

Orienteering Maps

Orienteering maps are drawn to a large scale, most commonly 1:15000 (1cm=150m) or 1:10000 (1cm=100m) and use an internationally agreed set of symbols. These are logical and easy to learn and you will absorb much of the information simply by attending your first few events. Most orienteering maps provide a detailed legend.

Orienteering maps are drawn using magnetic north rather than ‘grid’ or ‘true’ north and are printed in up to five standard colours. The colours are an integral part of the map symbols:

**Black** is used for most man-made and rock features such as cliffs, crags and boulders.

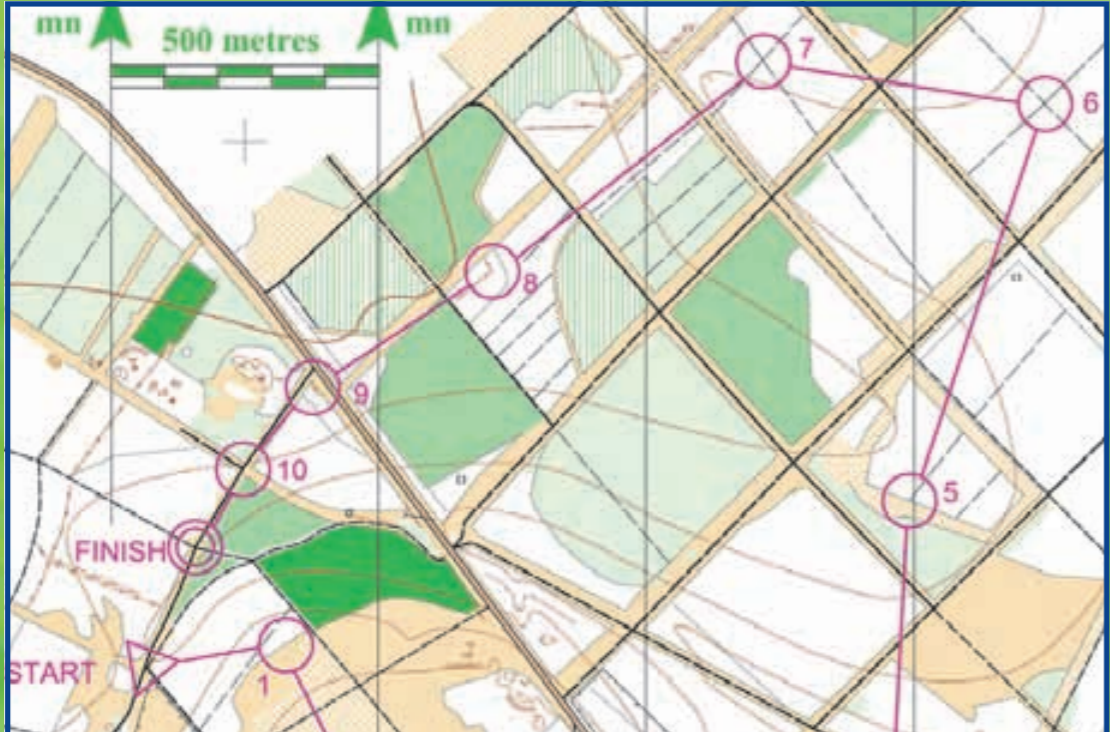
**Brown** is used to show landform, including contour lines, gullies, pits and knolls (small hills).

**Blue** is used for water features such as lakes, ponds, marshes and streams.

**Green** is used to depict the density of woodland and the extent to which it impedes progress. Open ‘runnable’ woodland is left white with progressively darker shades of green meaning increased density. This ranges from ‘slow run’ to ‘difficult’ (or walk) through to ‘impenetrable’ (or fight).

**Yellow** is used for unwooded areas with a solid yellow for grassy spaces such as playing fields and a paler yellow for rougher terrain (‘rough open’) such as heather.

Combinations of yellow and green show other types of terrain which will be explained in the legend.



LEGEND

	Contours - 5m interval
	Foreline
	Knoll : large, small
	Pit, Depression : large, small
	Earth wall
	Earth bank
	Building, ruin
	Distinct vegetation change
	Major road
	Forest road
	Vehicle track
	Large path
	Small path
	Hole
	Wide ride
	Fence
	Forest : run
	Forest : slow run
	Forest : walk
	Forest : impenetrable
	Rough open land
	Scattered trees
	Undergrowth : slow run
	Marsh



Course Description Sheet

Red course 5.0km 35m climb

No	Code	Description
1	33	Vegetation Boundary
2	56	Ride Crossing
3	31	Knoll, E. Side
4	77	Track Bend
5	68	Ride End
6	51	Ride Crossing
7	72	Ride Crossing
8	48	Earthwall Corner
9	53	Earthwall, W. Side
10	55	Track/Road Junction
Follow tapes to finish		

Route Choice

To the left you will find an orienteering map with an example of a red course. Use the map, legend and course description sheet to identify your position and decide what the best route choice would be to navigate from controls 3 to 4.

You will have found control 3 (Knoll, E. side) just before the major road. Just to be sure, check the code (31) matches your control description sheet and use the punch to confirm that you have been to that control.

Now it's your choice how to get to control 4. You could use any route, but the three most obvious are:

- Go north up the road until you reach a path on your right. Follow this until it passes through a gap in the fence and then continue along a wide ride. When you reach the vehicle track, turn right (south east) and follow it for 150 metres, bringing you to control 4, code 77.
- This time you go to your right (due east) across the rough open land until you reach the fence bend. Follow the short section of fence until a wide ride is reached at the next bend in the fence. Now follow the ride as it curves around to the left. Upon reaching the vehicle track, go left for 250 metres until you come to control 4.
- The first two ways involved following tracks and rides, but you could follow a more direct route using a compass and go straight across the rough open land and through the open forest until you reach the vehicle track. If you do, it will be best to ‘aim-off’ to the left, so when you reach the vehicle track you will know that you need to turn right to control 4. If you aim straight for the control but can’t see it when you reach the track, you won’t know which way to turn. Although slightly longer and a bit slower, aiming-off can save time in the long run.

Please remember that whether you visit all the controls or not, you must always report to the finish. This is the golden rule of orienteering preventing unnecessary searching for ‘missing’ competitors.

Badge Scheme

The British Orienteering National Badge Scheme awards badges on the basis of performance over a series of events. Badges are graded Championship, Gold, Silver and Bronze. Associations award badges for successful completion of colour coded courses.

Rankings

The ranking system is a fully automated method of calculating ranking points based on the results of events where age classes apply. All members aged over 18 are eligible for inclusion in the ranking list and will be included automatically after competing successfully at a qualifying event. Points are allocated at each event you compete in and your total ranking points in a class is the aggregate from your best six events.

Permanent Orienteering Courses (POCs)

These are fixed courses available throughout Great Britain. They are usually designed for beginners but often include difficult options for improving or experienced orienteers. For information about permanent orienteering courses please contact your local club or visit our website: [www.britishorienteering.org.uk](http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk)

Other Disciplines Of Orienteering

**Trail Orienteering** - These events can be enjoyed by all, including those with disabilities. It does not require speed, strength or navigation but retains the crucial orienteering skill of relating the map to the ground in complex terrain. [www.trailo.org](http://www.trailo.org)

**Mountain Bike Orienteering (MTBO)** - MTBO uses traditional orienteering maps and are usually held within forests containing a good network of tracks and paths, providing a variety of route choices. The sport is enjoyed by enthusiasts from both an orienteering and cycling background. [www.trailquest.co.uk](http://www.trailquest.co.uk)



For further information about British Orienteering and the sport of Orienteering please contact us at:

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Details of your local club and fixtures can be found on the Website:

[www.britishorienteering.org.uk](http://www.britishorienteering.org.uk)

# Orienteering

THE ADVENTURE SPORT FOR ALL



# Experience an Adventure, Try Orienteering!

Orienteering is a challenging outdoor adventure sport that exercises both the mind and the body. The aim is to navigate in sequence between control points marked on a unique orienteering map and decide the best route to complete the course in the quickest time. It does not matter how young, old or fit you are, as you can run, walk or jog the course and progress at your own pace.

Orienteering can take place anywhere from remote forest and countryside to urban parks and school playgrounds. The most challenging orienteering takes place in areas, which has demanding terrain and few paths.

Orienteering is very popular with all age groups and is truly an adventure sport for all! Young children and pensioners can enjoy the sport equally as there is always a course to suit their ability.

Many school children take part with both their families and in school competitions. Some of these youngsters may even go on to compete as elite orienteers for Great Britain which involves very high levels of skill and fitness.

To start orienteering all you need is a sense of adventure and a pair of trainers. It's a great sport for runners, joggers and walkers who want to improve their navigation skills or for anyone who loves the outdoors.

## LOCAL

Clubs host over 1000 local events per year and they are ideal for newcomers offering a limited range of colour coded courses.

These events have a range of courses for all abilities including newcomers. They offer a full range of colour coded courses and there are nearly 300 events per year.

## DISTRICT

These events are hosted by clubs for experienced orienteers in their own and adjoining associations. Junior classes are ability based and senior classes are age based. There are around 80 per year.

## REGIONAL

These events are hosted by clubs for experienced orienteers with all classes age based. Courses at National events are longer than those at Regional events. There are a series of 6-8 held throughout the country aimed at providing top quality competition for all ages.

## NATIONAL

## CHAMPIONSHIP

There are five championship events held in Great Britain each year.

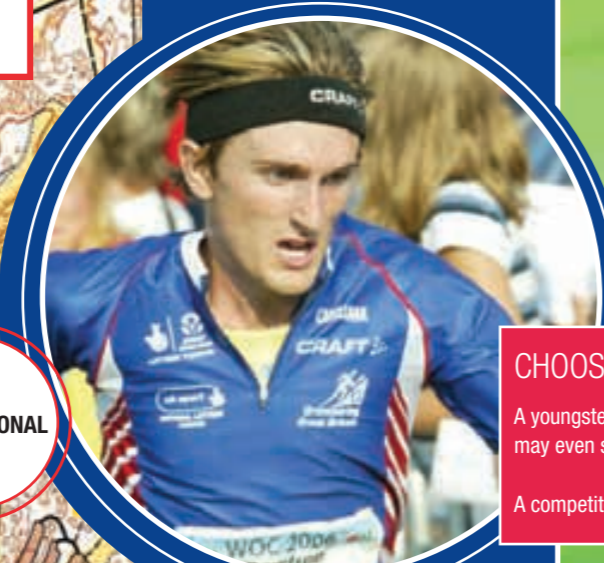
## INTERNATIONAL

The Great Britain team competes against the best in the world at World Championships and World Cups.

# Local And District Events

Orienteering takes place at the weekend and if you are new to the sport it is best to start at a local or district event. At the event you will be provided with a specially drawn orienteering map, an electronic punching card and a control description sheet. As you advance in the sport you will also require a compass.

Local and district events are colour coded which means there are several courses of differing length and difficulty running at the same time. Before you begin you will need to select the course you are going to run based on your ability. Most events will provide maps with the courses pre-printed, but at smaller events you may need to use a red pen to copy your course onto your map from the 'mastermap'.



Colour coded courses are related to ability and provide a progression for all ages and standards. Colour coding also allows comparison between different courses at different events as a yellow course at one event should be the same length and difficulty as a yellow course at any other event.

Courses are graded according to their technical difficulty with the scale running from:

TD1 = Very easy  
TD5 = Very difficult

WHITE (TD1)  
1.0 – 1.5km

YELLOW (TD2)  
1.5 – 2.5km

ORANGE (TD3)  
2.5 – 3.5km

RED (TD3)  
3.5 – 7.5km

LIGHT GREEN (TD4)  
2.5 – 3.5km

GREEN (TD5)  
3.5 – 5.0km

BLUE (TD5)  
5.0 – 7.5km

BROWN (TD5)  
7.5 – 10.0km

**White (TD1)** White courses are very easy with all controls on paths. They are mainly used by 6-10 year olds and family groups.  
**Length of course 1.0 – 1.5km**

**Yellow (TD2)** Yellow courses use simple linear features like paths, walls and streams. They are mainly used by under 12's and families.  
**Length of course 1.5 – 2.5km**

**Orange (TD3)** Orange courses progress to basic use of the compass and route choice. They are ideal for novice orienteers.  
**Length of course 2.5 – 3.5km**

**Red (TD3)** Red courses are technically similar to an orange course. They are used by beginners wanting a longer run.  
**Length of course 3.5 – 7.5km**

**Light Green (TD4)** Light green courses introduce navigation using simple contours and 'point' features. They are ideal for improving orienteers.  
**Length of course 2.5 – 3.5km**

**Green (TD5)** Green courses are technically difficult and use contour and point features. They are used mostly by experienced under 18's and adults wanting a short but challenging course.  
**Length of course 3.5 – 5.0km**

**Blue (TD5)** Blue courses are technically difficult and a longer, more physically demanding course in comparison to the green. The distances are also more varied between controls and the course attracts experienced orienteers.  
**Length of course 5.0 – 7.5km**

**Brown (TD5)** Brown courses are physically demanding and technically difficult. They are for experienced orienteers only.  
**Length of course 7.5 – 10.0km**

## CHOOSING A COLOUR CODED COURSE

A youngster would be expected to start on either the white or yellow course, whilst an adult novice would begin with either the yellow or orange course depending on his or her confidence. Very young children may even start on the string course. The string course is made up of controls that are joined together by a long piece of string and is ideal for introducing very young children to orienteering.

A competitor's progression can then be made either towards longer courses with the navigation remaining the same, or on to more technically difficult courses up to the appropriate length for his or her fitness.

# Regional Events

Regional events provide a map already printed with your course and you pick this up before you start. It is necessary to enter a regional event in advance, although there may be some limited entries on the day, subject to a surcharge. There will also be a colour coded event held at these events for beginners. During the Summer there are several multi-day regional events which provide campsites and social activities and form the basis for many orienteering family holiday.

At Regional events senior orienteers are classed and run courses based on their age and gender. Your age class is determined by how old you will be on the 31st December of the year of the competition. So regardless of whether a woman is 21 in January or 21 in December they will both compete in W21. The age class is always prefixed by either M (Men) or W (Women). For senior age classes there are Long and Short courses, where the technical difficulty is the same but the course length is different. At Regional events, junior orienteers enter in their ability class which is determined by the length of the course.

## National And Championship Events

National and Championship events require pre-entry 4-6 weeks in advance. These events are only available to British Orienteering members but like regional events there are often a limited number of enter on the day (EOD) colour coded courses.

Championships include the British Championships, British Night Championships, British Elite Championships, British Sprint Championships and the British Trail O Championships.

The Jan Kjellstrom International Festival of Orienteering, which is held over the Easter weekend, is very popular with both British and International orienteers and sees over 4000 people competing.

At Championship and National events both senior and junior Orienteers are classed and run courses based on their age and gender, the same as senior orienteers at Regional events. For age classes up to and including M/W18, A and B courses are normally available, where the B course will be shorter and easier than the A Course. For other age classes there are Long and Short courses, where the technical difficulty is the same but the course length is different.



## Age Classes

Your Age	Your Age Class
10 and under	M/W 10
12 and under	M/W 12
14 and under	M/W 14
16 and under	M/W 16
18 and under	M/W 18
20 and under	M/W 20
Open	M/W 21
35 and over	M/W 35
40 and over	M/W 40
45 and over	M/W 45
50 and over	M/W 50
55 and over	M/W 55
60 and over	M/W 60
65 and over	M/W 65
70 and over	M/W 70

## Junior Ability Classes

Classes	Distance (KM)
JM1, JW1	1.30 – 1.70
JM2, JW2	1.70 – 2.30
JM3, JW3	2.20 – 3.00
JM4, JW4	2.60 – 4.00
JM5S, JW5S	3.20 - 4.80
JM5M, JW5L	4.40 - 6.60
JM5L	6.00 - 9.00