Topographical test map symbols: questions and answers

22 practice questions for the TfL topographical assessment, with answers and explanations at the end.

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Questions

Road colours and classes

1. **On most UK road maps, what colour are primary routes?**
   - ☐ A. Green
   - ☐ B. Yellow
   - ☐ C. Blue
   - ☐ D. Black

2. **On most UK road maps, what colour is an ordinary A road that is not a primary route?**
   - ☐ A. Purple
   - ☐ B. Red
   - ☐ C. Blue
   - ☐ D. Green

3. **What is the background colour of a direction sign on a primary route?**
   - ☐ A. Blue
   - ☐ B. White
   - ☐ C. Green
   - ☐ D. Brown

4. **What does a direction sign on a non-primary route look like?**
   - ☐ A. Brown background, white letters
   - ☐ B. Blue background, white letters
   - ☐ C. Green background, white letters
   - ☐ D. White background, black letters

5. **What do most motorway signs look like?**
   - ☐ A. Green background, yellow letters
   - ☐ B. Blue background, white letters
   - ☐ C. White background, black letters
   - ☐ D. Red background, white letters

6. **What colour is the background of a sign to a tourist destination?**
   - ☐ A. Yellow
   - ☐ B. Green
   - ☐ C. Blue
   - ☐ D. Brown

7. **What kind of number does a primary route always have?**
   - ☐ A. An A number
   - ☐ B. An M number
   - ☐ C. A B number
   - ☐ D. A C number

8. **A direction sign shows a motorway number in brackets on a blue panel, with no motorway symbol. What does it show?**
   - ☐ A. The end of the motorway
   - ☐ B. The start of the motorway
   - ☐ C. The way to reach the motorway
   - ☐ D. A road closed to cars

9. **Which roads are usually called major roads?**
   - ☐ A. Only motorways
   - ☐ B. Motorways and A roads
   - ☐ C. B roads and C roads
   - ☐ D. All unclassified roads

10. **What are classified unnumbered roads sometimes called, unofficially?**
    - ☐ A. D roads
    - ☐ B. M roads
    - ☐ C. C roads
    - ☐ D. B roads

11. **Which class of road makes up most of the roads in the UK?**
    - ☐ A. Motorways
    - ☐ B. A roads
    - ☐ C. B roads
    - ☐ D. Unclassified roads

Signs described in words

12. **What do circular road signs mostly do?**
    - ☐ A. Give orders
    - ☐ B. Give information
    - ☐ C. Give warnings
    - ☐ D. Show directions

13. **What do triangular road signs mostly do?**
    - ☐ A. Give orders
    - ☐ B. Show motorway numbers
    - ☐ C. Show parking places
    - ☐ D. Give warnings

14. **A sign is a red ring around a symbol. What does it usually tell you?**
    - ☐ A. What you must not do
    - ☐ B. Where to park
    - ☐ C. What you must do
    - ☐ D. What is ahead on the left

15. **A sign is a blue circle with a white symbol. What does it usually give?**
    - ☐ A. A warning of danger ahead
    - ☐ B. An instruction you must follow
    - ☐ C. The name of a place
    - ☐ D. Tourist information

16. **A round sign has a red ring and a red bar across a black arrow. What does the bar show?**
    - ☐ A. That a turn is required
    - ☐ B. That the road is one way
    - ☐ C. That change of direction is banned
    - ☐ D. That the road ends ahead

17. **A round sign has a red ring. Inside, a black arrow bends to the right, with a red bar across it. What does it mean?**
    - ☐ A. Turn right ahead
    - ☐ B. No right turn
    - ☐ C. No left turn
    - ☐ D. No U-turn

18. **A round sign has a red ring. Inside, a black U-shaped arrow has a red bar across it. What does it mean?**
    - ☐ A. No right turn
    - ☐ B. Two-way traffic
    - ☐ C. No left turn
    - ☐ D. No U-turn

19. **A round red sign has one thick white bar across the middle. What does it mean?**
    - ☐ A. No entry for vehicles
    - ☐ B. No overtaking
    - ☐ C. End of the road
    - ☐ D. Stop at the line

20. **A round sign has a red ring and is plain white inside, with no symbol. What does it mean?**

- ☐ A. Speed limit ends
- ☐ B. No entry for pedestrians
- ☐ C. No vehicles
- ☐ D. Road closed ahead for repairs

21. **A blue round sign has three white arrows in a circle. What does it show?**

- ☐ A. A one-way street
- ☐ B. A motorway junction
- ☐ C. A pedestrian zone
- ☐ D. A mini-roundabout

22. **A tall blue rectangular sign has one white arrow pointing up. What does it mean?**

- ☐ A. Parking ahead
- ☐ B. Ahead only for buses
- ☐ C. One-way traffic
- ☐ D. Motorway ahead

Answers

1. **A. Green.** Green is the usual colour for primary routes on a road map.
2. **B. Red.** The Department for Transport says ordinary A roads are usually red on road maps, and primary routes are green.
3. **C. Green.** A primary route sign is green, with yellow road numbers and white words.
4. **D. White background, black letters.** Direction signs on non-primary routes have a white background with black route numbers and lettering.
5. **B. Blue background, white letters.** Motorway signs are mostly blue, with white words, numbers and edges.
6. **D. Brown.** Signs to tourist places have a brown background.
7. **A. An A number.** Primary routes are roads of national and regional importance, and they always have A numbers.
8. **C. The way to reach the motorway.** The route from the junction ahead leads to the motorway. It is not the motorway itself.
9. **B. Motorways and A roads.** Major roads usually means A roads and motorways, but there is no fixed definition.
10. **C. C roads.** Some people call them C roads, but this is not an official name.
11. **D. Unclassified roads.** About 60% of UK roads are unclassified. These are local roads for local traffic.
12. **A. Give orders.** As a general rule, circles give orders, triangles warn and rectangles inform.
13. **D. Give warnings.** As a general rule, triangles warn. Circles give orders and rectangles inform.
14. **A. What you must not do.** A red ring or circle means something is banned.
15. **B. An instruction you must follow.** A blue circle usually tells you what you must do, for example turn left. It can also mark a route only for some vehicles.
16. **C. That change of direction is banned.** A red bar across the sign, as well as the red circle, is used where a change of direction is not allowed.
17. **B. No right turn.** The arrow bending right with the red bar means no right turn.
18. **D. No U-turn.** The U-shaped arrow with the red bar means no U-turn.
19. **A. No entry for vehicles.** This is the sign for no entry for vehicular traffic.
20. **C. No vehicles.** A plain red ring with nothing inside means no vehicles. Pedal cycles pushed by hand are an exception.
21. **D. A mini-roundabout.** This is the mini-roundabout sign. You give way to traffic from the immediate right.
22. **C. One-way traffic.** This blue rectangle with a white arrow shows one-way traffic.

Sources

- Topographical assessment guidelines, Transport for London, No date printed; PDF file dated 29 April 2026. Checked 1 November 2026. https://content.tfl.gov.uk/topographical-assessment-guidelines.pdf
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- Guidance on road classification and the primary route network, Department for Transport, published 13 March 2012. Checked 1 November 2026. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-road-classification-and-the-primary-route-network/guidance-on-road-classification-and-the-primary-route-network