

Scout Skills Orienteering Badge



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0845 300 1818

INFORMATION SHEET

What is it orienteering? – an outdoor sport which takes place in parks or woodlands, and involves navigating between control points marked on a map. The challenge is deciding the best route.

Orienteering Maps - these are specially prepared for orienteering; for normal events the usual Scale 1:15,000 or 1:10,000. Compared to most O.S. maps the scouts will have worked with in the past, 'O' maps will have significantly more detail on them. ie. Walls, fences differentiated, individual boulders and pits mapped. To start, maps used, can be even larger scale, 1:500 of the local Scout HQ. It is important that the Scouts appreciate the different colours on the map.

- Black** is used for most man-made and rock features such as paths, cliffs, boulders and buildings
- Brown** is used to show landform, including contours lines, gullies pits and knolls (small hills)
- Blue** is used for water features such as lakes, ponds and streams.
- Green** is used to depict the density of the woodland and the extent to which it impedes progress. Open 'runnable' woodland is left white; progressively darker shades of green mean increasing density, ranging from 'slow run' through to 'difficult' (or walk) to 'impenetrable' (or fight).
- Yellow** is used for unwooded areas, a solid yellow for grassy spaces such as playing fields, a paler yellow for rougher terrain ('rough open') such as heather.

General Principals

Keeping the map orientated. In orienteering the map should always kept orientated (set) to the ground. This may mean it is upside down, but as there is no writing to read, only symbols, this does not matter. This helps with navigation, particularly for people who have difficulty reading maps. Everything that is shown on the right hand side of the map is then on the right hand side on the ground.

This can be practiced with simple exercises indoors/outdoors

Control markers Each course is made up of a series of controls joined together to form the course. A control marker will be found at each control; they are marked on the map with a red circle. Each marker will have clipper/punch, to record and prove the control has been visited. Punches make a different set of pin holes on the control card and therefore you have to visit the correct marker to obtain the correct punch. (Some events will now have an electronic version of checking.) Each control will also have an identifying number/letter. Details of these will be given to you before you start to enable you to verify you have the correct marker. (If you are using a permanent course the marker would have a number and letter for you to copy, instead of a punch.)

Check points an obvious feature on the map and ground which can be used to check that you are keeping to your chosen route.

Attack points an obvious feature near a control point from which the control marker can be

located by navigating carefully with the map and compass.

Route planning and the importance of contours.

Because of the more detailed information on the map particularly contours, decisions can be taken as to the fastest route. Some examples.

- it may be quicker to go thorough a wood if it is runnable (white), but not if it is mid green (walk)
- which route will give me check points along the way.
- is it quicker over the steep hill or round the bottom of the hill.

Transferring from a master map

Each scout will copy their course from a master map onto their own map and need to remember the following:

- the start is indicated with a triangle.
- each control is shown with a circle and the number is placed on the *outside* of the circle. The marker will be found at the *centre* of the circle, it is therefore important that the map is marked up correctly.
- the finish is marked with a double circle.
- Sometimes the maps are already overprinted with the course.

Competitive orienteering events

- Scout Groups can attend a local or district event, which are organised, by local clubs and newcomers are always welcome. Events usually take place on a Sunday morning.
- Local and District events use colour-coded courses. The colour coding of courses is related to ability not age, providing a suitable entry point to orienteering and progression for all ages and abilities. 6 -14 year olds would be expected to start on either the white or yellow course. You can compete at these events either on your own, with a friend or your family. To start, all you need is a

sense of adventure, a pair of trainers or outdoor shoes and outdoor clothes. A compass is not a compulsory piece of kit when starting out, but is helpful to set the map.

HOW TO FIND YOUR LOCAL CLUB - either contact the national office or check out the web site.

British Orienteering Federation, National Office, 'Riversdale', Dale Road North, Darley Dale, Matlock, Derbyshire DE42HX. Phone: (01629) 734042, e-mail: bof@britishorienteering.org.uk
Web site www.britishorienteering.org.uk