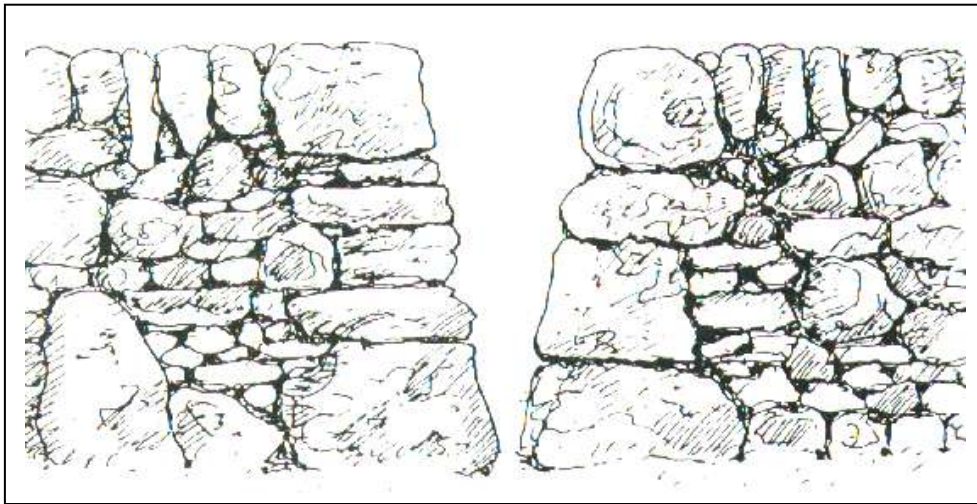




# WALL SURVEYS



A set of photocopyable sheets with guidelines to assist those wishing to conduct surveys on dry stone walls in a local area

## Survey Categories:

- Length and condition
- Wall style/Regional variations and features
- Natural History and/or History

The Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain,  
Westmorland County Showground, Lane Farm,  
Crooklands, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7NH

Website address: <http://www.dswa.org.uk>

# SURVEY OF DRY STONE WALLS

These papers are published by the *Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain* and have been devised by DSWA member, Dr Brian Jones. The Association would be grateful to receive copies of all data collected in local surveys.

## Introduction

This is a description of how to carry out a survey of dry-stone walls. The purpose of the survey is to record their present state and any features of interest. This information can be used over the years to record changes and to encourage the protection and preservation of our heritage of dry stone walls. There is very little information nationally about the length, condition and style of walls: the Dry Stone Walling Association is trying to collect all such information.

## Survey Area

The survey can take a long time so do not be too ambitious initially. Start in one place and gradually expand to cover a logical area such as parish, valley or kilometre square. Some of the survey can be done by sight or field glasses from public rights of way but a full survey will require the cooperation of the owners of land on which the walls stand.

## Survey

The survey described here is in three levels:

- Level (A) : Length and condition survey
- Level (B) : Style and features survey
- Level (C) : History and/or Natural History survey.

In general the value for national and local conservation of walls is in the order A, B, C but individuals may wish to concentrate on the B or C surveys through personal interest. In any case all the survey levels will need a map and a recording method for all the walls and this will take up a significant part of the initial effort. The succeeding levels requiring more work in order A, B, C.

The survey has three phases:

1. planning and marking the map,
2. field survey,
3. collection of the field data into a concise report.

## Planning and the map

It has been suggested that four 1 km grid squares can be surveyed on foot in a day by one person for a Level (A) condition survey. However, this may be optimistic.

A large map is needed - probably an enlarged photocopy of a 1:25,000 map is easiest if larger scales are not available.

All the walls should be sectionalised and labelled on the map. This can be started at home but can only be done properly in the field. A 'section' is the survey unit and is the length between obvious features such as all boundary junctions and corners with perhaps gateways, stiles or even trees used to keep the maximum length of a section down to about 200 m. A wall/hedge junction is a natural section junction. The junction should lie at one side of such a feature so that the feature is clearly included into one section. Each section should be marked on the map and labelled. Each section will have its own record.

The length information can be measured from the map and need not be done in the field although some people may prefer to do it in the field.

## **The Report**

All the field data has to be collected together to produce overall numbers for the whole survey area. Try not to reduce the data too much since further reduction can be done by the reader but without the field data the summary data cannot be unscrambled. Perhaps include some of the data, or the survey material as an appendix.

Information that is needed includes:-

- Description of the extent of the survey area (eg . parish, 1 km square etc).
- Location (full 2 letter and 6 figure grid reference, county, parish).
- Is it in a protected area such as a National Park, AONB/SSSI/Nature reserve?
- Geographical description (upland, urban fringe, valley).
- Area of survey region (metric units please).
- Map with boundary of survey area and surrounding region.
- Map showing survey sections and numbers.
- Total length of walls.
- Total lengths in each condition category.
- Number of each feature etc.
- Photographs.
- Description of type of stones /and wall style..
- Brief history of walls.
- Your subjective assessment of the value of the wall in the landscape.

The report should go to your co-ordinating/sponsoring organisation and a copy to:-

*Dry Stone Walling Asociation (DSWA)  
Westmorland County Showground, Lane Farm,  
Crooklands, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7NH*

**Please record the following with each copy**

Report deposited with DSWA      Yes [ ]      No      [ ]

Report deposited with (please list organisations deposited with):

Original survey material deposited with:-----

*Survey form prepared by B.K.Jones 116 North Road, Carnforth, Lancs. LA5 9LX*

*Comments on the form and its methods are welcome.*

*Copying for survey purposes is allowed.*

Version:      May 2000.



## **Level A Survey: Length and Condition Survey**

Date of survey (include year)
Surveyor name
Location (Parish and County)
Grid Reference (2 letters and 6 figures)

Wall Section number	Section Description Beginning                      End	Length Metres	Wall Divider	Furniture	Fencing	Condition Class

## Key -

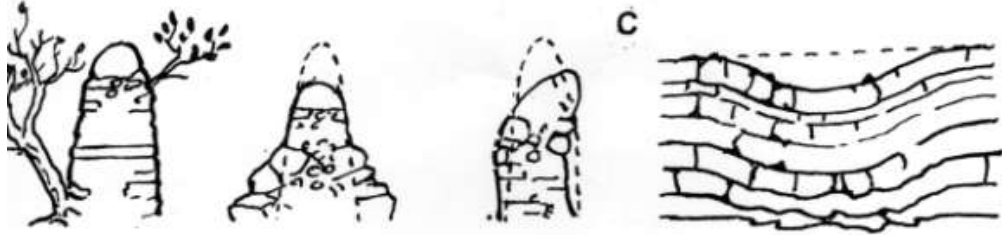
Survey location	Please ensure that this page of the form can be traced back to a specific survey.	
Section description	Beginning and end should be specified by physical location such as a field corner, gate, barn and also the number of any adjacent section.	
Wall divider	Two letters to indicate the land use on the two sides (e.g. GA, AA )	
	A	Arable
	B	Building, house, garden, farmhouse, churchyard.
	F	Rough grazing, moor, down, fell etc.
	G	Permanent grass.
	R	Metalled road (with asphalt or similar surface) or railway.
	S	Sea, river or lake.
	T	Unsurfaced track.
	W	Wood
Furniture found in section	SS	Sheep smoot (hole for sheep)
	S	Stile.
	WS	Water smoot (hole for water)
	See separate charts for more detailed codes and descriptions in Level B survey.	
Fencing along the section	F1	Single wire strand near the top.
	F2	Stockproof and continuous post and wire fence.
	F3	Electric fence
	F4	Other

Condition Class	Wall farming value	Description of condition of the wall section
A	Stockproof	Excellent condition. Topstones nearly all in place. All sides smooth and straight. No sign of bowing, bellying or slumping. Almost no fallen stones.
B	Stockproof	Some structural defects but effective. A few fallen stones and occasional top stones missing. Obvious temporary repairs such as gap filled with single width of rubble
C	Stockproof	Almost complete but signs of future problems, bellying, slumping, bowing. Extensive tree growth at wall base or shrub growth in wall.
D	Not stockproof	Boundary still used as stockproof boundary but the wall plays a secondary or negligible role to a fence.
E	Not stockproof	Boundary not maintained stockproof in any way. Large gaps and reduced wall height. Most stone still present.
F	Not stockproof	Very derelict along its entire length with apparent large loss of stone, removed or buried. Apparent mainly because of a raised bank.

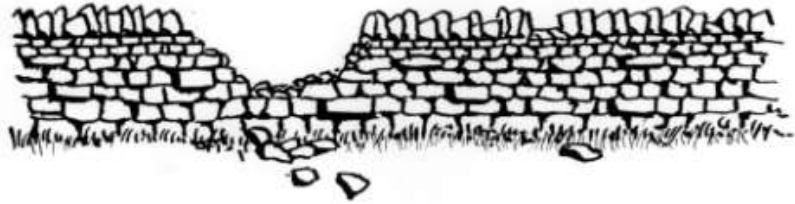
Condition Classes



B



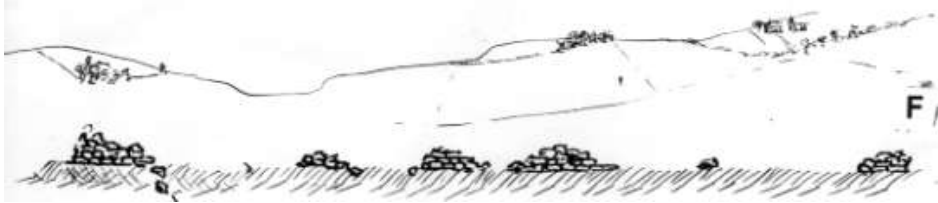
C



D



E



F

## Level B Survey: Wall Style and Features Survey

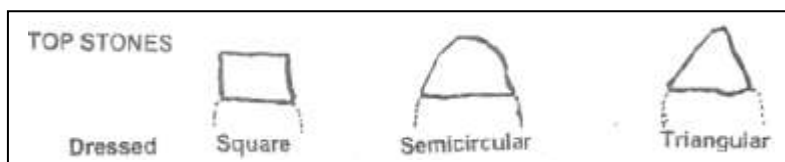
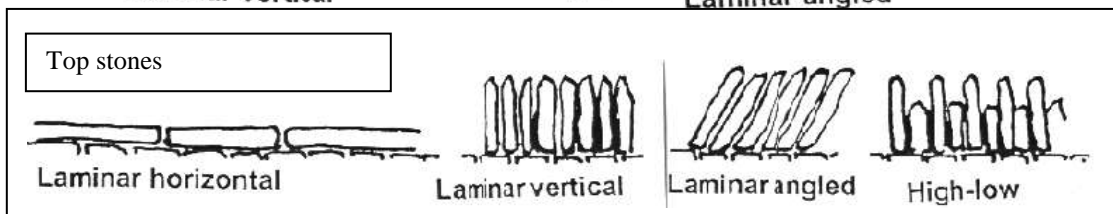
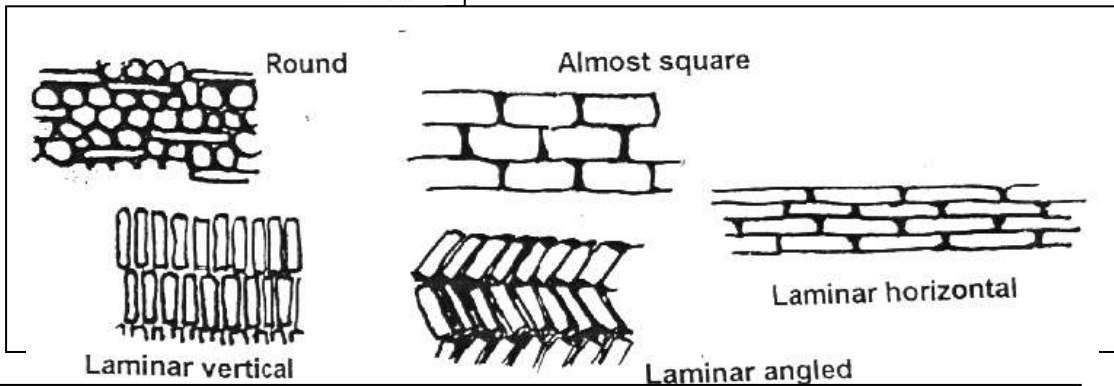
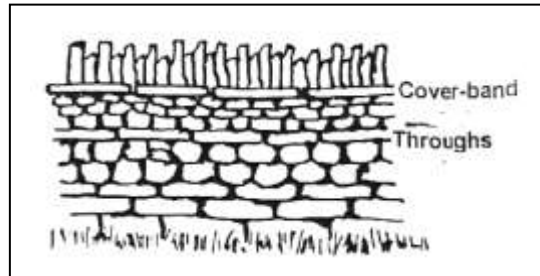
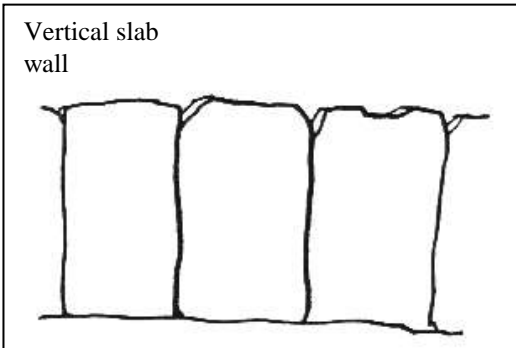
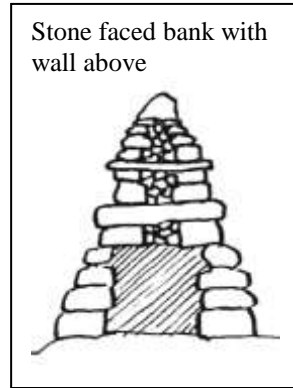
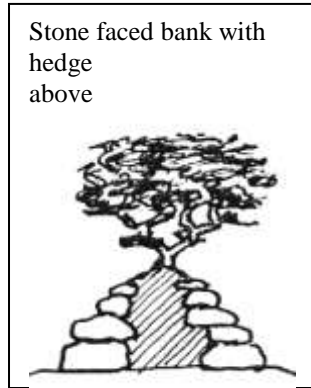
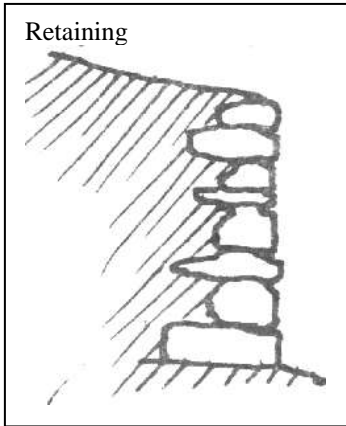
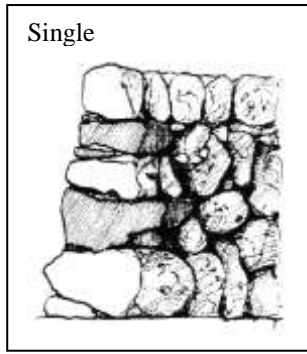
In another level of survey the same wall sections can be surveyed and information can be recorded on the height, width and style of construction together with a record of the features found. Several sections can often be recorded together if there are no special features. Make sure that the Level B survey can be related to the Level A survey. A key is attached with sketches of each feature.

Date of survey (include year)	Wall section number
Surveyor name	
Location (Parish and County)	
Grid Reference (2 letters and 6 figures)	

SIZE			
Total Height (metres within 0.1 m)	High side/Low side.....	[ / ]metres	
Width near base.....about 0.8m	[ ]	Other (give width).	[ ]metres
STYLE			
Double.....	[ ]	Single.....	[ ]
		Single above double.....	[ ]
Retaining.....	[ ]		
Stone-faced bank.	with wall above.....[ ]	with hedge above....[ ]	by itself.....[ ]
Wall on earth bank...	Yes..... [ ]	No..... [ ]	
Wall next to earth bank	Yes..... [ ]	No..... [ ]	
Wall next to ditch	Yes..... [ ]	No..... [ ]	
Vertical slab wall.....[ ]			
DETAIL			
Approx. number of through-bands per metre:	0...[ ]	1...[ ]	2... [ ]
		3...[ ]	Continuous.....[ ]
Coverband	Yes.....	[ ]	No..... [ ]
Stones thoroughly dressed	Yes.....	[ ]	No..... [ ]
Coursed.....[ ]		Random.....	[ ]
Stones	Round.....	[ ]	
	Irregular.....	[ ]	
	Almost square.....	[ ]	
	Laminar: Horizontal....	[ ]	Vertical..... [ ]
			Angled....., [ ]
Top Stones	Laminar: Horizontal....	[ ]	Vertical/even.... [ ]
	Angled uphill....	[ ]	Angled downhill. [ ]
	Boulders...[ ]		
	Dressed; Square...[ ]	Triangle..... [ ]	Semi-circular..... [ ]
	Mortared Yes..... [ ]	No..... [ ]	
FEATURES			
Smoots;	Sheep.... [ ]	Water... [ ]	Rabbit..... [ ]
Wall head	Within wall length.....	[ ]	At wall junction [ ]
	At gate/stile with stoup.....	[ ]	without stoup.... [ ]
Stile	Squeeze [ ]	Steps to top.... [ ]	Step/squeeze..... [ ]
	Wood over wall.....	[ ]	Wood over stone stile..... [ ]
Gate	Farm vehicle.... [ ]	Horse... [ ]	Person..... [ ]
Bridge	Arch..... [ ]	Slab..... [ ]	Not stone..... [ ]
Niche, bee-bole etc. ....	[ ]	Brief description.....	
Inscription.....	[ ]		
TYPE OF STONE			
Slaty (laminar,hard,smooth).....	[ ]		
Granity (round,hard,smooth).....	[ ]		
Limestone (laminar/round,lumpy,hard/soft).....	[ ]		
Sandstone (fine compressed grains).....	[ ]		
Other			

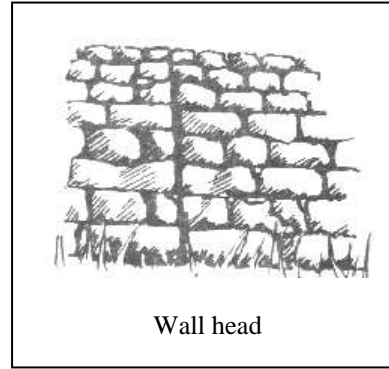
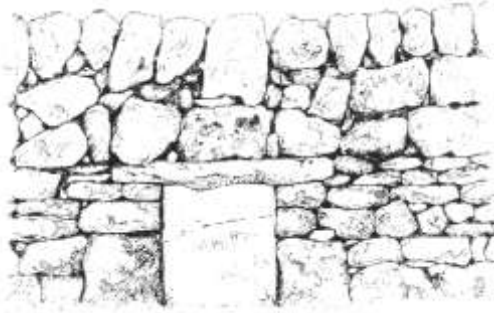


**SKETCH DRAWINGS OF SOME BASIC STYLES AND PATTERNS**



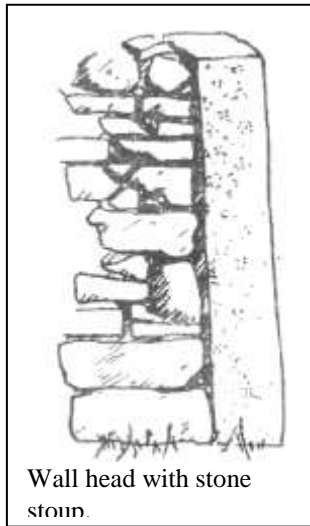
# Some Wall Features or “Furniture”

Typical lunky, cripple hole, sheep smoot – to allow sheep passage through wall but keeping cattle back.

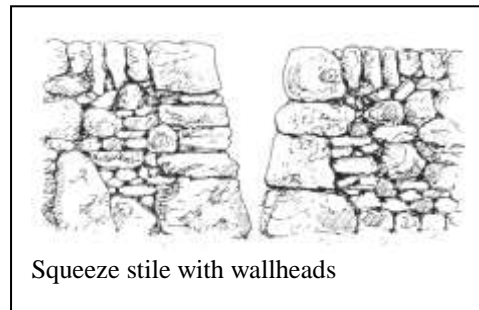


Wall head

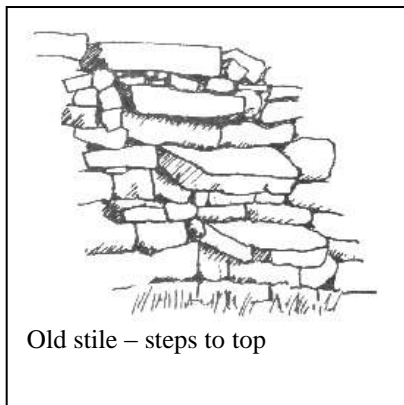
Doubled cheekend or wallhead



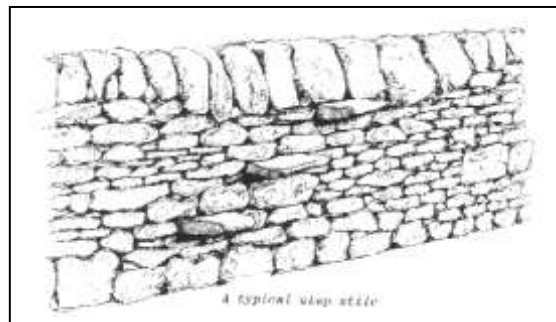
Wall head with stone stoun.



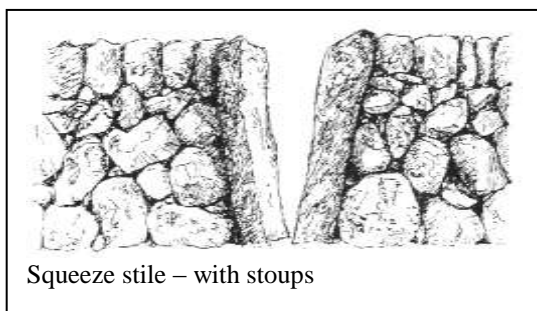
Squeeze stile with wallheads



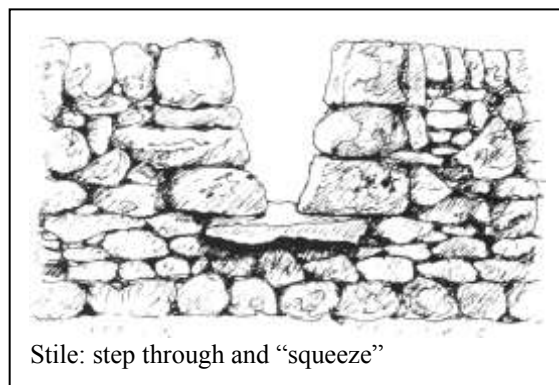
Old stile – steps to top



A typical sheep stile



Squeeze stile – with stoups



Stile: step through and “squeeze”

## **Level C Survey: History and Natural History Surveys**

These are specialist topics and the form of the survey and report will depend greatly on the interests and expertise of the surveyor, the location and the resources available.

### ***NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY***

For the natural history survey we recommend the methodology and codes described in the booklet 'What's on a Wall' (*Published by South Court Environmental Ltd*) and available by mail order from DSWA (details in current mail order leaflet).

### ***HISTORICAL SURVEY***

For a historical survey much time can be expended! However most of the research can be done when the weather is less encouraging for outdoor work! Research at the County Records Office will be needed.

If you take an area such as your local Parish you should start with today's boundaries; you then have to work backwards establishing the existence of a boundary at each particular period of time. In archive material you may find church, tithe and estate records which will help in your work but they are likely to only show a "boundary" – though some do strike lucky and find records of wallers or dykers being paid to build a particular wall. If a local estate has been in the same family for many generations you may find they have records (often not sorted and certainly not catalogued) and they may allow you access to them.

Talk to local professional wallers who have done any recent repair or rebuilding work particularly if it was on the wall in question: they may have found "artefacts" – the debris of yesterday – in the wall and this could help establish when it was built.

The establishment of boundaries through the Enclosure Acts was by Act of Parliament and these records should be available through your local Records Office.

*One of DSWA's members in Derbyshire has been working on an historical survey of his Parish which produced the leaflet **Exploring & Recording Local Field Boundaries** available from DSWA.*

### ***OTHER SURVEY FORMS***

- ***Bee Boles*** A leaflet from DSWA which includes a form for reporting of bee boles and other bee structures to the IBRA Register of Bee Boles.
- ***Dry Stone Walls Around Churchyards*** published by the Living Churchyard & Cemetery Project which includes a DSWA report form for churchyard walls. (*Full leaflet – out of print 2002 we believe - Living Churchyard Project, Arthur Rank Centre, NAC, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2LZ. Report form is available separately from DSWA*).

**Please send copies of any survey work undertaken to DSWA using the Report Form included with this set of papers.**