

Section 2 Intermediate Techniques

In the last section I started by describing Orienteering Basics and in it I said that regardless of the difficulty of the course you are completing, you should always have a plan, so that your navigation is far more consistent and with minimal mistakes. In the first section, I detailed the technique of map orientation and I am sure that even easy course orienteers know about that one! However, I have been surprised how many times this technique is not applied, even by training squad members! How many of you hit a track and just run along it with out checking its direction by simply lining the map up with north on the compass? Or worse still, you do it too quickly, see that it is nearly right and make everything else on the leg fit in with the mistake, even though it would have only taken 2 seconds to check it properly? The moral of this story is that as well as having Orienteering Techniques etched in your mind, so that you also actually keep referring to it in your mind while you are on the course. If you do this meticulously throughout a course, you will make far fewer mistakes of less duration!

Now to some techniques required for navigation at moderate and hard level.

9. Compass Bearings

These can be used from an obvious attack point to the control. The basic method is described below but you should be practicing more advanced compass use as described after the basic method.

- Put compass on map with edge along where you want to go
- Turn dial till lines in dial match the north lines on the map (note north to north!)
- Hold compass with edge you used in stage 1 pointing away from you
- Turn self and compass until the red end of the needle lies over the north arrow in the dial and you will be facing the way you need to go

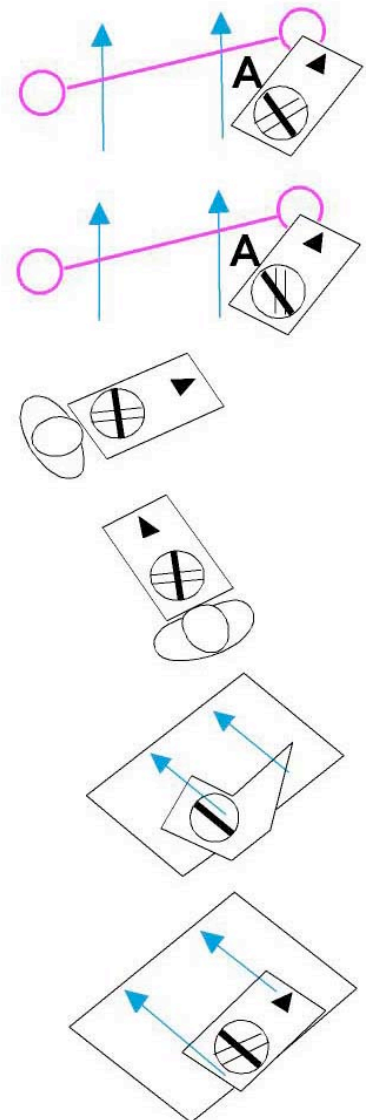
Thumb compass technique does these stages automatically but misses out turning the dial.

If you use a base plate try holding it on the map all the time like a thumb compass and then you will always have a permanent rough bearing

Compass and map are meant to complement each other and I strongly recommend that you hold them both in the same hand, preferably your steadiest hand which is usually the one that you naturally carry the map in

If you do this you will always be applying the first basic technique described in the last issue ... *orientate your map and check everything off against that orientation.*

Most orienteers know how to take a compass bearing but it is included here in its full form so that you will be able to explain it to a newcomer.



10. Contour Interpretation

You need to know some basic contour and earth features such as knoll, depression, earth bank and steep slope. Such a level of skill would overlap with the Basic Techniques, described earlier.

Contour lines are drawn onto the map to join spots of equal height so that they give us a picture of the shape of the ground.

It is really important to:-

- o read them and identify features such as spurs, gullies, and the steepness of the slope.
- o working out up and down by using the contours together with any tags, watercourses and knolls.
- o and notice that you can link contour features together or simplify them to create handrails

11. Collecting Features

These are:-

- o obvious features to go hard for on the route (collecting)
- o features beyond the control to "bounce back" off (catching)

12. Aiming Off

This is the technique of aiming deliberately to one side of a line feature so that you know which way to turn when you hit it.

