

# Exploring the ArcMap Interface

ISTC Topic:

1.5

## In this Chapter you will learn

- About the main components of the ArcMap user interface such as the main menu, table of contents, data view and layout view as well as about the ArcCatalog user window.
- How to open and save a map document and use some of the tools on the Standard and Tools Toolbars.

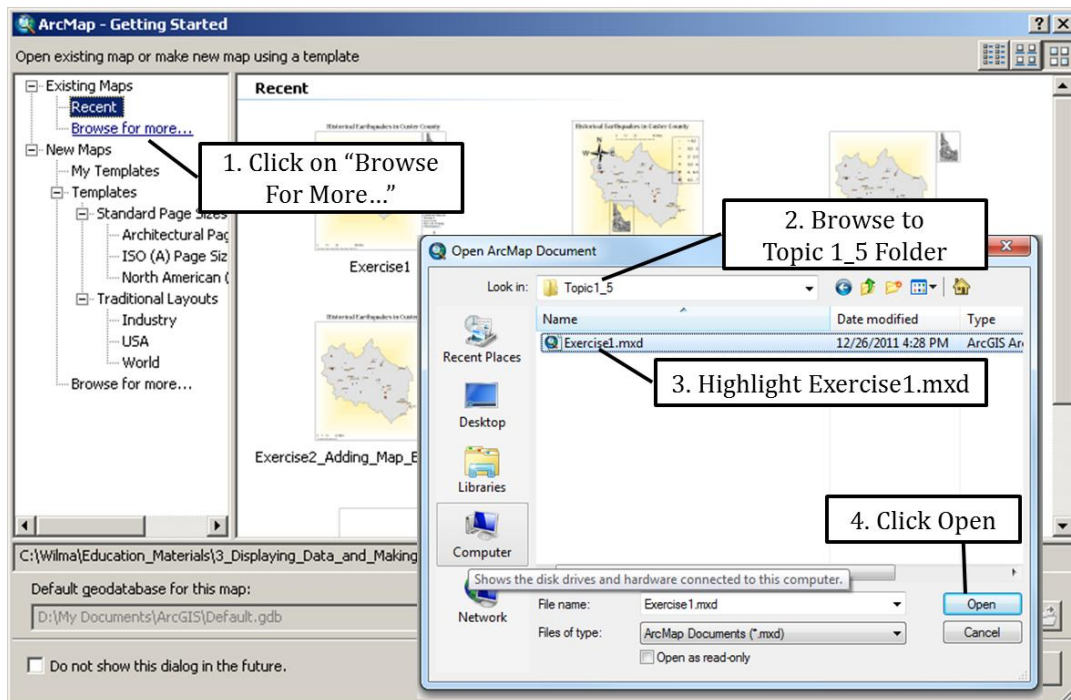


1.2: Opening a map document

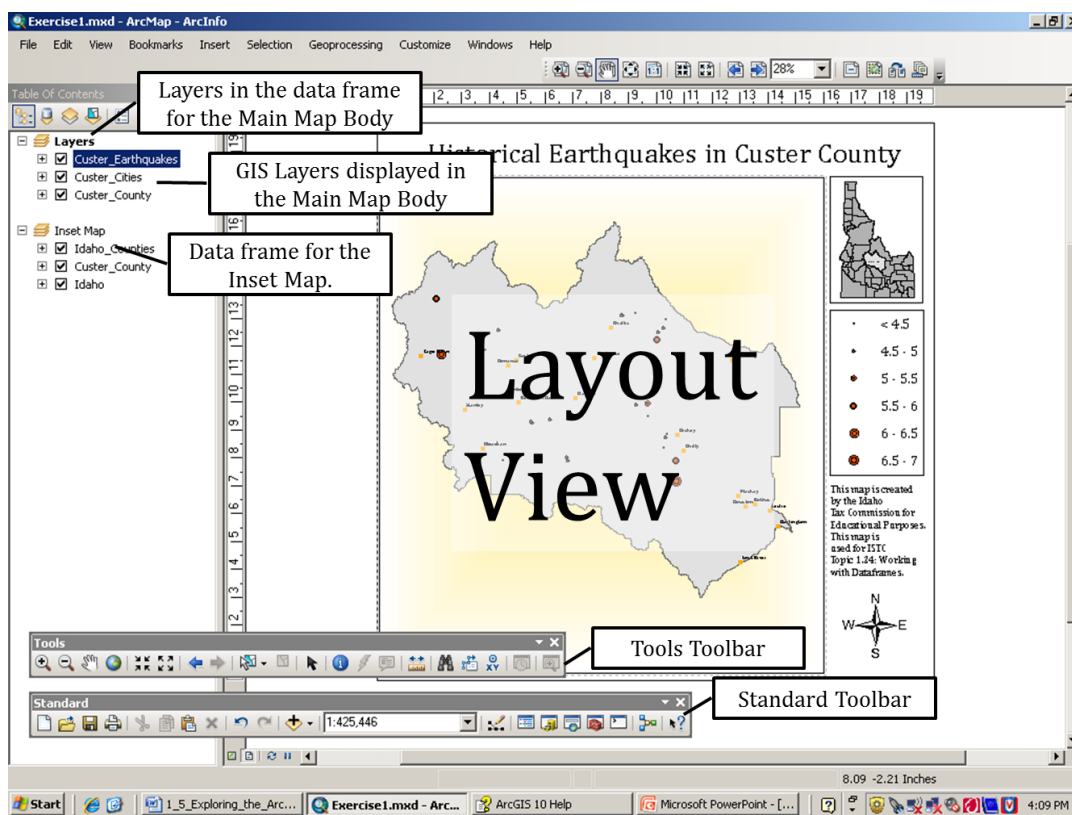
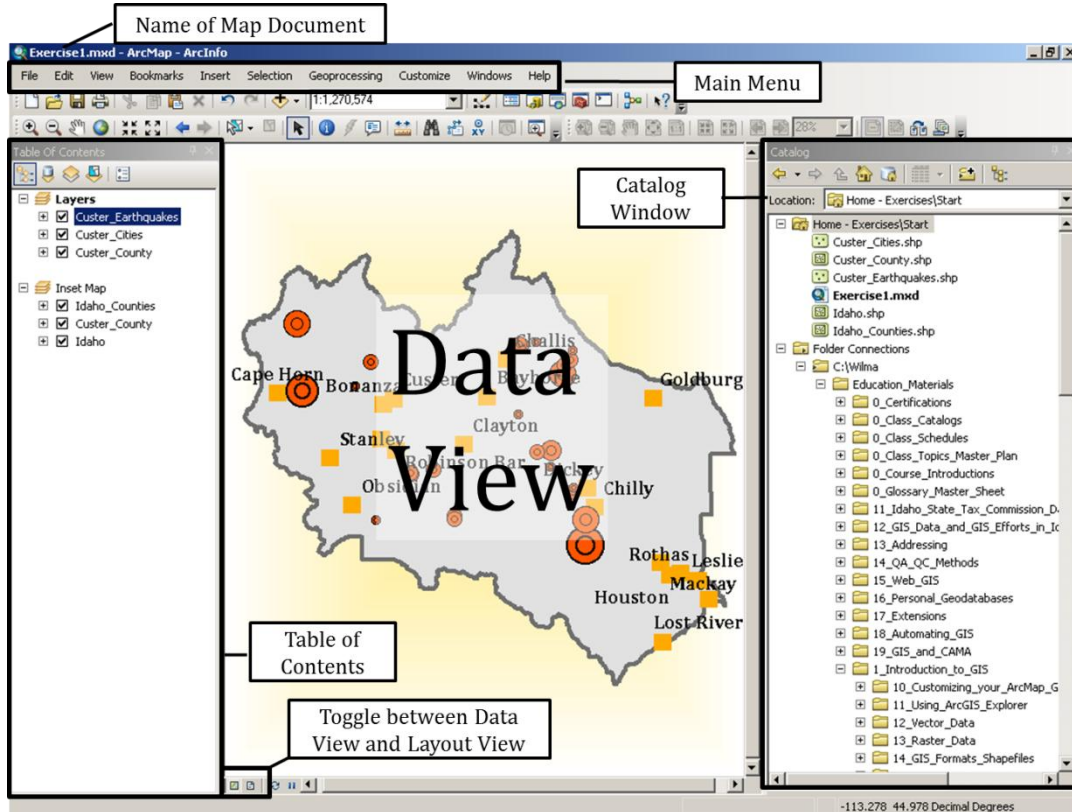
## 1. An overview of the ArcMap Interface

### Exercise 1: Open a map document in ArcMap

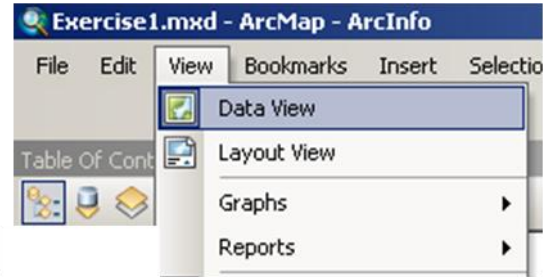
1. A **map document**, which can be recognized by its **.mxd** extension, contains information about the layers that should be displayed on a map, how those layers should be symbolized along with some other properties unique to a given map. There are different ways to open a map document. Try the following two ways:
  - a. Use Windows Explorer to browse to the Topic1\_5 folder and double click on Exercise1.mxd.
  - b. Go to Start (at the bottom left of your screen) > Programs > ArcGIS > ArcMap. Follow the instructions below to browse to the map document and open it.



- The two figures below show some of the main components of the ArcMap interface. The Layout View at the bottom shows a virtual page that displays your map, inset maps, legend and other map elements as they would appear on paper when you print your map. The Data View is used for all other GIS functions. Find all the components shown in the figures below in your ArcMap interface. Toggle between the Data View and the Layout View.

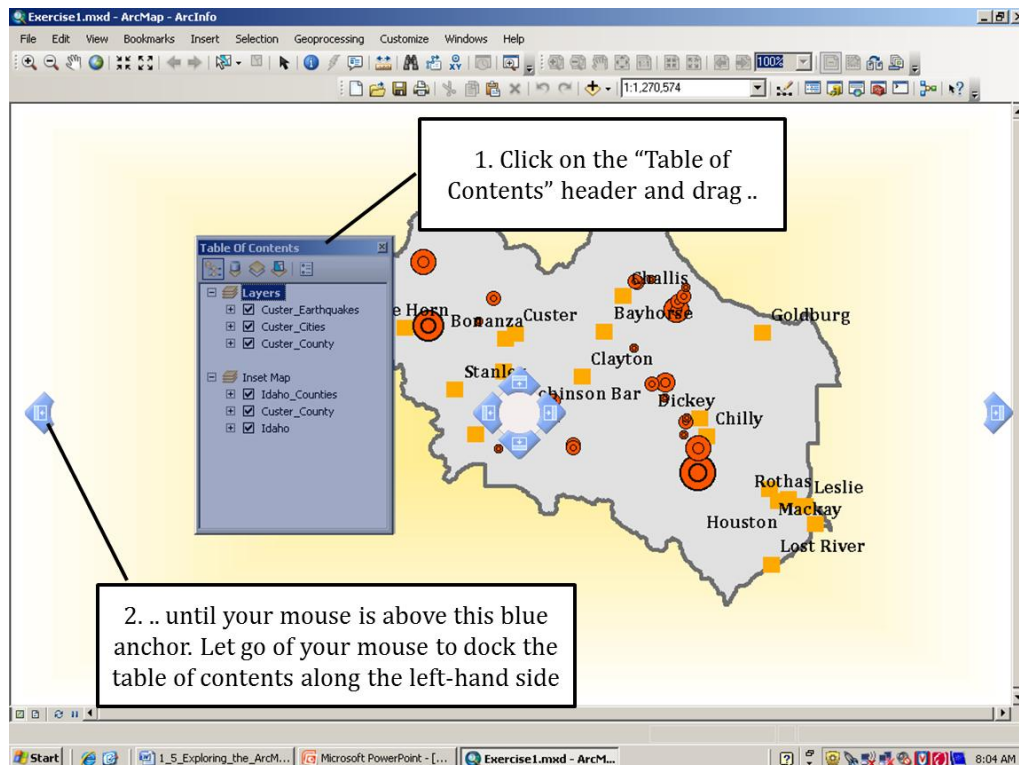
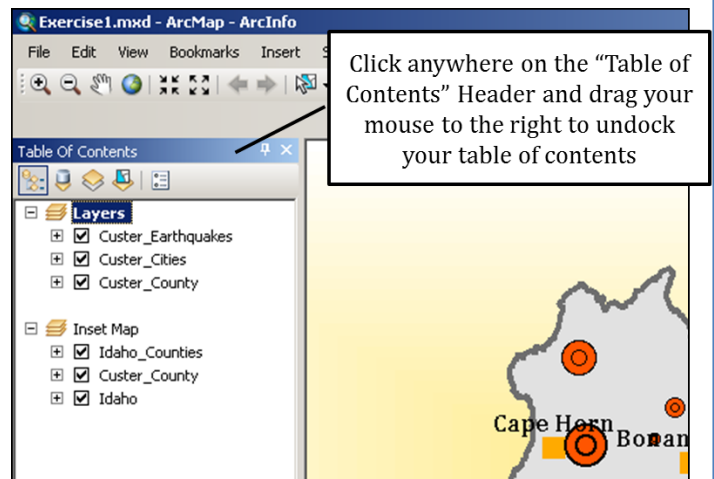


- In the previous step you toggled between the Data View and Layout View using the buttons near the bottom-left side of your map window. Alternatively you can click on "View" on the main menu and select Data View or Layout View as shown on the right. Toggle between the Layout and Data View. Set it to the Data View before moving on to the next step.

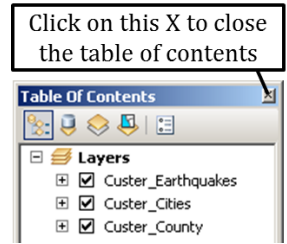


**1.5: Opening, closing and docking windows**

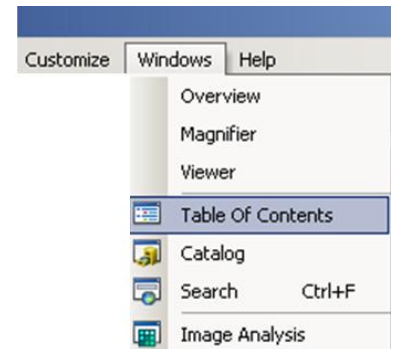
- You can customize your interface by moving around toolbars and the table of contents. Click on the header for the Table of Contents and, while holding down your mouse button, drag it a little distance away from its original position as shown on the right.
- Use the instructions below to dock your table of contents to the left-hand side of your screen.



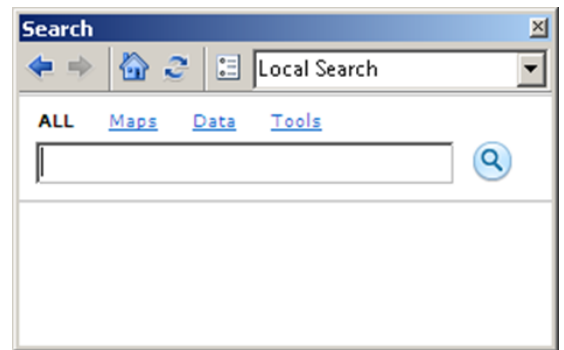
- Next, remove the table of contents from your interface by clicking the “x” in the top right corner as shown on the right.



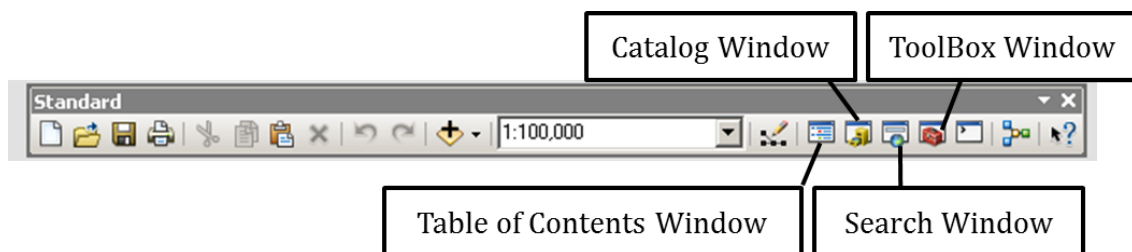
- Click on “Windows” on the main menu along the top of your screen and click on “Table of Contents” to add this window back onto your screen. Notice that you can also open the Catalog and the Search Window from this Menu. After opening the Table of Contents also open the Catalog Window.
- Using the same techniques as before, go ahead and move the Catalog window to the center of your screen. Then dock it back to the right-hand side of the ArcMap interface. Close your ArcCatalog window.



- Click on “Windows” on the main menu and open the Search window. This window is a handy addition to the ArcGIS 10 release. It allows you to search for Maps, Data and Tools in one handy location. You can do a local search (as shown in the figure on the right) to look for data, tools and maps on your own computer. Or you can expand your search to include resources found in the enterprise GIS or ArcGIS Online. Do a search for the Clip tool.

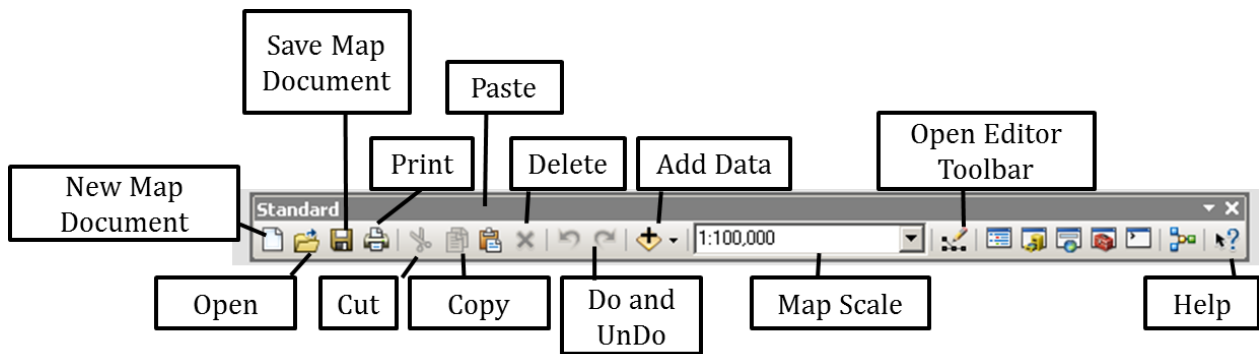


- An alternate way to open the Catalog and Search windows is by clicking on the Catalog Window and Search Window buttons as shown below. Note that you can also open the Table of Contents and the ArcToolbox (which contains a collection of tools available to you in ArcGIS) from the Standard Toolbar.

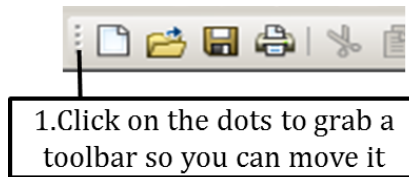


- Much of the functionality of ArcGIS can be accessed from a variety of toolbars. The most common tools are found on the Standard toolbar and Tools toolbar. The figure below labels some more commonly used tools on the Standard toolbar. Take a minute to locate the Standard

toolbar in your ArcMap interface. Next, hover your mouse over the various buttons on the Standard toolbar to reveal tool tips that label the function of each button on the toolbar.

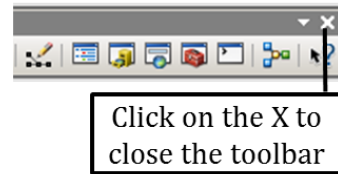


12. Use the instructions on the right to move the Standard toolbar to the middle of your screen. Note that when you toolbar is not docked you can see the name of the Toolbar.

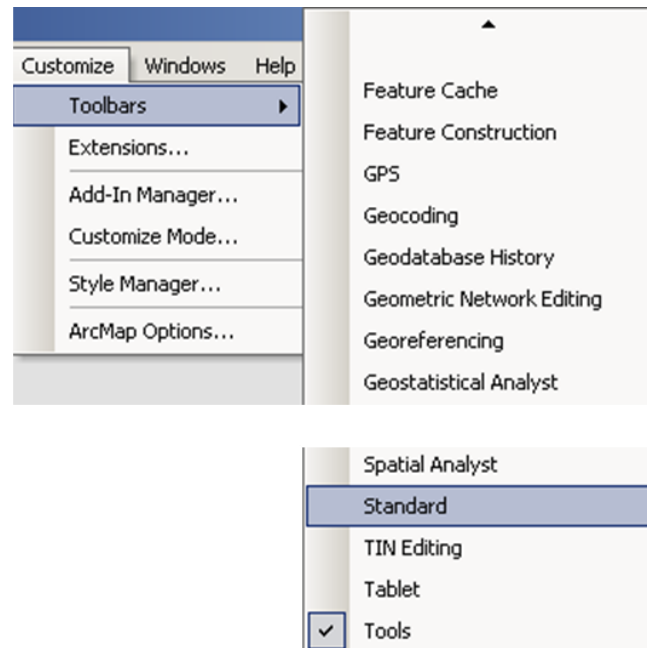


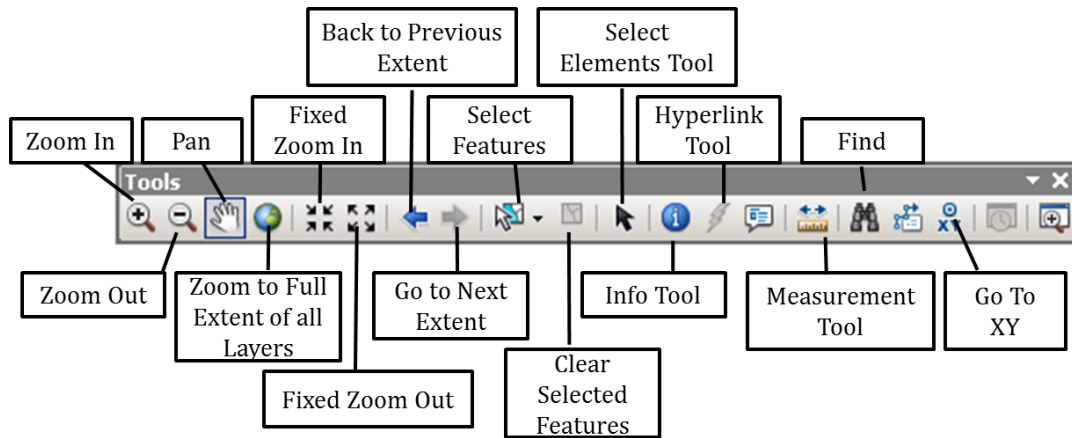
1.5: Adding and Removing Toolbars in ArcMap

13. Close the Standard Toolbar by clicking the "X" in the top-right corner as shown on the right.



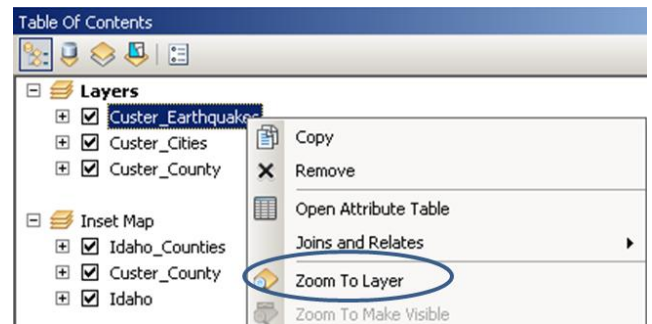
14. You can add the Standard toolbar back to the ArcMap interface by clicking on Customize > Toolbars as shown on the right. You will see a lengthy list of toolbars available to you. Scroll down the list of toolbars and click on "Standard". You should now be able to see the Standard toolbar again.





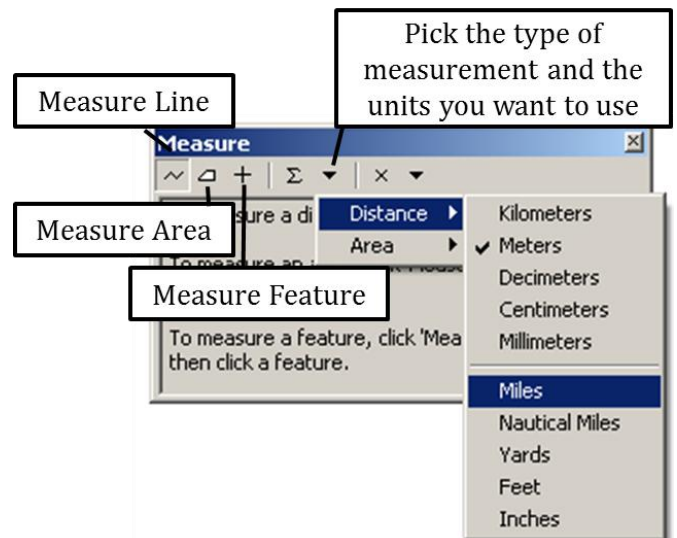
15. The figure above shows the “Tools” toolbar. Experiment with the zoom in, zoom out, fixed zoom in and fixed zoom out buttons. Then click on the button that looks like the Earth to zoom to full extent of all the layers in your map document.

16. Instead of zooming to the full extent of all the layers in the map document it is often more convenient to zoom only to the extent of one specific layer. Zoom to the Custer\_Earthquakes layer by right-clicking on the words “Custer\_Earthquakes” and selecting Zoom to Layer as shown on the right.



17. Experiment with the “Back to Previous Extent” and “Go to Next Extent” buttons.

18. Click the measurement tool. Use the figure on the right to experiment with measuring lines and areas. Use any unit you like.



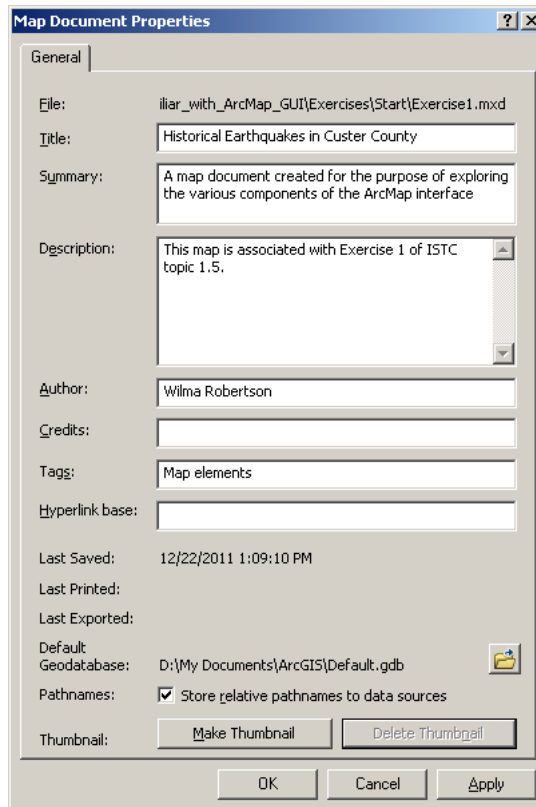
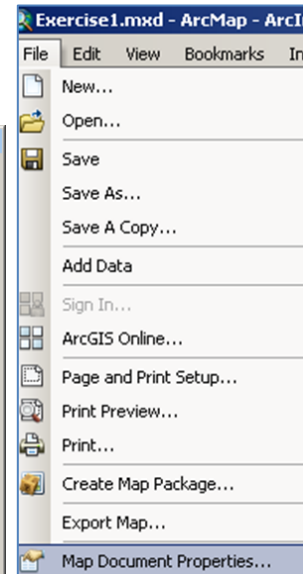
19. Click on File on the main menu and choose Map Document Properties as shown on the right.

20. Most of the dialog box, which is shown on the right, is self-explanatory. If you want to see a snapshot of your map when opening a map document or see a preview of your map in ArcCatalog click on the “Make Thumbnail” button.

21. It is usually a good idea to click on the check box in front of “Store relative pathnames to data sources”. This way, if you have a map document along with all the associated GIS data files stored in the same folder you can copy this folder anywhere without worrying about disconnecting the data from the map.

22. Click OK to close the Map Properties Document.

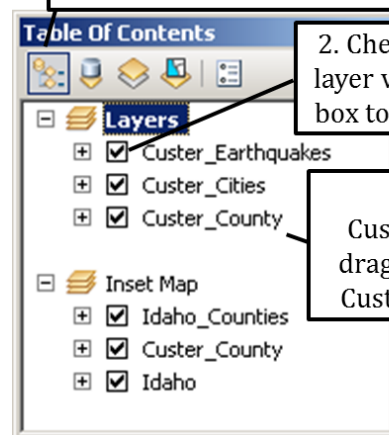
23. Use the directions on the right to turn layers on and off in the table of contents. Then try dragging the Custer\_County layer to the top of the map. Why can't you see the earthquakes and the cities anymore? Drag the Custer\_County layer back to the bottom. If you were unable to drag the layers than you are not using the “List by Drawing Order” tab. Go to this tab and try again.



1. Make sure you are on the List by Drawing Order tab

2. Check box to make a layer visible. Uncheck a box to make it invisible

3. Click on Custer\_County and drag the layer above Custer\_Earthquakes



24. Click on the List by Source tab as shown on the right. What additional information do you see?

25. So far we have looked at the GIS layers for the “Layers” data frame which is the data frame highlighted in the figure on the right. Look at the contents of the Inset Map by right-clicking on “Inset Map” and clicking “Activate”. Go to the layout view and notice that the “Layers” and “Inset Map” appear as separate maps views on the same layout.

26. Click on File > Save As and save you map as “Exercise1\_Done” in the Topic 1\_5 folder.

