Getting Started with ArcGIS™ Tutorial

GIS by ESRI™

Exploring ArcCatalog and ArcMap 2

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Maps are the most commonly used tools for understanding spatial information. Whether you do analysis or editing, produce wall maps or illustrate reports, design GIS databases or manage them—when you work with GIS you work with maps. ArcMap allows you to work with all of your geographic data in maps, regardless of the format or location of the underlying data. With ArcMap, you can assemble a map quickly from predefined layers, or you can add data from coverages, shapefiles, geodatabases, grids, TINs, images, and tables of coordinates or addresses.

Two other GIS applications—ArcCatalog and ArcToolbox—are designed to work with ArcMap. In ArcCatalog, you can browse, organize, and document your data and easily drag and drop it onto an existing map in ArcMap. Using the tools in ArcToolbox, you can project and convert data. If you are working in ArcInfo, ArcToolbox also has tools for sophisticated geoprocessing. It has never been easier to use the power of GIS.

In this chapter, you will create a map for a planning meeting of the Greenvalley City Council. You will use ArcCatalog to find the data and produce the map in ArcMap.

Introducing ArcCatalog

ArcCatalog is the tool for browsing, organizing, distributing, and documenting an organization's GIS data holdings.

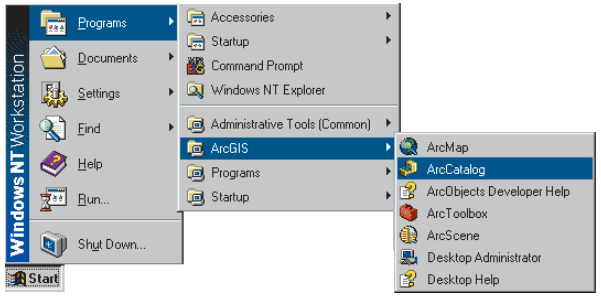
In this exercise you work for the (fictitious) City of Greenvalley. The City Council is debating a proposal to build additional water mains downtown. As part of the process, the Council is reviewing water use in the downtown area.

You have been asked to make a map that shows the water mains in downtown Greenvalley and the relative water use at each parcel downtown.

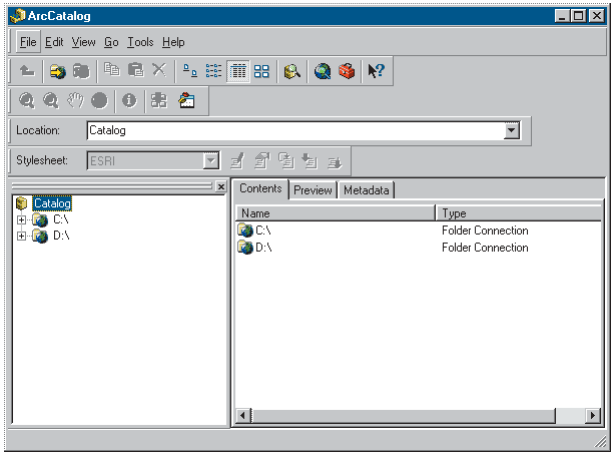
To make the map easy to read, you will add the data to a general-purpose map of the town.

Start ArcCatalog

1. Click the Start button on the taskbar.
2. Point to Programs to display the Programs menu.
3. Point to ArcGIS.
4. Click ArcCatalog.



ArcCatalog starts, and you see two panels in the ArcCatalog window.

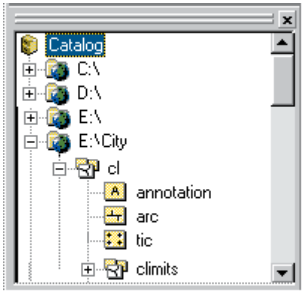


The Catalog tree on the left side of the ArcCatalog window is for browsing and organizing your GIS data. The contents of the current branch are displayed on the right side of the Catalog window.

Viewing data in ArcCatalog

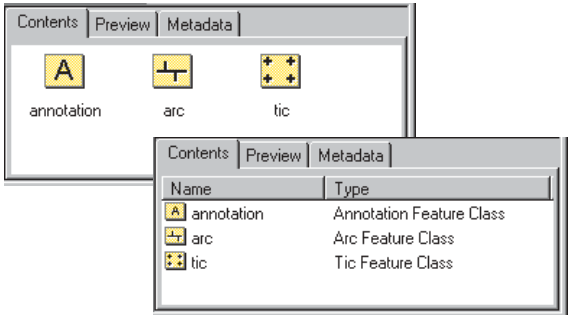
When you need more information about a branch of the Catalog tree, you can use the Contents, Preview, and Metadata tabs to view your data in many different ways.

In this example, the ArcInfo coverage "cl" contains street centerlines. It is located on a computer's E:\ drive in a folder called City.

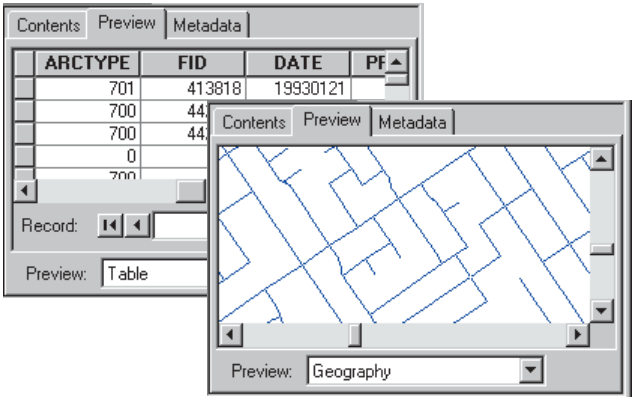


If you select a data source in the tree, you can view it in several ways, depending on the tab that you choose. Each tab has a toolbar associated with it that allows you to modify how you see your data.

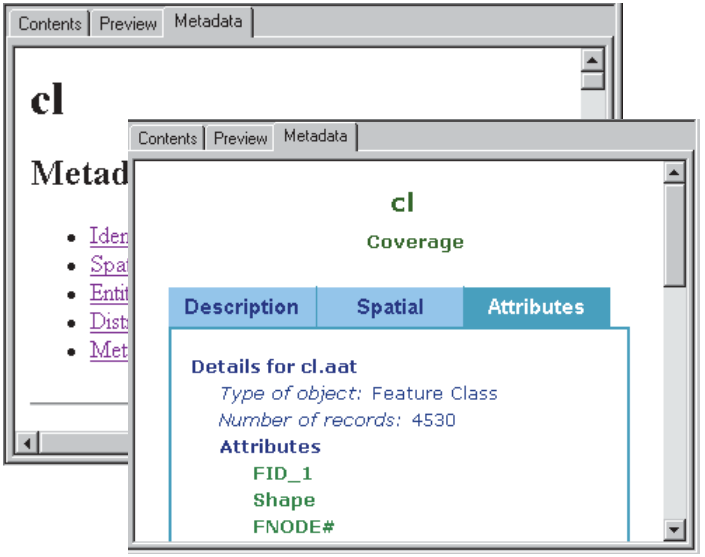
These are Contents views:



These are Preview views:



These are Metadata views:



Connecting to your data

When you start ArcCatalog for the first time, the Catalog tree has a branch for each local hard drive. Branches for Coordinate Systems, Database Connections, Geocoding Services, Internet Servers, and Search Results can be added by clicking the Tools menu and clicking Options, then checking the check boxes next to the branches you want to add to the catalog. You can view the contents of a branch by double-clicking it or by clicking the plus sign beside it.

You can also create new branches in the Catalog tree to make it easier to navigate to your data. These branches are called connections.

Before continuing, you will need to know where the tutorial data has been installed on your system.

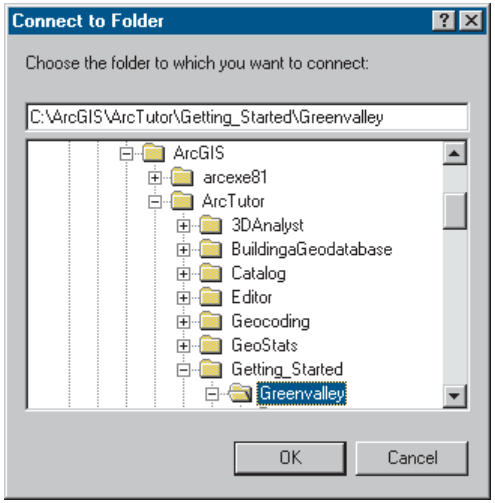
Make a connection to the tutorial data

Now you will add a connection to the folder that contains the tutorial data. This new branch in the Catalog tree will remain until you delete it.

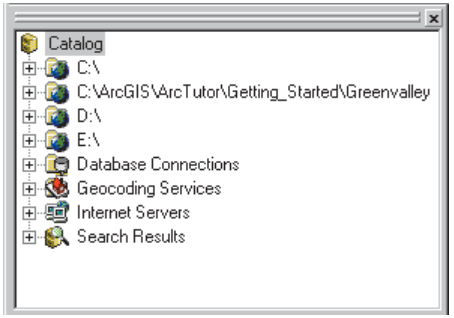
1. Click the Connect to Folder button.

When you click the button, a window opens that lets you navigate to a folder on your computer or to a folder on another computer on your network.

2. Navigate to the ArcGIS\ArcTutor\Getting_Started\Greenvalley folder on the drive where the tutorial data is installed. Click OK.



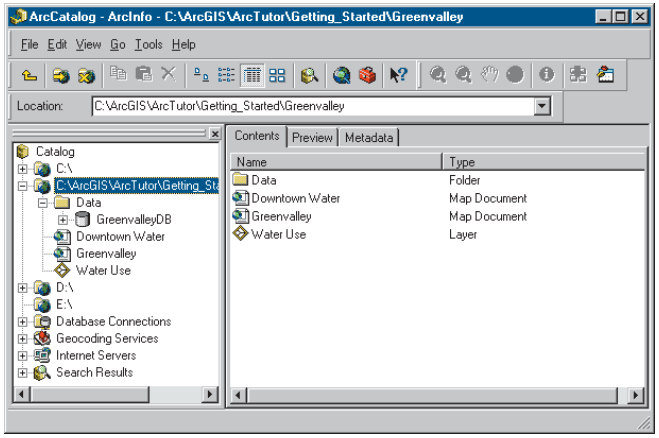
The new connection shows up as a branch in the Catalog tree.



Explore the Greenvalley folder connection

You can now look at the tutorial data that you have added.

1. Click the ArcGIS\ArcTutor\Greenvalley folder to view its contents on the right side of the ArcCatalog window.
2. Click the plus sign to expand the connection in the Catalog tree. This branch of the tree contains a folder, map documents, and a layer.



The Greenvalley folder has a special icon to show that it contains GIS data. By default, ArcCatalog recognizes many different file types as GIS data including shapefiles, coverages, raster images, TINs, geodatabases, projection files, and so on. If the list of recognized file types does not include a file type that you use in GIS analysis, you can customize ArcCatalog to recognize additional file types—for example, text files—as GIS data.

The Greenvalley map document is a general-purpose map of the City.

The Water Use layer shows a set of parcels in Greenvalley with a color scheme that indicates relative water use at each parcel.

Maps and layers

Maps and layers are important ways of organizing and displaying data in ArcGIS.

Maps, such as everyday paper maps, can contain many kinds of data. The data on a map is organized into layers, which are drawn on the map in a particular order. Each map contains a page layout where graphic elements, such as legends, North arrows, scale bars, text, and other graphics, are arranged. The layout shows the map page as it will be printed.

Layers define how a set of geographic features will be drawn when they are added to a map. They also act as shortcuts to the place where the data is actually stored—not necessarily the same place as where the layer file is stored. In this case, both the map and the layer refer to data that is stored in the Data folder.

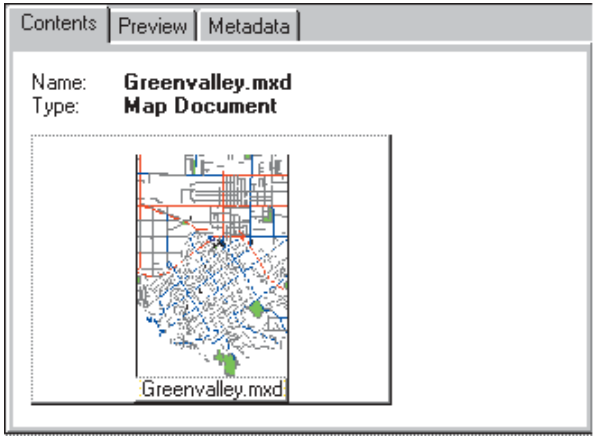
If you store your geographic data in a central database, you can create maps and layers that refer to the database. This makes it easy to share maps and layers within an organization and eliminates the need to make duplicate copies of your data.

View the thumbnail sketch of the Greenvalley map

The right-hand panel of ArcCatalog displays datasets in many different ways. You can click an object in the left panel to view it in the right panel. One of the views that can be useful when you want to select a particular map is the thumbnail view.

1. Click the Thumbnails button on the Standard toolbar.

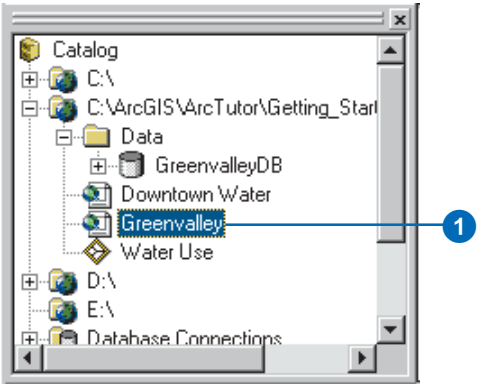
You can see the thumbnail sketch of the map.



Open the Greenvalley map

You will use the Greenvalley map to provide context for the information that the City Council wants.

1. Double-click Greenvalley in the Catalog tree.



Double-clicking a map in the Catalog tree opens the map in ArcMap.

Sometimes you may want to start ArcMap without opening an existing map. You can start ArcMap by clicking the Launch ArcMap button in ArcCatalog.

Launch ArcMap button

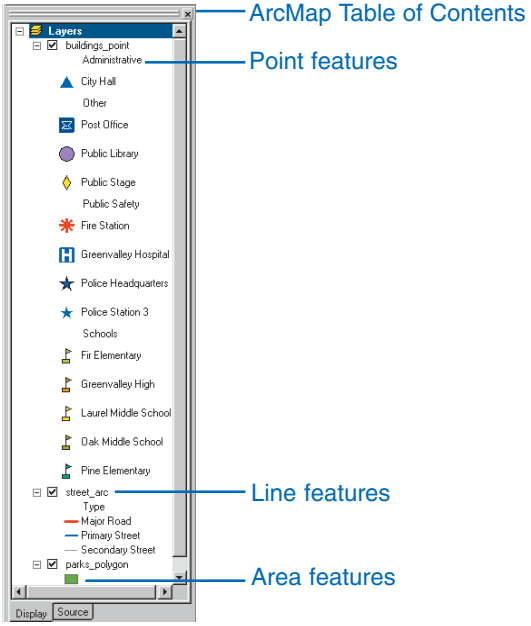
You can also start ArcMap as you would any other program on your system, whether the Catalog tree is open or not.

Introducing ArcMap

ArcMap is the tool for creating, viewing, querying, editing, composing, and publishing maps.

Most maps present several types of information about an area at once. This map of Greenvalley contains three layers that show public buildings, streets, and parks.

You can see the layers in this map listed in the table of contents. Each layer has a check box that lets you turn it on or off.



Within a layer, symbols are used to draw the *features*. In this case, buildings are represented by points, streets by lines, and parks by areas. Each layer contains two kinds of information. The spatial information describes the location and shape of the geographic features. The attribute information tells you about other characteristics of the features.

In the park layer, all the features are drawn with a single green fill symbol. This single symbol lets you identify areas that are parks, but it does not tell you anything about the differences between the parks.

In the street layer, the features are drawn with different line symbols according to the type of street that the lines represent. This symbol scheme lets you differentiate streets from other types of features and tells you something about the differences between the features as well.

In the buildings layer, the features are drawn with different point symbols. The shapes and colors of the symbols allow you to differentiate the institutions that they represent. All of the schools are grouped together and drawn with a particular symbol, so you can easily differentiate schools from the hospital or from City Hall. Each school symbol is drawn with a different color, which lets you differentiate Pine Elementary from Greenvalley High.

Working with maps

ArcMap offers many ways to interact with maps.

Exploring

Maps let you see and interpret the spatial relationships among features. You could use the map you have just opened to find City Hall, to identify parks near schools, or to get the names of the streets around the library.

Analyzing

You can create new information and find hidden patterns by adding layers to a map. For example, if you added a layer of demographic information to the Greenvalley map, you might use the resulting map to define school districts or find potential customers. If you added layers of geology and surface slope, you might use the map to identify areas at risk for landslides.

Presenting results

ArcMap makes it easy to lay out your maps for printing, embedding in other documents, or electronic publishing. You can quickly make great maps of your data. When you save a map, all of your layout work, symbols, text, and graphics are preserved.

ArcMap includes a vast array of tools for creating and using maps. In the rest of this chapter, you will use some of these tools.

Customizing

Maps are tools for getting a job done. You can create maps that have exactly the tools you need to help you complete your job quickly. You can easily customize the ArcMap interface by adding tools to existing toolbars (or removing them) or by creating custom toolbars. You can save these changes to the interface with a particular map or for every map that you open.

You can also use the Visual Basic® for Applications (VBA) programming language included in ArcMap to create new tools and interfaces. For example, you can create a VBA tool to make a table of the addresses of houses in a selected area. Once the tool is created, you can associate it with a custom toolbar and save it with a map for anyone to use.

Programming

You can build completely new interfaces for interacting with your maps and create new, specialized classes of features. ArcGIS is built using Microsoft's Component Object Model (COM); all of the COM components are available to developers using a COM-compliant programming language. For more information about customizing ArcMap and ArcCatalog, refer to *Exploring ArcObjects*.

Exploring a map

You can explore a map in several ways. The Tools toolbar contains frequently used tools that let you navigate around the map, find features, and get information about them.

Zoom in and get information

If you want to see an area of the map in greater detail, you can zoom in to the map.

1. Click the Zoom In button.
2. Drag a box around one of the parks to zoom in to it.

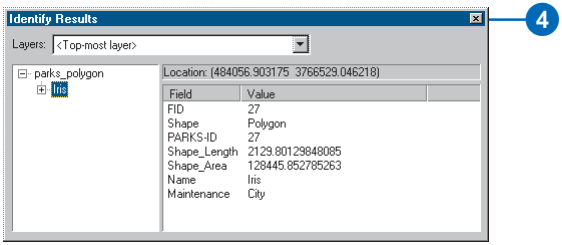
When you drag a box on the map after clicking the Zoom In button, the map zooms to the new area. You can click the Back button to jump back to the previous map extent.

3. Click the Identify Features button and click the park.

When you click a feature with the Identify Features tool, the Identify Results window appears. You can inspect the attributes of the feature from this window.

If the tool finds several features where you clicked, it lists each feature on the left side of the window. You can click the features in this list to view their attributes on the right side of the window.

4. Close the Identify Results window.



Zoom to the map's full extent

If you have zoomed in to the map and want to see all of it, you can quickly zoom out to the map's full extent.

1. Click the Full Extent button.

Now you can see the full extent of the map. The map scale is around 1:95,000 (depending on your screen setup and the size of the ArcMap window), which you can see on the Standard toolbar. (If the map scale is not around 1:95,000 change it by clicking in the text box, replacing the text with 1:95:000, and pressing Enter.)

At this scale, the building symbols are not visible. The Maximum Visible Scale *property* of this layer has been set to 1:70,000. You will change some of the properties of a layer later in this chapter.

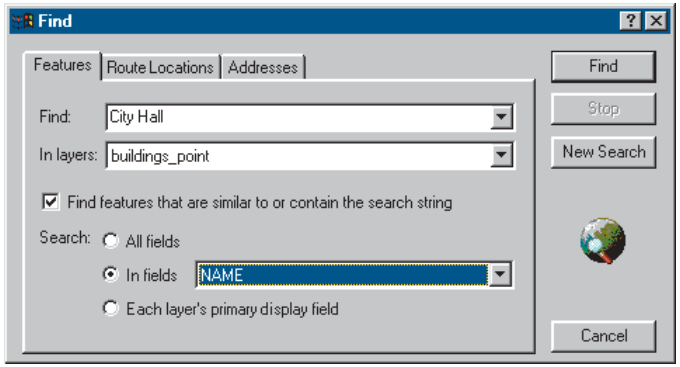
Find a feature

The Find button lets you search a map for features that match your search criteria. The area you want to map is around the Greenvalley City Hall, so you will find City Hall and zoom to it.

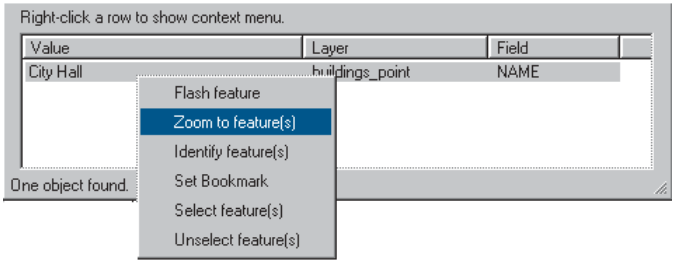
1. Click the Find button.

When you click the Find button, the Find dialog box appears. You can search for features from a particular layer or from all layers on the map.

2. Type "City Hall" in the Find text box. Click the In layers dropdown arrow and click buildings_point. Click In fields, then click the dropdown arrow, and click NAME. Click Find.



City Hall appears in the list of features that the tool has found.



3. Right-click City Hall and click Zoom to feature(s).

The map zooms to the City Hall. As the scale is now greater than the 1:70,000 threshold, the building features appear on the map, and you can see the blue triangle symbol for City Hall.

4. Click Cancel to close the Find dialog box.

The map now shows some of the area that you need to map for the City Council.

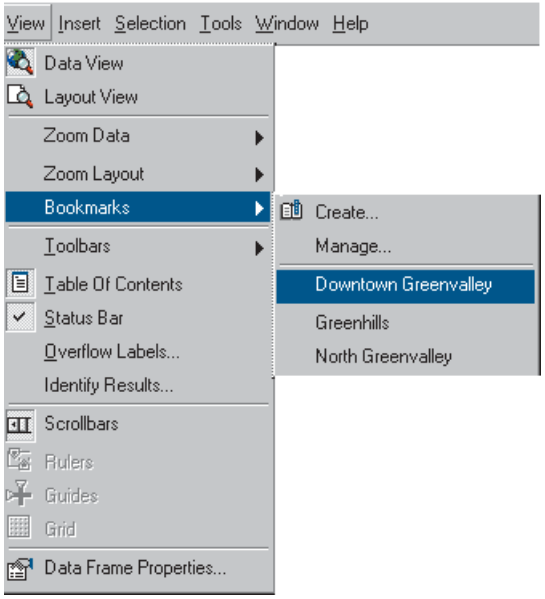
When you chose Zoom to feature(s), another option on the list was Set Bookmark. A spatial bookmark preserves a particular map extent so that you can zoom back to it whenever you want.

Spatial bookmarks are saved with a map, so anyone who opens a map can quickly zoom to a particular bookmarked area.

Zoom to a bookmarked area

Because you use this map to provide a context for other information, you have created some spatial bookmarks for the areas you frequently map. Downtown Greenvalley is one of these areas.

1. Click View and point to Bookmarks.
2. Click Downtown Greenvalley.



Now the map is zoomed to the downtown area. This map extent and scale has been used for previous maps of downtown Greenvalley. The map you are making will be easy for the Council members to compare with the other maps of the downtown area.

ArcMap provides an excellent interface for interactively exploring existing maps. You can use the tools you have just used and others to answer questions about particular features, find features, and view your maps at a variety of scales.

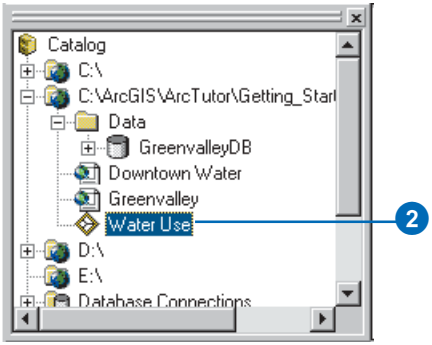
You can change the information that is displayed on maps by adding and removing layers and changing the way that layers are displayed.

In the next part of this chapter, you will add data to your map and change the properties of a layer.

Adding a layer to a map

Now that you have opened a map of Greenvalley and set the extent to downtown, it is time to make the map you need. The City Council wants the map to include downtown water use and the location and size of existing water mains. You will start by adding the Water Use layer to your map.

1. Position the ArcMap and ArcCatalog windows so that you can see both of them.
2. Click the Water Use layer in ArcCatalog and drag it onto the map. You can click and drag any layer from the ArcCatalog tree onto an open map in ArcMap.



The layer shows parcels drawn with a graduated color ramp. Just as the roads and buildings were drawn with predetermined symbols when you opened the Greenvalley map, this layer is drawn with a particular set of symbols.

A layer serves as a shortcut to data. It also tells ArcMap how the data should be drawn. You can store layers in a place that is accessible to everyone in your organization who needs a particular set of data; the data will be displayed the same way for each of them.

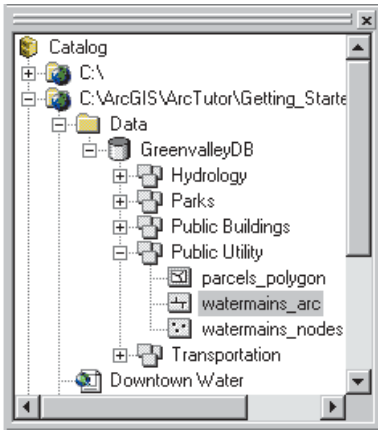
As useful as layers are, sometimes they are not available. Fortunately, you can add raw geographic data to a map just as easily as you can add a layer.

Adding features from a database

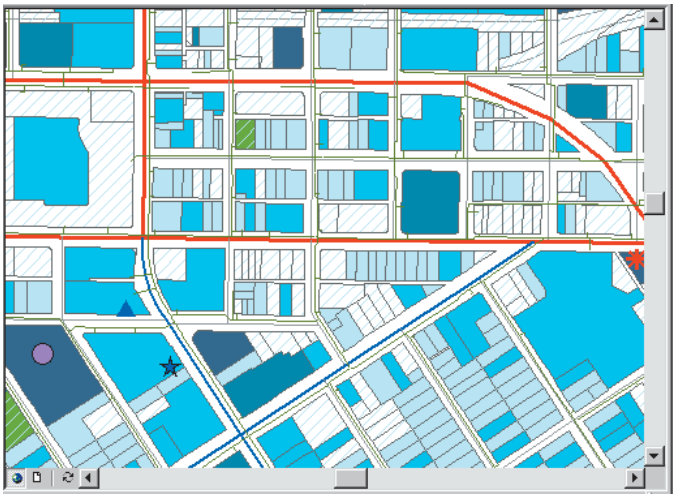
When you add features directly from a coverage, shapefile, or database, they are all drawn with a single symbol.

Now you will add the water main features to your map.

1. Position the ArcMap and ArcCatalog windows so that you can see both of them.
2. Click the plus sign next to the Data folder in the Catalog tree to view the contents of the folder.
3. Click the plus sign next to GreenvalleyDB. GreenvalleyDB is a geodatabase that contains the remainder of the data you will be using. The data in this geodatabase is organized in five feature datasets: Hydrology, Parks, Public Buildings, Public Utility, and Transportation.
4. Click the plus sign next to Public Utility.
5. Click watermains_arc and drag it onto your map.



Watermains_arc is a feature class—a collection of features represented with the same geometry (shape). In this case, the features are polyline shapes that represent the pipes in the water distribution system.

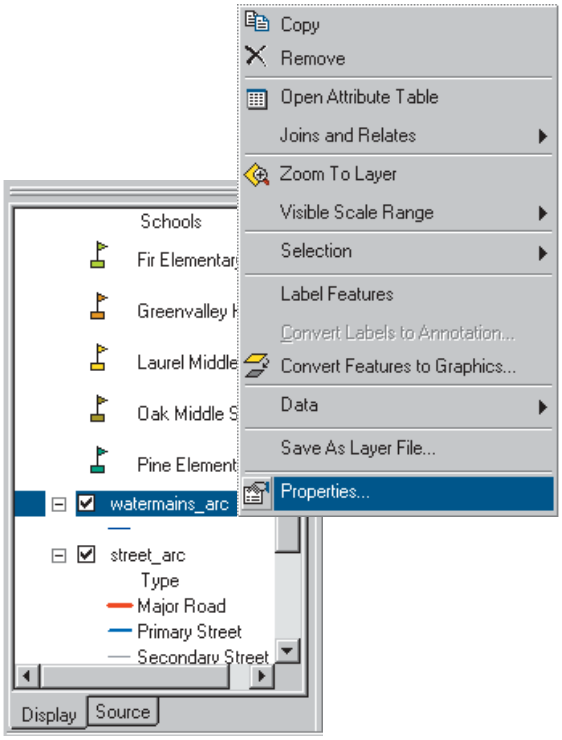


Geodatabases containing feature datasets and feature classes are how ArcGIS applications manage geographic information. In Chapter 3, you will learn more about these and other GIS data types.

Changing the way features are drawn

The Council wants to know the approximate sizes of the water mains downtown, so you must assign some new symbols to the features.

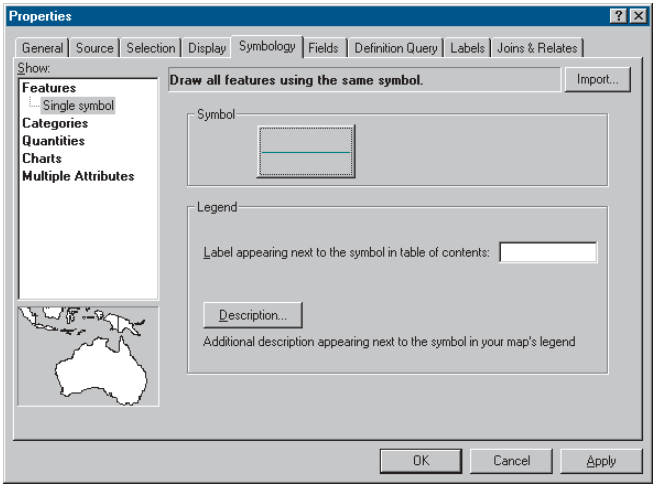
1. Right-click watermains_arc in the ArcMap table of contents and click Properties.



The layer Properties dialog box appears. You can use this dialog box to inspect and change a wide variety of layer properties.

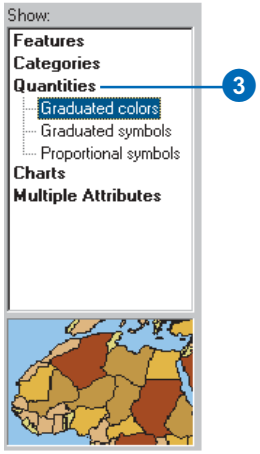
The water mains feature class includes several attributes of the water mains. As the Council wants to know the sizes of the water mains, you will group the mains into five classes based on their diameter attribute.

2. Click the Symbology tab on the Properties dialog box.

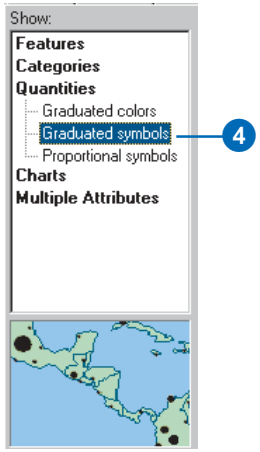


You can change the symbol scheme for the layer, as well as its appearance in the table of contents, from this tab.

3. Click Quantities. The panel changes to give you controls for drawing with graduated colors.

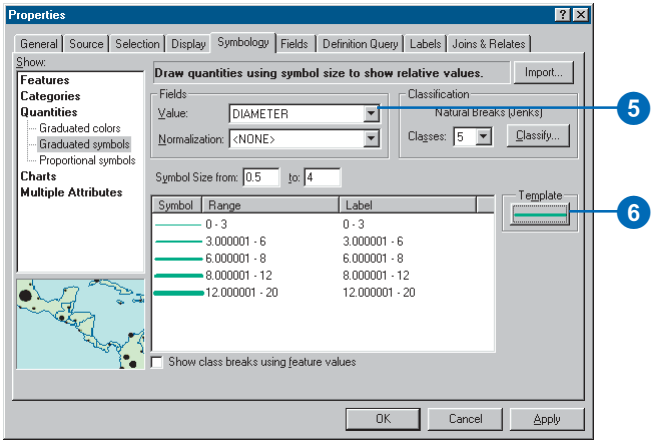


4. Click Graduated symbols. The panel changes to give you controls for drawing with graduated symbols.



5. Click the Value dropdown arrow and click DIAMETER. ArcMap assigns the data to five classes using the Natural Breaks classification (Jenks' method).

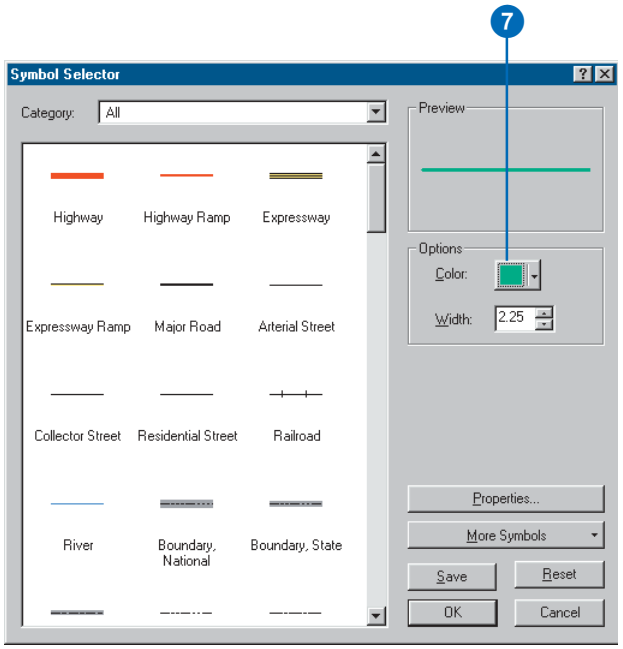
Now the width of the line symbols indicates the diameter of the water mains. You want the water mains to be blue, so you will change the base symbol.



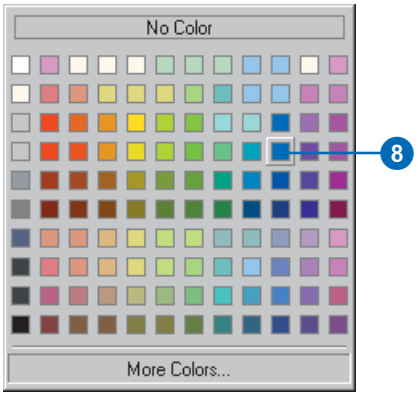
6. Click Template.

When you click Template, the Symbol Selector dialog box appears. Here you can choose predefined symbols, such as the Highway line symbol, or you can design your own symbols.

7. Click Color. The color selector dialog box appears. You can select one of the predefined colors from this palette or click More Colors to mix your own colors using one of several popular color models.



8. Choose a dark shade of blue and click OK.



Now all of the water mains will be drawn with dark blue lines, with the line width representing the diameter of the water main.

9. Click OK on the Properties dialog box to see your map with the new line symbols.

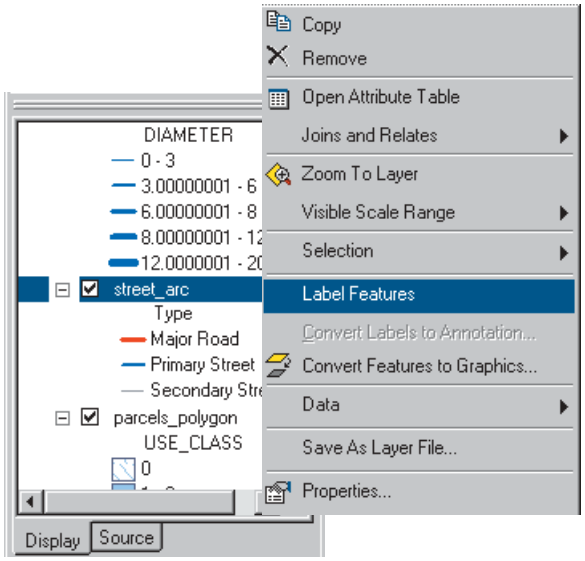
As you have seen, ArcMap has a rich set of line symbol selection and editing tools. These and other tools also work with point and polygon symbols.

Once you have set the symbolization for a layer to your satisfaction, you can preserve it for later use by saving the map (later in this chapter) or by saving the layer as its own layer file such as the Water Use layer you added (see *Using ArcMap* for step-by-step instructions).

Adding labels to a map

The map now shows some of the street centerlines and water mains with similar symbols. To avoid confusing a map reader, you will add street names on the map and change the street centerline symbol.

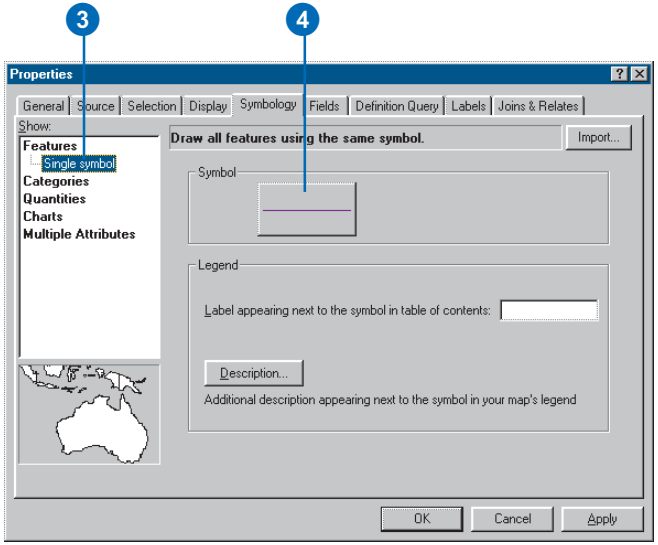
1. Right-click street_arc in the table of contents.
2. Click Label Features.



ArcMap adds the names of the streets to the map.

Change the street centerline symbol

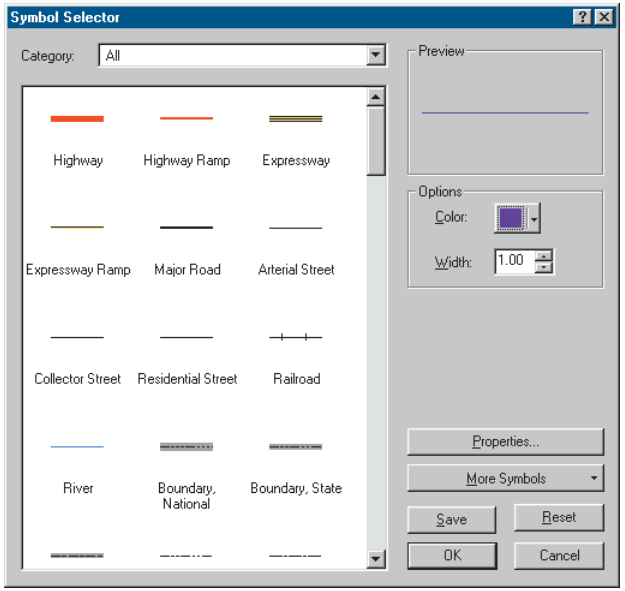
1. Right-click street_arc in the table of contents again and click Properties.
2. Click the Symbology tab.
3. Click Features, then click Single symbol.



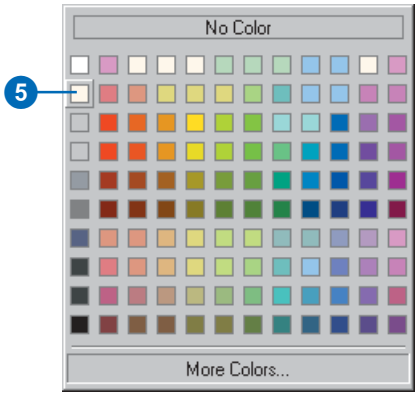
The street centerlines will now be drawn with a single symbol. You will change the default line color to a light gray, so the centerlines will be visible but unobtrusive.

4. Click the Symbol button.

The Symbol Selector appears.

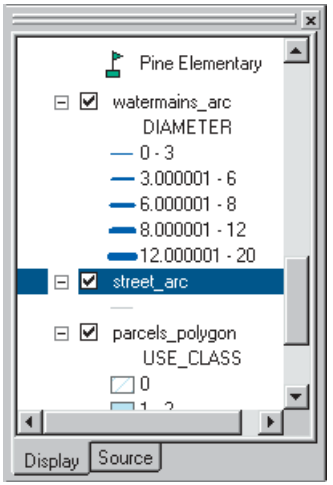


5. Click Color. Click a light gray and Click OK.



6. Click OK on the Properties dialog box.

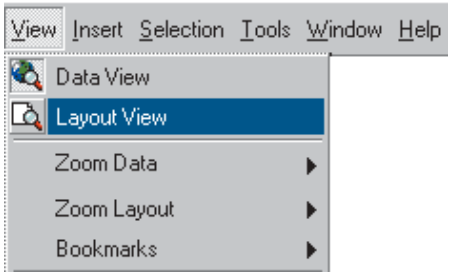
Now the centerlines will be drawn in a light gray, so they will not be confused with the water mains.



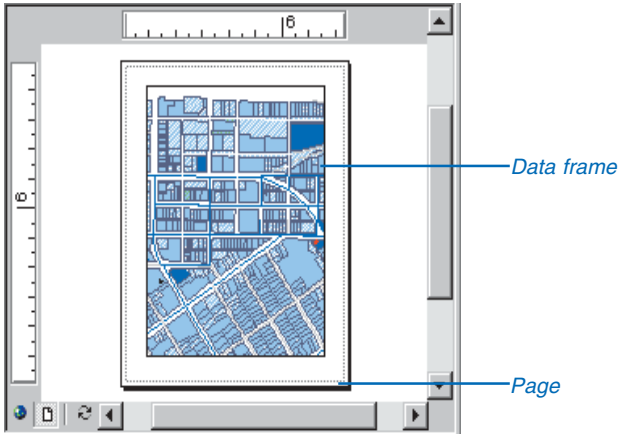
Working with the map layout

All of the data you need is now on the map and has symbols. The map that you are making for the Council meeting will be printed in color on an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper and distributed to each council member.

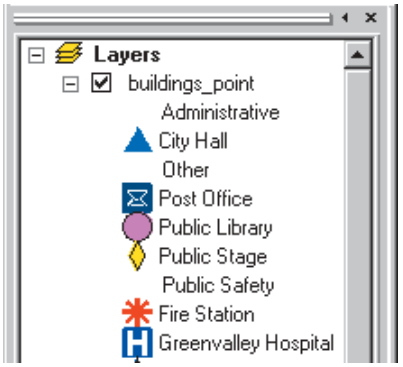
1. Click View and click Layout View.



Now you can see the map on a virtual page. The layers of data appear in a *data frame* on the page. Data frames are a way of organizing the layers you want to see together on a map.



There is always at least one data frame on a map. This one is called Layers; you can see its name at the top of the ArcMap table of contents.



You can add additional data frames to a map to compare two areas side by side or to show overviews or detailed insets.

You can see all of the data frames on your map in Layout view. If you switch back to Data view, you will see the layers that are in the active data frame. The active data frame is shown in boldface type in the table of contents.

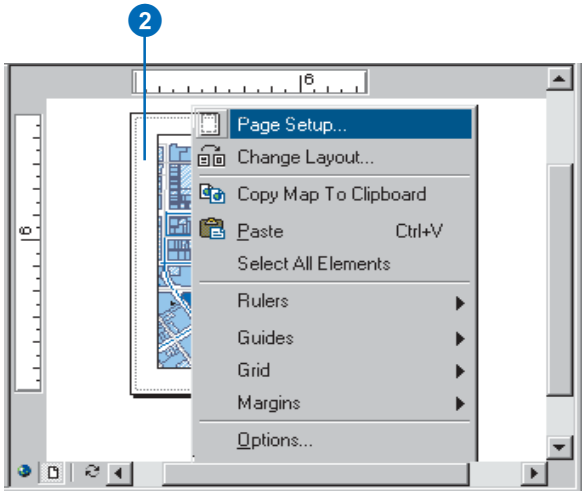
In Layout view you can change the shape and position of the data frame on the page, add other map elements such as scale bars and legends to the map, and change the page size and orientation.

The Layout toolbar is added to the ArcMap interface when you choose Layout View.

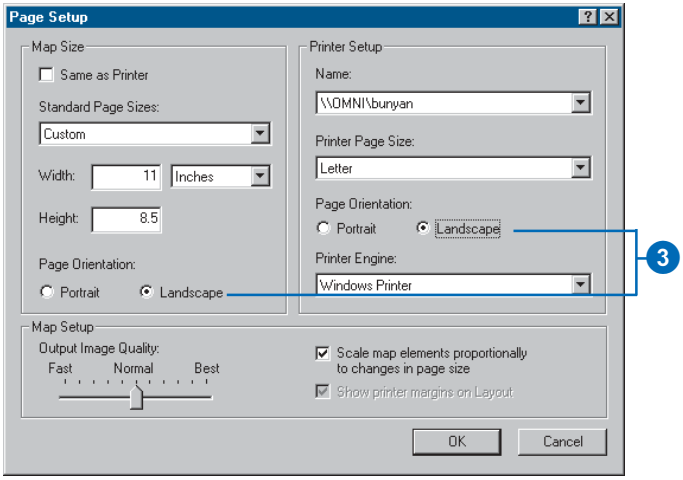
You can use the tools on the Layout toolbar to change the size and position of the virtual page on your screen or to zoom in or out of the virtual page.

You can also use tools from the Tools toolbar in Layout View to change the extent of the layers that are shown in the data frame.

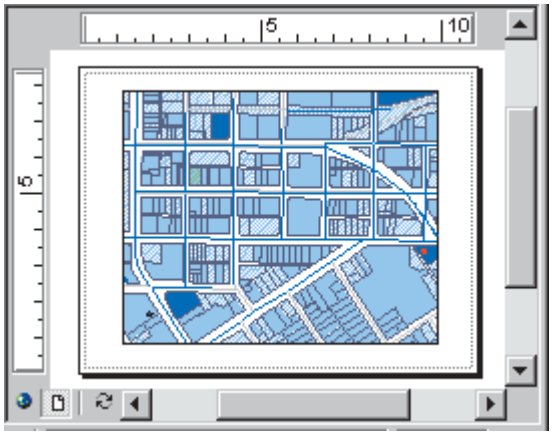
2. Right-click on the page and choose Page Setup.



3. Click Landscape under Map Size and under Printer Setup to change the page orientation then click OK.



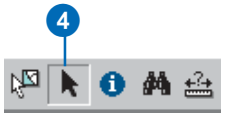
Now the page is in landscape orientation.



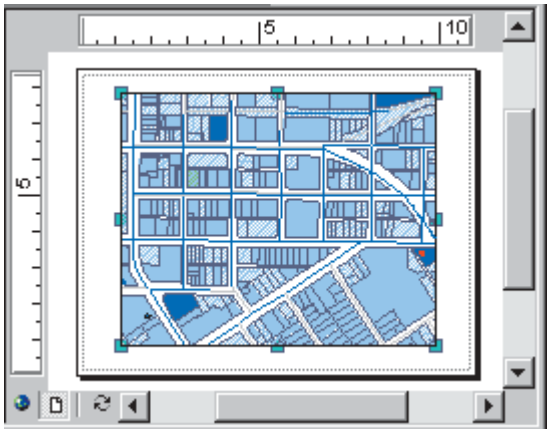
You will add a scale bar, North arrow, legend, and title to the page to help the Council members use the map.

First, you will make some space on the page for these other map elements by reducing the size of the data frame.

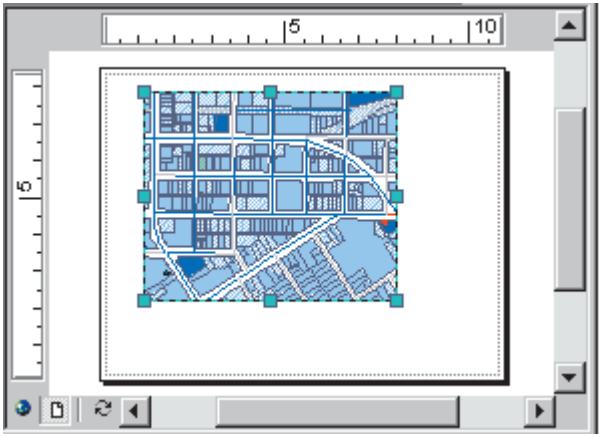
4. Click the Select Elements button.



5. Click the data frame to select it. The data frame is now outlined with a dashed line and has selection handles at its corners and edges.

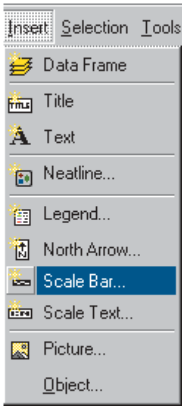


6. Point to the selection handle at the lower-right corner of the data frame. The cursor becomes a two-pointed resize cursor. Click the corner and drag it up and to the left.



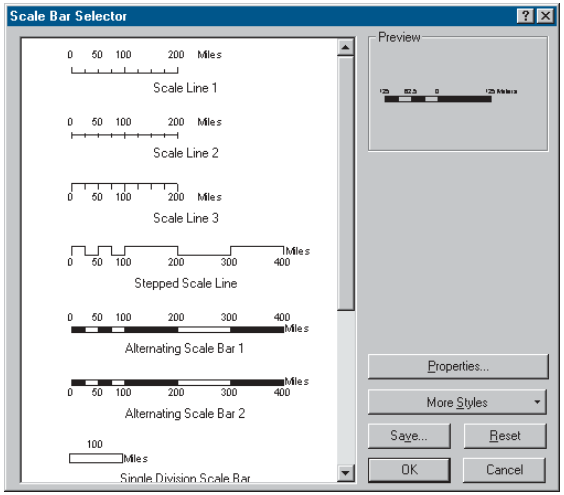
Add a scale bar

1. On the Insert menu click Scale Bar.



The Scalebar Selector dialog box appears.

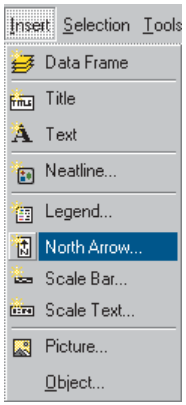
2. Click one of the scale bars and click OK.



3. Click the scale bar and drag it to the empty space below the left side of the data frame.

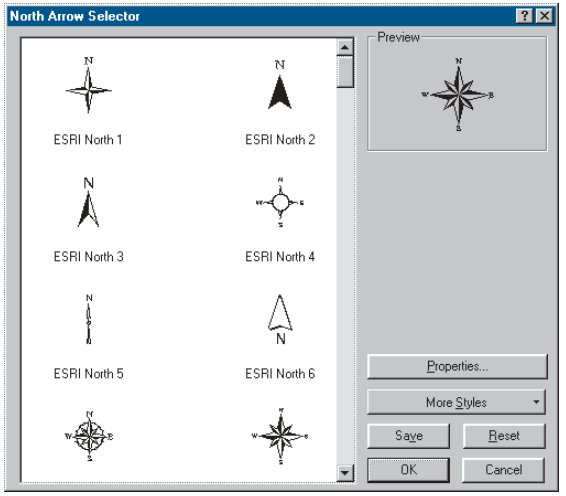
Add a North arrow

1. On the Insert menu click North Arrow.

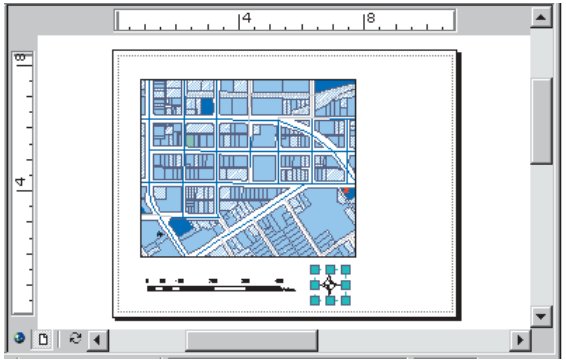


The North Arrow Selector appears.

2. Click one of the North arrows and click OK.

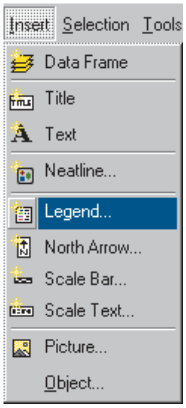


3. Click the North arrow and drag it to the empty space below the data frame and to the right of the scale bar.

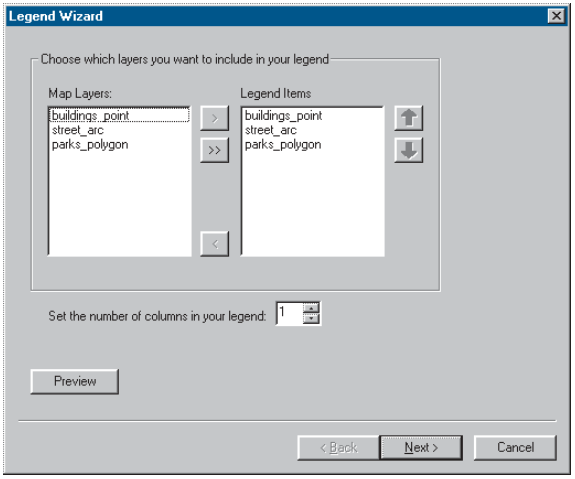


Add a legend

1. On the Insert menu click Legend.



The Legend Wizard appears.



Changing Legend Wizard parameters alters the appearance of the legend on your map. The Legend Wizard takes you through five dialog boxes that allow you to change the layers included in your legend, the appearance of the legend title, the appearance of the legend frame, the size and shape of the symbol patches used to represent line and polygon features, and the spacing between legend items.

In this case, the default legend parameters are appropriate for your map. However, legend parameters can be modified at any time by right-clicking the legend in the layout view and choosing Properties from the menu that appears.

2. Click Next several times to step through the wizard, accepting the default legend parameters. Click Finish when done.

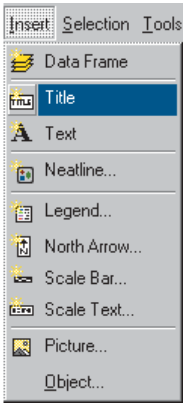
The legend appears on your map.

3. Click the legend and drag it to the empty space to the right of the data frame.

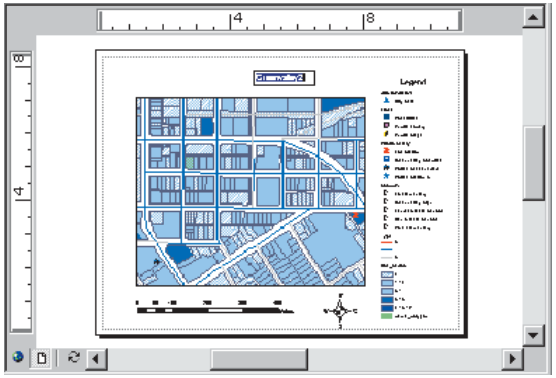
You can click on the blue selection handles to resize the legend so that it fits along the right side of the page.

Add a title

1. On the Insert menu click Title.

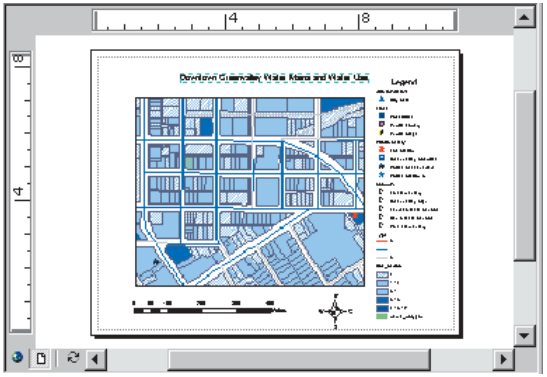


A partial title, “Greenvalley”, appears in the layout view.



Greenvalley is the name of the map document, but you will need a more explanatory title on the map.

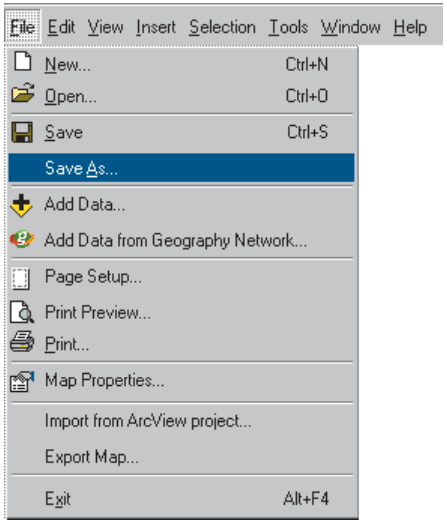
2. Type “Downtown Greenvalley Water Mains and Water Use”. Press Enter, then click and drag the title to the top and center it on the page.



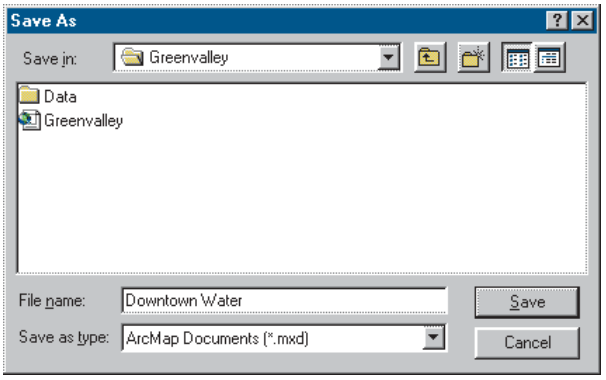
Saving a map

You have made a lot of changes to this map. Because you want to keep the new map that you have created and also keep the old template map, you will use Save As to save this map under a new name.

1. Click File and click Save As.



2. Navigate to the Greenvalley folder.
3. Type “Downtown Water”. Click Save.



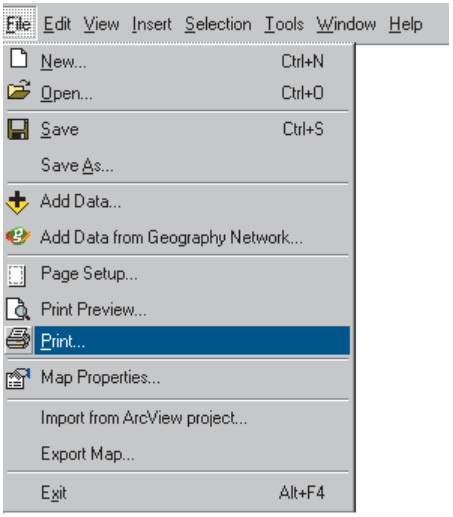
Now you are ready to print a copy of this map for the City Council.

Printing a map

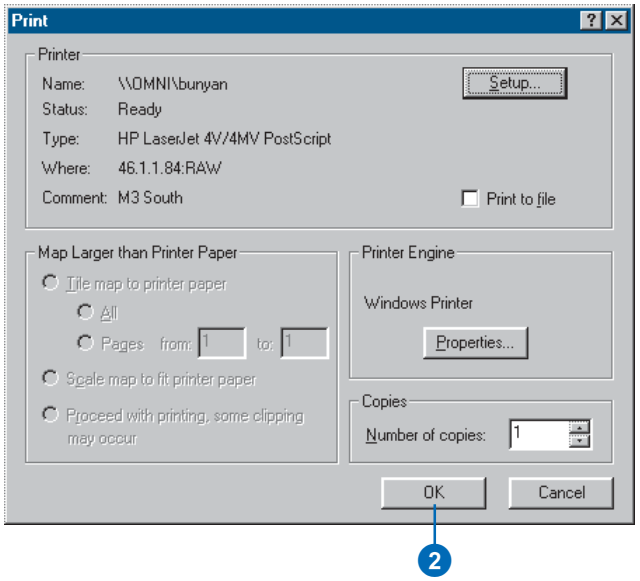
You can easily print the maps you have composed in ArcMap. The Layout view lets you arrange map elements, such as data frames, scale bars, and North arrows, on the page exactly as you want them to print.

You can print your maps using any printer on your network, and you can choose to print using Windows, PostScript®, or ArcPress™ (if installed) printer engines.

1. Click File and click Print.



The Print dialog box appears. You can change the default printer by clicking Setup.



2. Click OK.

You are ready to take the map to the Council meeting.

Close ArcMap and ArcCatalog.

3. Click File and click Exit, or simply click the Close button (x) in the upper-right corner of the ArcMap window. Do the same for ArcCatalog.

What's next?

While making your first map, you learned how to start and use two GIS applications: ArcCatalog and ArcMap.

In the next chapter you will learn more about GIS data and how to work with various data types. Working in the field of GIS analysis inevitably means working with geographic data in a variety of different formats. Understanding the advantages and limitations of each format is an important first step in any project and is essential to the project you will begin in Chapter 4, 'Planning a GIS project'.