

QOC Beginner Instruction Guidelines

Explain that everyone needs to be off the course and checked in at the finish by 3:00pm - even if they didn't finish their course. Tell them what to do in an emergency: If lost, stay at a control; if injured, blow your whistle 3 times (keep blowing every few minutes until help arrives); If you are in a group, stay together at all times. Help them understand how to do a safety bearing.

1) The Sport: Orienteering

The Goal: Explain

- a) To find the numbered "controls", in numerical order, in the fastest possible time.
- b) To read your map, not simply following the compass bearing in a straight line.
- c) To pick the best route for you (over the hill or around it).

The Equipment: Show an example of the following and explain what they are.

- a) Control, white and orange nylon bag.
- b) Control code, the number on the bag.
- c) Epunch, the finger chip used to prove you were at the correct location.
- d) Clue sheet, description of features and the list of control codes.
- e) Map, used to get from one control location to another.
- f) Compass, used to keep the map oriented north.

2) The Map: Becoming familiar with the map legend.

The Colors: Show them a legend and explain it a bit.

- a) White = normal forest, walking or running through without difficulty
- b) Green = forest with undergrowth, walking or running through with difficulty. The darker the green the more difficult it will be to get through.
- c) yellow = fields, open areas.
- d) blue = water features like streams and marshes.
- e) black = typically man-made features like roads and trails. Black will include rocks and boulders.
- f) brown = earth objects like knolls, hilltops, earth banks, ditches, gullies and contours. Contours show elevation. The closer contours are together, the steeper the terrain.

The Scale: Explain the scale (ie, 1 meter = 10,000 meters)

- a) 1:10,000 is most commonly used.

The Contours: Explain, the closer the contours are to each other the steeper the terrain.

- a) contour intervals are typically 5m (16 feet). Each contour line represents 5m of elevation difference.

3) The Compass: Knowing where north is.

The Compass Needle: Show them a compass and the north arrow.

- a) It is usually red; but sometimes one end is red and the other is white.
- b) The red always points to North, towards the earth's magnetic north pole.

Orienting your map to north: Explain, then have them show you that they can do it.

- a) Hold your map horizontally.
- b) Place the compass flat on the map.
- c) Rotate the map until the "north lines" on the map (a series of evenly spaced parallel lines drawn across the map, all pointing to magnetic north) are aligned with the compass needle pointing north.

Taking a bearing: This is an intermediate technique, explain only when asked.

- a) Place the compass on the map so that the direction of travel arrow is lined up with the way you want to go.
- b) Turn the compass housing so that the orienting lines are parallel to the north arrows on the map (make sure the orienting arrow points north) take the compass off the map and hold it in front of you so that the direction of travel arrow points ahead of you.
- c) Rotate your body until the compass needle is aligned with the orienting arrow.
- d) Pick out a prominent object ahead of you along the direction of travel, go to it, and repeat the process (this way you can detour around obstructions but still stay on your bearing).

