

Contours and Their Characteristics

Chapter 3: Contours and Their Characteristics · Topic 1

Key Concept

Closely spaced contour lines indicate steep slopes, while widely spaced contour lines indicate gentle slopes.

V-shaped contours pointing uphill (away from higher ground) typically indicate a valley, while contours forming a closed loop indicate a hill or depression.

Contour intervals (the elevation difference between adjacent contour lines) are consistent on a given map, helping calculate elevation changes.

Understanding contour patterns helps us visualise three-dimensional terrain from a two-dimensional map, essential for geography and outdoor navigation.

Quick Revision Notes

- Contour lines connect points of equal elevation.
- Closely spaced lines mean steep slopes.
- Widely spaced lines mean gentle slopes.
- V-shaped contours pointing uphill indicate valleys.
- Closed loop contours indicate hills or depressions.
- Contour intervals are consistent on a map.
- This helps calculate elevation changes.
- Contours help visualise 3D terrain from 2D maps.

Practice Questions

- 1 Identify steep and gentle slopes on a contour map.
- 2 Find a V-shaped contour and discuss what it represents.
- 3 Find a closed loop contour and discuss what it represents.
- 4 Calculate elevation change using a contour interval.
- 5 Practice visualising terrain from a contour map.
- 6 Explain contour lines in your own words.