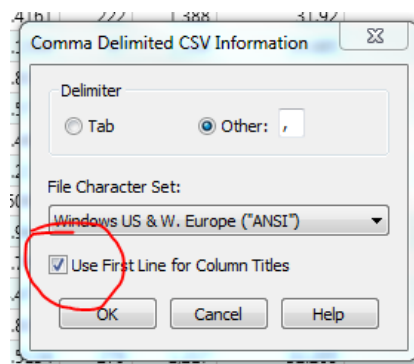Verity Tether
November 2018

MapInfo Cheat Sheet

This cheat sheet will go through basic use of MapInfo, from opening tables, to joining them, making a thematic map and making a layout window.

Opening files

1. Open MapInfo

2. We are first going to open the boundary file. Click *Open → Open Table*

3. Navigate to your boundary file. If you are positive you are in the right folder but you can't see it listed, it could be that MapInfo is looking for the wrong format. By default it looks for .tab files, so try different file types, by selecting from the drop-down option *Files of Type* towards the bottom of the window. I recommend looking for .shp (the default for Arc, which is sometimes the default download for UKBORDERS. If this is the case, it will ask you to save it again as a .tab file, so just click ok)

4. Your boundary file will open as a map

5. Open the table connected to this file, by clicking *Table → New Browser.* This shows what data you currently have in the boundary file

6. Open your attribute data, again by *Open → Open Table*. Again, the default is to look for a .tab file. If you're opening a file from excel, save it as a .csv and therefore look for .csv files as in step 3 above. **WHEN OPENING .CSV FILES FOR THE FIRST TIME, THIS BOX WILL POP UP - ASSUMING YOUR FIRST ROW IN YOUR EXCEL FILE CONTAINS THE COLUMN TITLES, ALWAYS TICK THIS BOX OR YOUR COLUMN TITLES WILL BE UNCLEAR**

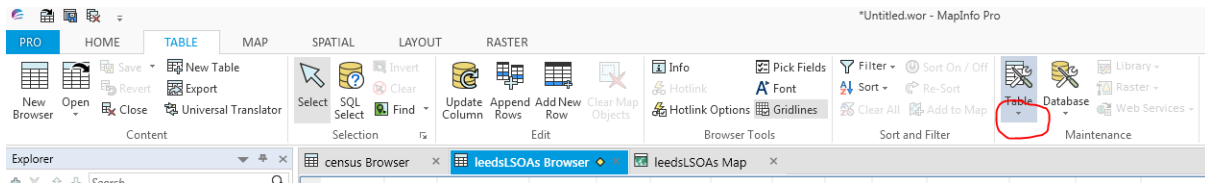7. This will open your data in a table format.

Joining the tables

The reason we need to join the tables is because the mappable file (your boundaries, in this example called *leedsLSOAs*) does not contain your attribute data, whereas your file with the attribute data (in
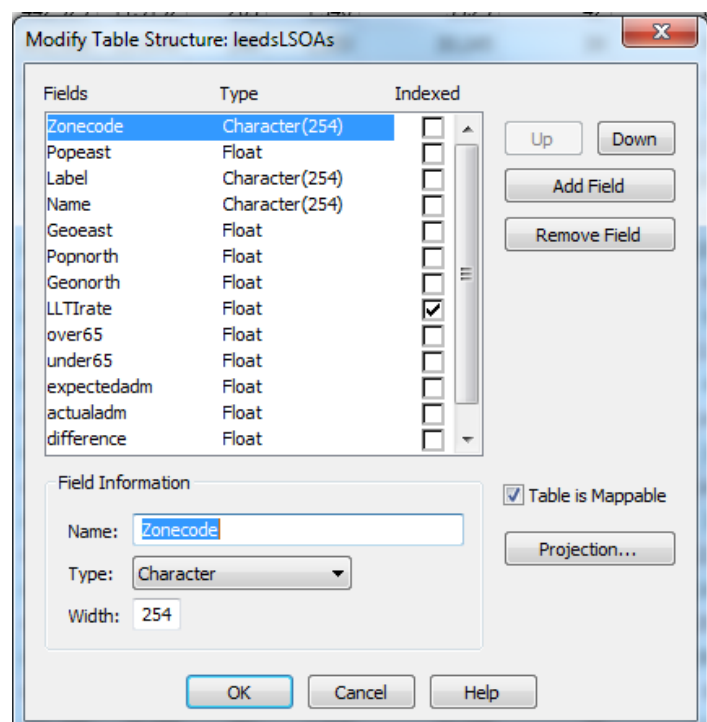
this example called *census*) is not mappable. As a result, we need to add the attribute data to the mappable file so that we can visualise it. In this example, I will be adding the count of people in each LSOA to the boundary file.

Joining Tables - adding a column to the boundary file

8. The first step here is to create a blank column in the boundaries file which you can fill with your attribute data.

9. Go to *Table → Maintenance → Modify Structure* (from the drop down box circled blow)

10. In the *View/Modify Table Structure* box, select your boundary file.

11. This box should appear. **If it does, and you have the *Add Field* option, follow steps 11 - 16, and skip 17-22. If a different box appears, and you can't add a field, go to step 17.**
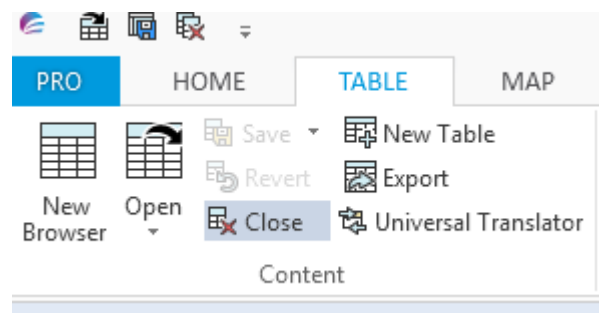

12. Press *Add Field*

13. Give it an appropriate column name - in my case it will be allpeople (don't use spaces as mapinfo doesn't like them)

14. Change the data type. If it is numeric data and whole numbers, I tend to go for *Float*. If it is numeric data with decimals, the *Decimal* option is good (remember to put how many decimal places you want in the *Decimal* box). If it is names (for example, county names) use *Character*.

15. Press OK. This will close your boundary table, and any associated maps. Don't panic, this is normal! You can open them again by going to *Table → New Browser* and *Map → Map* respectively.

16. When you re-open your table, you should see a column full of zeros, ready for your data.

The following steps are for people who had a different window when they opened *Modify Table Structure*.
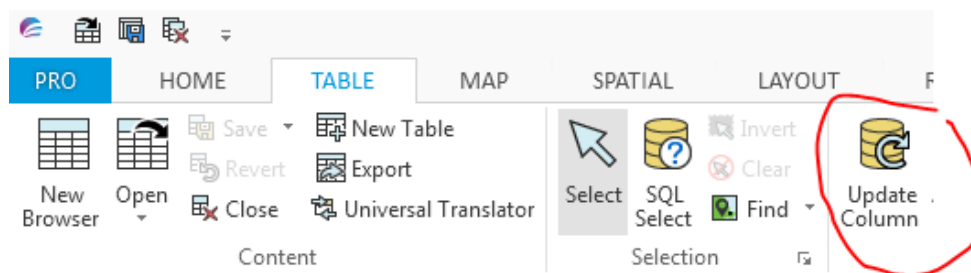
17. If you try to Modify Table Structure, but the box is smaller and there is no option to add a field, you need to close the table, re-save it, and re-open it.
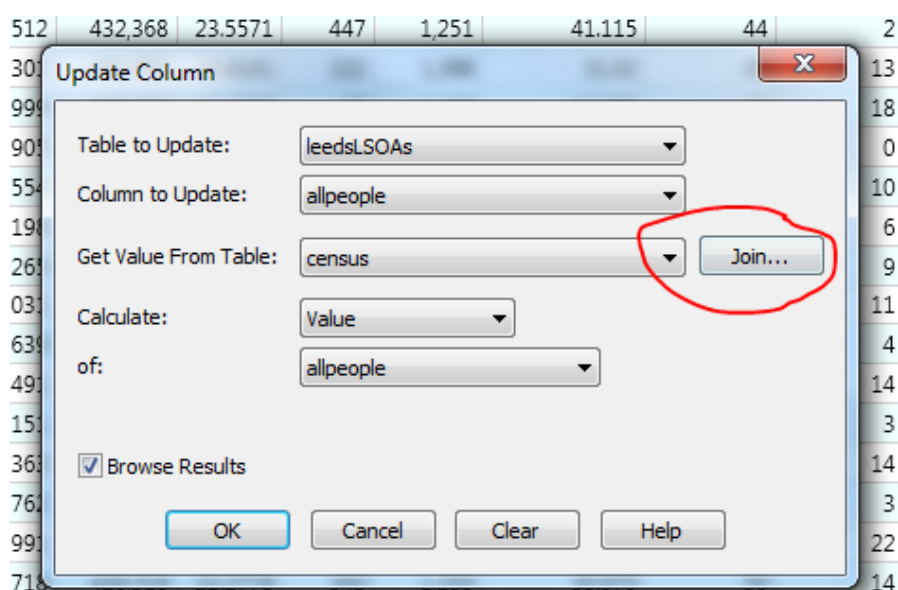
18. Go to *Table → Close*

19. Select your boundary file, and press ok.

20. Create a copy of it in the folder (outside of mapinfo), with a slightly different name.

21. Then, re-open it, as in steps 2-4 above.

22. Go back to step 9, and it should work again :)

Joining the tables - adding the attribute data

23. Now, we need to add the attribute data to your empty column
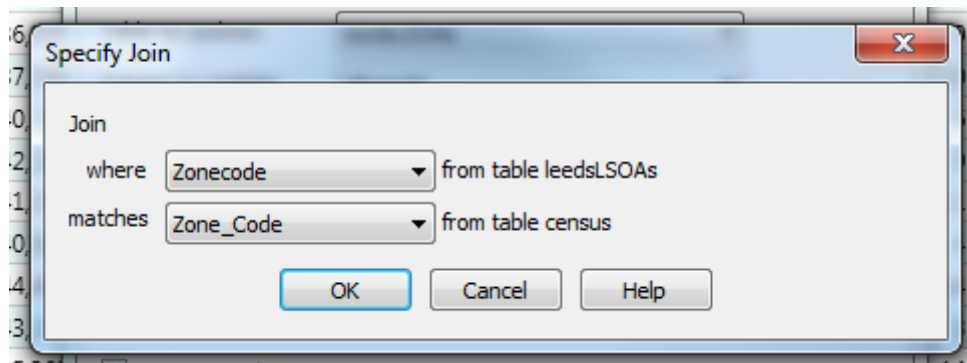
24. Go to *Table → Update Column*

25. These next few steps can catch people out, so do them slowly! Do not press OK until you've done step 25 and 26! Fill in this window as appropriate to you, using the guidance in the table below.

Column	What it is/what you need
Table to Update	This is the table you'll be updating, so your boundary file
Column to Update	The blank column you've just made for your new data
Get Value from Table	The table containing your attribute data that you want to move to your boundary file. **You will also need to check the join**, which is explained below
Calculate	This gives you various options of different values MapInfo can calculate, such as the average. If you just want the data to go into the boundary file exactly as it is in the attribute file, just select *Value*
Of:	The column title in your original attribute file

26. **BEFORE YOU PRESS OK**. Press *Join* on the window in step 25. This is an important step, as this is the way you tell mapinfo how to connect the two data tables to ensure that the

correct row of attribute data is connected to the correct row in the boundary table, and thus the right polygon gets assigned the right value. This will vary, depending on your data, but you need to find a column in each table which gives a specific value to each row of data (i.e. each row has a different value). The easiest way to do this is using zone codes or names, as each LSOA (for example) has its own zone code which is unique to that particular LSOA. As a result, we specify that we want mapinfo to join the tables to match the zone codes in the two tables. As I've said, this will vary depending on your data, but you should be able to find a name/code/identifier for your boundaries which matches on each table.

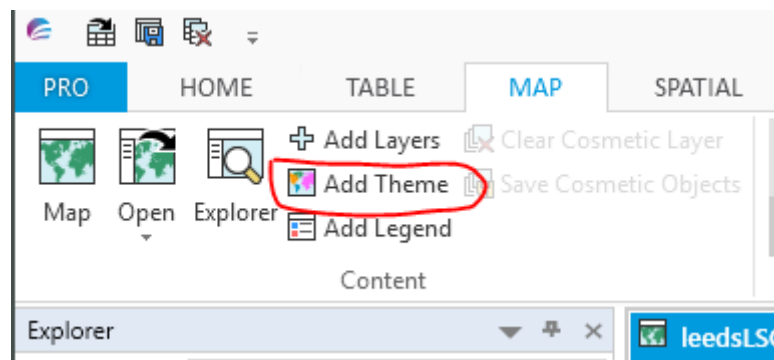27. Now press ok - this has joined your tables and filled in your column ready to map!

28. If your column still has zeroes in it, there are a few things you could check:

    a. Check that you joined the tables correctly (step 26)
    b. Check that your column has the right data type (step 14) - by going back to *Modify Structure* (step 9)
    c. Make sure that you selected the right column to update, and haven't accidentally over-ridden the first column in your table
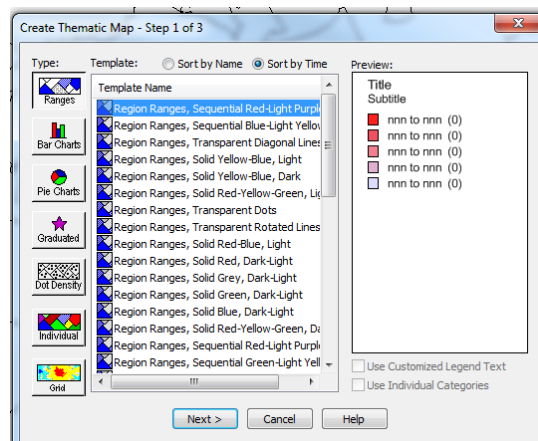
Thematic Mapping

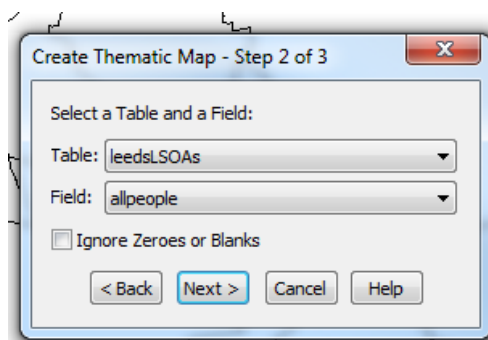29. To create a thematic map, first make sure that you have a map window open (*Map → Map*)
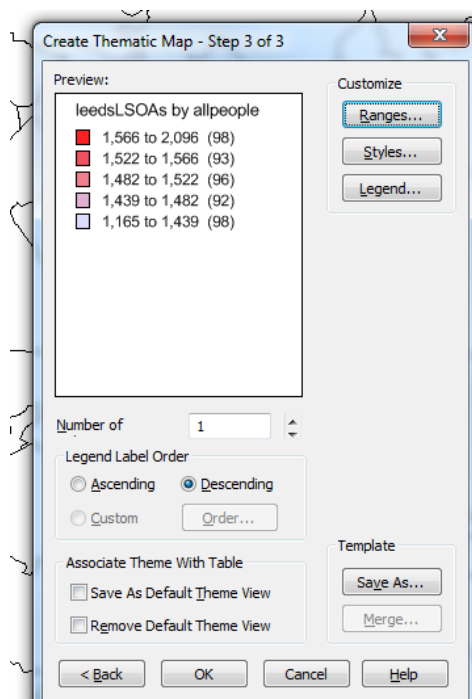
30. Go to *Map → Add Theme*

31. Select your theme colours. Press next.

32. Select your boundary file, and the column you wish to map, and press next.

33. If you wish to change the ranges, to modify the colour classes, press *Ranges*. You can change the number of ranges, or the numeric boundaries for each range (sorry if this isn't clear, it's clearer if you have a look at them).

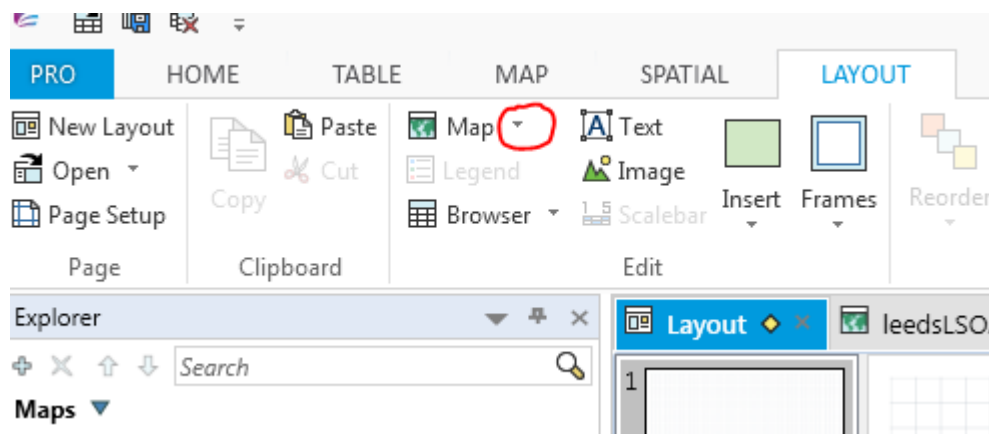34. If you wish to change the legend title to something neater, press *Legend*.

35. Press ok.

Layout Windows

If you want to save a map as an image (such as .jpeg) or format it nicely, you'll need a layout window.

36. Go to *Layout → New Layout.* This opens a new layout window. If you wish to have it landscape (rather than default portrait), right click and select *Page Setup. Page Orientation* is in the bottom left corner.
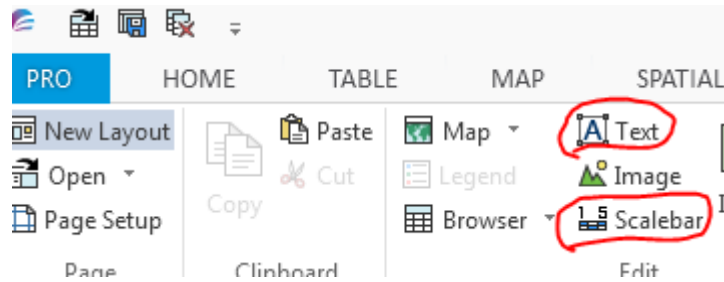
37. To insert your maps, press the little arrow circled here. This gives you a list of all the map windows you currently have open (including all settings, layers, labels etc on that window)
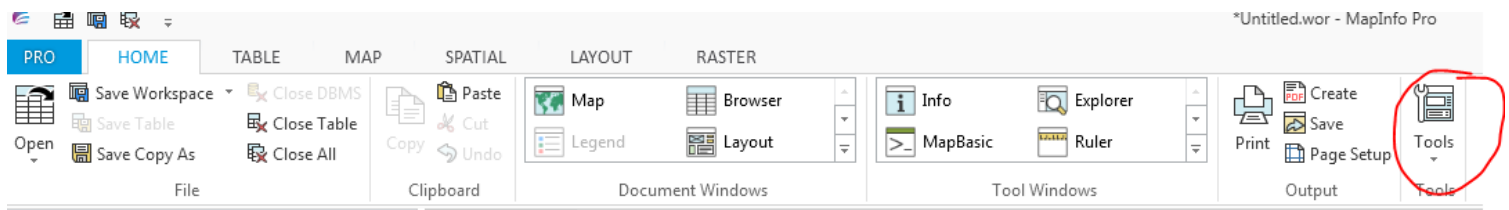

38. Scale your map to fit on the white layout window. Note that when you first insert a map window into layout view, it also inserts a legend, and both are selected, so if you try to move one they will both move, and the same with resizing them. I recommend clicking outside of them to de-select them before trying to move/resize them.

39. When resizing the map window, you may find that your map becomes very small or is not fully shown. If so, right-click, and select *Activate*. Then, right click again and select *View Entire Layer → LeedsLSOAs* (or whatever your boundary file is called).
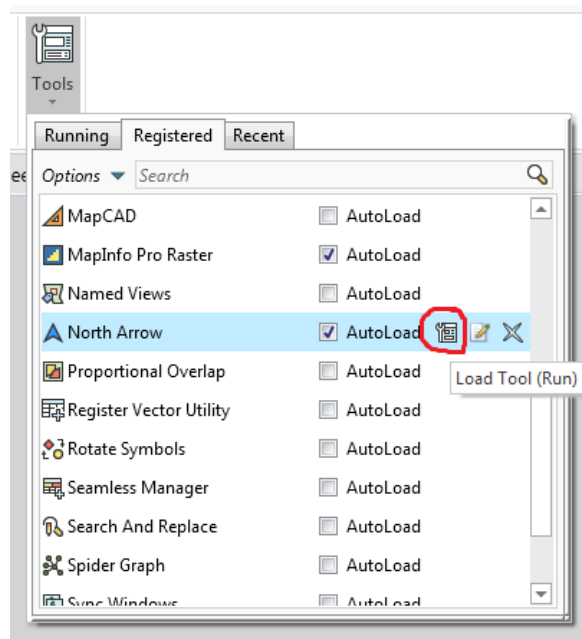
40. To insert a scale bar, click this button. Then select the style of bar and details (eg miles vs km). Press OK and drag it to position. A text box for a title can also be inserted in this way.
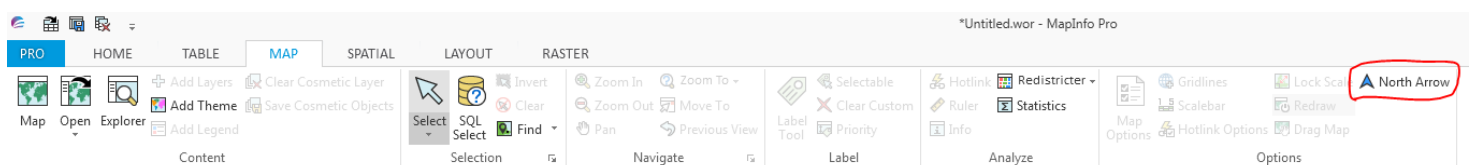
41. North arrows on mapinfo are tricky! Firstly, go to *Home → Tools:*
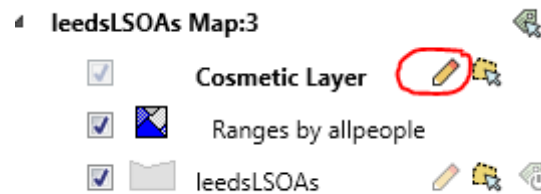

Then, under *Registered*, scroll down to North Arrow. Hover over it, and select *Load Tool* (same logo as the *Tool* icon above)
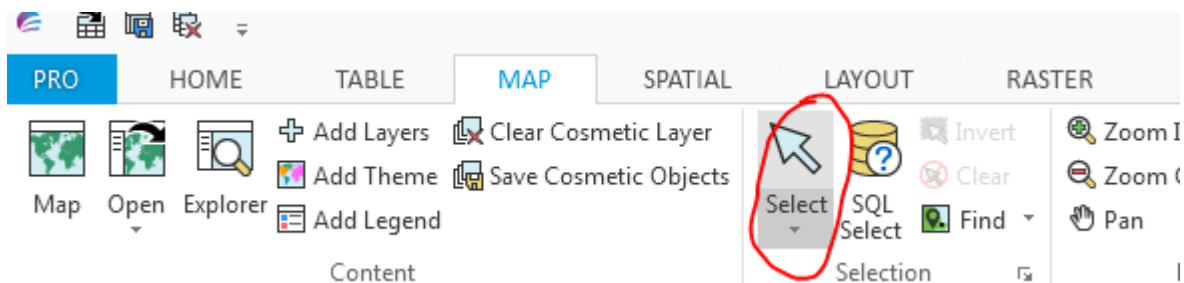

The N*orth Arrow* button is now under the *Map* tab:

Select the *North Arrow* button, then right-click and *Activate* the window as in step 39, then click in the window to place it. It usually places it somewhere weird, so to edit it, *Activate* the window again, and make the Cosmetic Layer editable:
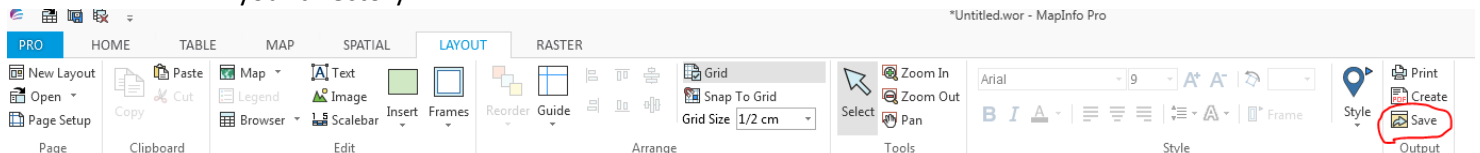

Then, ensure that you have clicked *Select* (rather than still having clicked on the *North Arrow* button or it'll put north arrows everywhere you click):

Then you can click on your north arrow to move it and resize it.

42. When you're ready to save your map, click S*ave*. This will allow you to save it as an image in your directory:

And your map is now ready to be inserted into a word document!