



What is Orienteering?

Orienteering is a competitive international sport that combines racing with navigation. It is a timed race in which individual participants use a specially created, highly detailed map to select routes and navigate through diverse and often unfamiliar terrain and visit control points in sequence. Courses also can be enjoyed as a walk in the woods, with difficulty levels from beginner to expert offered at most events.

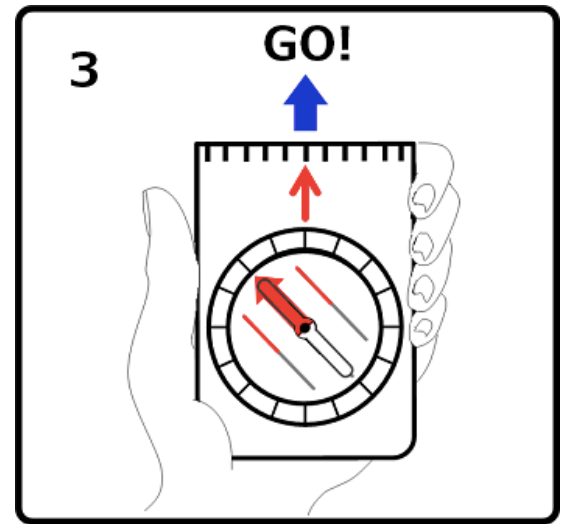
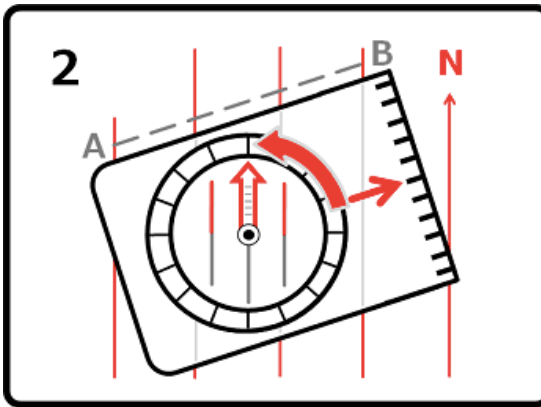
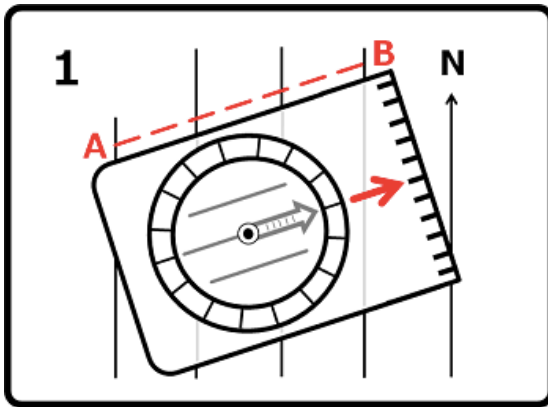
A standard orienteering course consists of a **start**, a series of **control sites** that are marked by circles, connected by lines and numbered in the order they are to be visited, and a **finish**. The control site circles are centered on the feature that is to be found; this feature is also defined by **control descriptions** (sometimes called **clues**, right), a list of which you'll receive along with your map, or printed on your map. Out in the terrain, a **control flag** (below) marks the location that the orienteer must visit.

Orienteering Control

Orange and white, made from nylon, about 1x1x1 foot cube.

Use a Compass

Using your compass to get from A to B is easy. Use the 1-2-3 system shown here.



Pace Count

Know your **pace count** - both on flat ground, and in the woods. Make sure to calculate your pace count based on the scale you run - miles, or meters. **Meters** or often better, as you'll be able to translate to the map quickly.

Orienteering Gear

Wear comfortable clothing appropriate to the season.

Long pants are generally recommended at any time of the year to protect against vegetation and undesirable insects. Walking or running shoes are sufficient for beginners.

It's also a good idea to wear eyewear to protect against branches, a watch, as there is typically a time limit, and a whistle to call for help in case of emergency. In fact, whistles are required at many orienteering events for safety's sake.

Safety Considerations

Use common sense. Hydrate throughout - many courses have water stops. Use your whistle only in emergencies. Stay alert. Manage your stress / exhaustion levels. Listen to your body. Stay safe. Don't take unnecessary risks.

Learn More!

We'd love for you to join us in the woods this year - we have several events throughout the area.

Every event has beginner as well as challenging courses to fit all levels of participants.

Learn more online, and check our schedule:

NEOOC.COM

Follow us on Twitter
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Orienteering Strategies

Pick out a **CATCHING FEATURE** that will let you know if you've gone too far. When planning your route, look on the map a short distance beyond the control you are heading for, and pick out a big, distinct feature that you can't fail to recognize. If you arrive at this catching feature, you will know you have overshot the control, and can turn around and go back.

Follow a **HANDRAIL**. Even if it were pitch dark, you would be able to easily negotiate a winding staircase if you just put your hand on the handrail and followed where it led. Handrails in orienteering are features that are you can follow just as easily. Trails and roads are the most obvious, but you can follow fences, streams, ditches, the edges of fields, and other long, narrow features just as easily.

When following a compass bearing to get to a distinct point near or on a handrail, try **AIMING OFF**. If you pick a compass bearing that aims directly at the precise point you are heading for, if you err even slightly you won't know if the feature you want will be on your left or your right as you approach it. By deliberately aiming to one side of the feature, you can confidently predict which side it will appear on. This technique works best when the feature is on or very near a handrail - for example a boulder near a stream.

If the control isn't on or near a handrail or other large, distinct, easily identifiable feature, choose an **ATTACK POINT** that you are confident that you can identify and take a compass bearing from there.

Use **COLLECTING FEATURES** to keep track of where you are. The most successful orienteers know exactly where they are at all times. They do this by constantly identifying features as they pass them, and locating them on the map (or "collecting" the features).

Map Colors

Brown: Land forms - Land forms are shown using contour lines with a contour interval (differences in elevation) of 5 meters. Additional symbols are provided to show e.g., earth bank, knoll, depression, small depression, pit, broken ground, etc.

Black: Rock features and man-made objects - This group covers cliffs, boulders, boulder fields, and boulder clusters, etc., as well as man-made objects including roads, trails, power lines, stone walls, fences, hunting stands, buildings, etc.

Blue: Water features - This group covers lakes, ponds, rivers, water channels, marshes, and wells, etc.

White/Green/Yellow: Vegetation - This group covers vegetation. White is typically open runnable forest. Green means a forest of low visibility with reduced running speed--the darker the green, the harder it is to see and run through. Areas of darkest green should be avoided.

Magenta: Overprinting symbols - Items that are overprinted on a completed map include symbols for the start, control points, control numbers, lines between control points, and finish.

Technical symbols - Two technical symbols are required on all maps: Magnetic north lines printed in blue, and register crosses (these show that the printed colors are coincident).

Common Control Symbols			
CTRL	20 controls		
▷	■		Start: building
1 31	⌋	⊖	N edge of saddle
2 32	○	⊙	S side of hill
3 33	⌒	⊖	SE foot of earth bank
4 34	⌒	⌒	Upper part of reentrant
5 35	≡	⊖	W end of marsh
6 36	⌒	⊖	NE side of path junction
7 37	↓	▲	S between boulders
8 38	⌒	⊖	Small gully and ditch junction
9 39	⌒	⊖	E edge of spur
10 40	⌒	⊖	NW part of terrace
11 41	■	⊖	NE outside corner of building and road
12 42	▨	⊖	SW inside corner of paved area
13 43	⌒	⊖	W end of sandy narrow marsh
14 44	⌒	⊖	NW inside corner of open vegetation boundary
15 45	⊖	⊖	Lower part of shallow depression
16 46	∨	⊖	Top of deep pit
17 47	⌒	⊖	S part of broad-leaved copse
18 48	⌒	⊖	Bend in ruined stone wall
19 49	⌒	⊖	SW outside corner of overgrown fence
20 50	⌒	⊖	S part of thicket

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