Types of Maps

General Reference Maps use symbols to show the exact location of things on the earth. For example, where the black line is drawn for the roads is where you can actually find the road in real life. The map of Oregon, below, is an example of a general reference map.

Thematic Maps use symbols to show a pattern or “theme.” Usually, the symbols used on these maps are not in an exact location because the maps provide only general information about the theme or pattern. The map of Oregon’s ecoregions, below, is an example of a thematic map.