

Council Approval: Not Required



Activity Permitted for: *D *B J C S A

*Daisies and Brownies may participate in orienteering when accompanied 1:1 by adults in established parks.

About Orienteering

Orienteering is an activity that involves using a map, compass, and navigational skills to find your way around or across an unfamiliar area.

The activity may also incorporate camping, backpacking, boating, hiking, cross-country skiing, or horseback riding skills.

Orienteering often takes place on wilderness trails, although events can take place in just about any terrain such as a beach, urban area, or park. Orienteering meets use control markers to flag various land features found on the map, serving as checkpoints along a course. Be certain to practice Leave No Trace while orienteering. Youth should always stay on trails.

Orienteering is not recommended for Daisies and Brownies, but they may be ready to learn pre-orienteering activities such as map reading, navigation, and map drawing. Brownies may also enjoy geocaching; see [Geocaching Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Learn More

- [Orienteering USA](#)
- Ethics and generally accepted rules of orienteering: [Orienteering Association of British Columbia](#)

Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities. Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to contact the meet host in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with disabilities.

Equity. Consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity. See the Equity section of the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for general advice about expense,

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before starting any activity and review it so all are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong, such as an accident, physical injury, missing person, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies. All troops must provide an adult volunteer certified in Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED.

Orienteering Checkpoints

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. Participants receive instruction from a person experienced in orienteering before navigating an orienteering course. First-timers participate on a beginner-level course. Those with previous topographic map reading experience may be eligible to attempt an advanced beginners' course.

Select a safe orienteering site. The site selected is a park, camp, or other area with a good trail network; proper landowner permission is secured to use the site.

Always avoid orienteering during hunting season.

Prepare for emergencies. Ensure the presence of a waterproof first aid kit and a first aider with a current certificate in first aid, including Adult and Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED; if any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider with Wilderness First Aid certification.

Follow basic orienteering safety standards. Take part as a group or with buddies. Each participant is given an allotted time to complete the course and must check in at the finish area, whether they completed the course or not. Beginning and finishing course times of each participant are carefully noted to ensure all participants have returned.

Take proper precautions in areas where snakes, ticks, or poisonous plants are prevalent.

Map your course. [Get to know map symbols](#) and how things like elevation and relief are communicated on maps.

Learn about orienteering techniques. Before participating in orienteering, [learn about strategies such as pacing, thumbing, and handrails](#).

Plan the right activity for the age group. Juniors should do orienteering in small groups and be accompanied on a course by an adult with basic instruction in orienteering. Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors who have received training may orienteer in groups of at least two.

Competitive orienteering courses often require participants to operate independently; solo competition is not recommended for inexperienced Girl Scouts or Juniors. However, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors whose skills match or exceed the demands of the course may participate in such competitions.

Plan ahead. When participating in a meet, there should be a clear area of safety (a safety lane), a specific finish time and location, and a search and rescue procedure designed by the competition's host and the Girl Scout adult volunteer.

Practice Leave No Trace skills before participating in orienteering. Pick up garbage you find along the way, be sure not to trample vegetation, and be aware of wildlife.

Safety Gear

- Orienteering map
- Compass and watch
- Emergency signaling whistle
- Long pants, hiking boots, sneakers
- Daypack to carry personal belongings