GIS
Training and Services
Geospatial Technology Training Program

QGIS: Print Composer

QGIS 3.4.1

Welcome to the Essential QGIS Tasksheet Series. This series supplements the Iowa State University Geospatial Technology Training Program short course series. The tasksheets are designed to provide quick, easy instructions for performing mapping tasks.

In this tasksheet you will learn how to use Print Composer. Print Composer is the final product of your mapping project where you can add map elements such as legends, compasses, and scale bars, to be exported and shared with others. A final layout should be well organized and easy for your audience to understand. There are many details and options to keep in mind when finalizing your mapping projects, to ensure your audience will fully understand your message.

1. Getting Started

a. Install data for this tasksheet at http://isueogtp.github.io/GISTaskSheets/TaskSheetData/PM2082-20h.zip and extra the zip file when downloaded.

b. Open QGIS, and add downloaded file **IowaCounties.shp** to the layers pane.
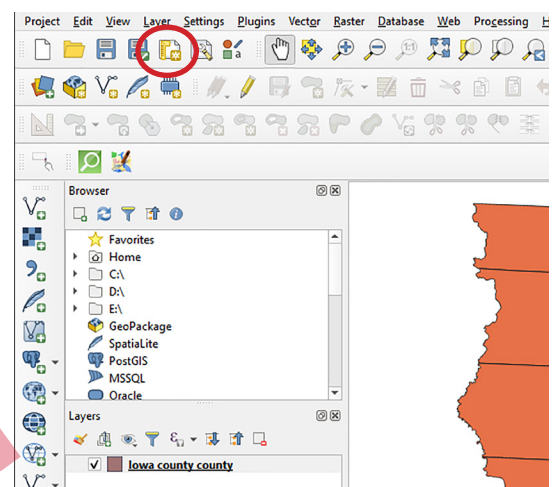
2. Creating New Print Layouts

a. With your layer in view. Click the **New Print Layout** button on the Toolbar.

b. **Create Print Layout title Appears**, here you can give a matching title such as **Counties of Iowa**, and click **OK** to continue.

c. A new blank QGIS window opens where you can create your layout.

d. From the Toolbox select **Add a New Map to the Layout** and your mouse cursor will change to crosshairs. Click and drag a frame that will fill the whole white space.

e. An image of your project will appear in the space you created.
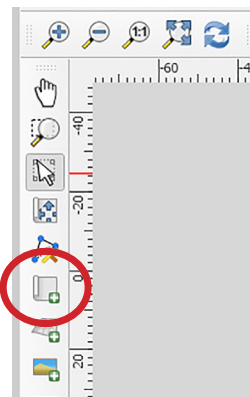
3. Adding Map Elements

a. Now you can add map elements such as a title, from the Toolbox click **Add a new Label to the Layout**, and draw a box above your project for a title.

b. Once you create the text box your right pane will change. Here you can adjust your text font. Under Main Properties replace the Latin text fill with a proper title such as **Counties of Iowa**.

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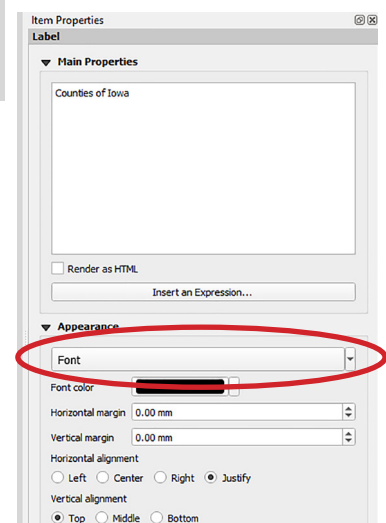
c. Within Appearance click on **Font**, and the Text Format window opens. Increase the font size to about **20**.

d. Next you can add a legend 🖼️ Draw a box for the legend to use. You can add a title to the legend using the Item Properties.

e. Add a **Scale bar** 📷 to your map, once added you can choose from a few different styles of scale bar as well as change the units of measurements

f. Use the **Add a new Arrow to the Layout** 📷 button, this can be used for added a north arrow or pointing to an area of interest.

g. Left click once to start the arrow line, then going straight up the length you want left click again, and then right click to finish the line and an arrow will appear.

h. Add a label box under your arrow and type a capitol **N** with a **20** point font

i. **Right-click** on the ruler around your layout to show the Guides and Snap options. These options will help align your map elements

j. If you click on your ruler you can drag a line onto your layout that will disappear when you export your project.
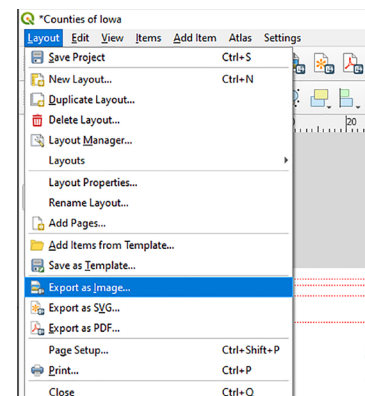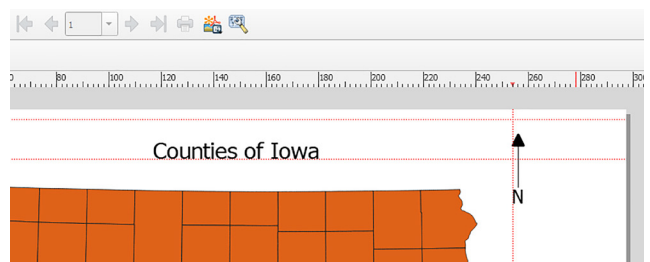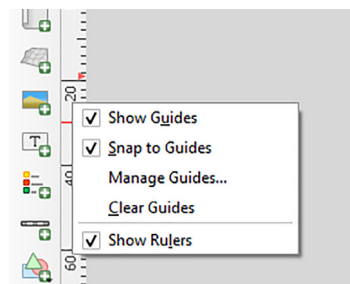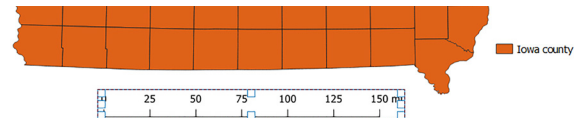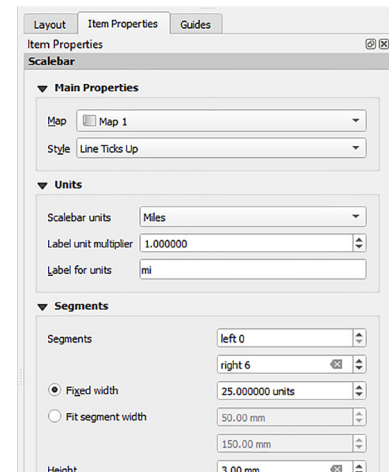
4. Saving and Sharing

a. When your project is finished and ready you can export your work as an image to be easily shared and added to documents.

b. Open **Layout** from the main menu and select **Export as Image**. Save Layout As window opens.

c. Expand the **Save as Type** options to see all the image formats you can choose from.

d. You can also export as a PDF file, which is a compatible file type for most users. There is an option for SVG files which are vector file formats. These are useful when your project may need to be resized in the future, tasksheet *GIS to SVG* **PM2082-20** to learn more.

Contact: