cartographers Use Symbols

Cartographers use different symbols on maps to represent real features from the world. Three common types of symbols are point symbols, line symbols, and area symbols.

Cartographers use point symbols to show exactly where one thing (a school or a hospital, for instance) is located on the map. The symbol can be a dot or a small icon.

When a feature is long and best represented in the shape of a line, cartographers choose lines of different colors, styles, and thicknesses to represent those features. Blue is typically used for rivers, and black for roads, but choices will depend on the purpose of the map.

When a feature is spread out across an area rather than at a specific point or along a line, cartographers choose different area symbols. Area symbols usually involve colors, but can also involve shading or patterns.

