

## Reading Grid References

### What is a Grid Reference?

A Grid Reference is a series of numbers that help to identify your location. This is a useful tool in navigation and for letting others know where you are.

			HO	HP		
			HT	HU		
	HW	HX	HY	HZ		
NA	NB	NC	ND	NE		
NF	NG	NH	NJ	NK		
NL	NM	NN	NO	NP		
	NR	NS	NT	NU		
	NW	NX	NY	NZ	OV	
		SC	SD	SE	TA	
		SH	SJ	SK	TF	TG
	SM	SN	SO	SP	TL	TM
	SR	SS	ST	SU	TQ	TR
SV	SW	SX	SY	SZ	TV	

The entire UK is divided into 100km squares, this is called the National Grid. Each one of these squares has a special two-letter code. These codes help to identify the part of the UK that a map covers and makes up the first part of a Grid Reference.

**Q. What is the special code for where you live?**

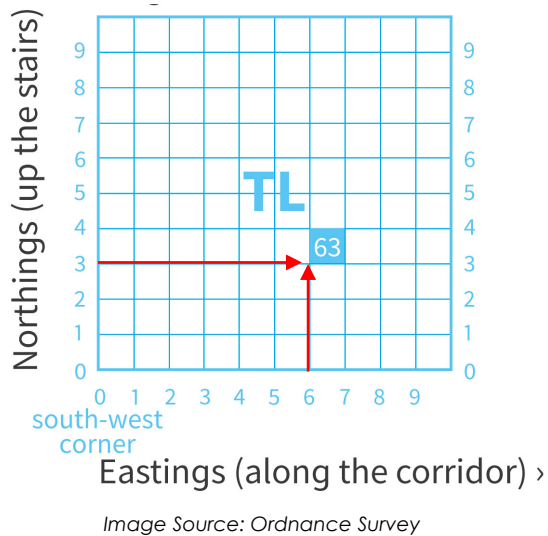
Use the picture, or if you're not sure you can ask an adult to download the **OS Locate** app to show the grid reference for where you are.



This part of the grid reference shows your special code.

Image Source: Ordnance Survey

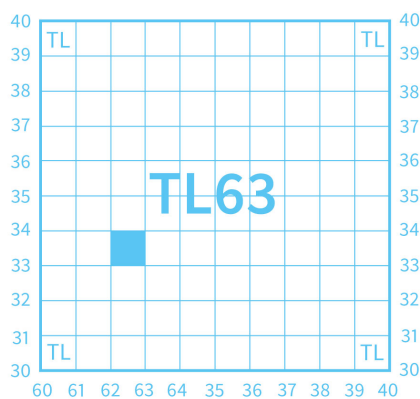
## Finding Your Grid Reference



1) Each 100km square of the UK is divided into 10km squares. This makes up your map.

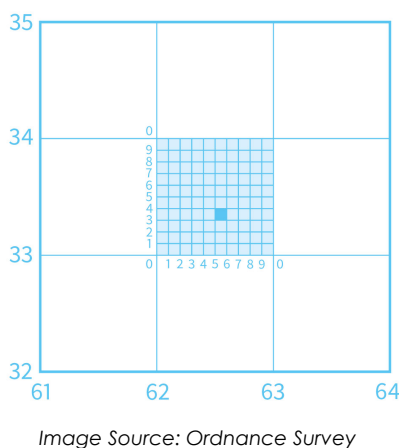
To identify the square you're in, you need to read the number along the bottom first (Easting), and then the number up the side (Northings). In the example, the 10km square is **TL63**. The number should be read for the bottom left-hand corner of the square you're looking for.

**TIP!** A really easy way to remember the order of reading the numbers is:  
**“Along the corridor and up the stairs!”**



2) The next step will give you a **Four-Figure Grid Reference** and the location of a 1km square. Again, read the numbers along the bottom first, and then up the side to the bottom left-hand corner of square that you're looking for.

These four numbers now replace the two that you worked out in **Step 1** and go after your two-letter code, **TL 62 33**. This is your Four-Figure Grid Reference.



3) If possible, it's really good to get a **Six-Figure Grid Reference**. This will give the location of a 100m square. This bit requires imagination!

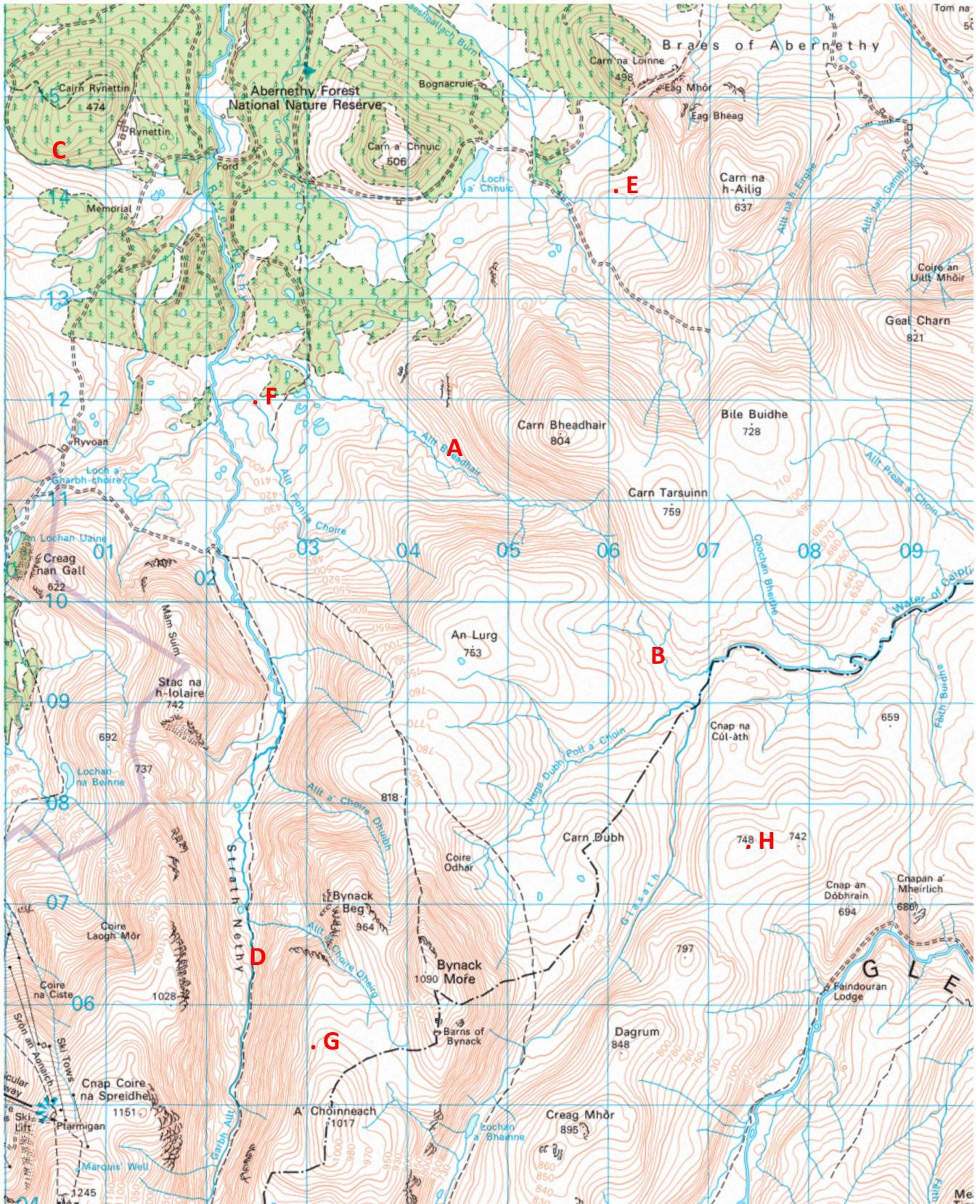
Now, imagine the square you've already located is divided into 100 smaller squares, numbered 1 – 10 along the bottom and up the sides, like in the picture.

Read the number along the bottom first (**“along the corridor”**) and squeeze that number in between the two numbers you worked out in **Step 2 (62533)**. Then read the number up the side (**“up the stairs”**) and add that onto the end (**625333**). You should now have six numbers after your two-letter code, **TL 625 333**. This is your Six-Figure Grid Reference and can pinpoint an exact location within 100m anywhere in the UK. Pretty awesome!



## Time to Practice!

Here is a section of a map of the Cairngorms. The special code for this map is **OL**. You can see the blue grid that shows each 1km square and the Easting and Northing numbers that run across the map and from bottom to top. Can you find the Grid References for the **Red Letters** shown on the Map? (See the next page)



## Questions

(Answers on Following Page)

- 1) Can you find the **Four-Figure Grid Reference** for the following **Red Letters**? (Don't forget the special code!)

**A** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**B** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**C** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**D** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

- 2) Can you find the **Six-Figure Grid Reference** for the following **Points (.)**? (A little bit of this is imagination remember, so don't worry if your answers don't match ours exactly!)

**E** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**F** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**G** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**H** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

- 3) What hill summits are at the following Grid References?

**OL 074 118** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**OL 062 056** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**OL 046 096** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

**OL 039 144** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_



## Answers

- 1**    **A.** OL 04 11  
      **B.** OL 06 09  
      **C.** OL 00 14  
      **D.** OL 02 06
- 2**    **E.** OL 061 141  
      **F.** OL 024 119  
      **G.** OL 031 056  
      **H.** OL 074 076
- 3**    **OL 074 118** - Bile Buidhe  
      **OL 062 056** - Dagrum  
      **OL 046 096** - An Lurg  
      **OL 039 144** - Carn a' Chnuic

How did you do? Remember, practice makes perfect so don't worry if you didn't get them all first time. On the next page we've provided a blank grid so you can add your own points to find grid references for, or even make your own map to practice on!

Let us know how you get on!

