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Orienteering ?

Orienteering – a sport combining the physical activity of running or walking and in some events mountain biking with the skill of navigating around a course with the aid of a map and compass. The aim is to find your way around a series of checkpoints back to the finish.

Often called "the family sport", regular events are held throughout the country in city parks, on farmland and in forested areas.

Both a competitive and recreational sport, Orienteering is enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.



There is usually a wide range of courses available, ranging in length from about 2 kilometres for beginners, children and the not so fit, to over 15 kilometres for the experienced and competitive athlete. You choose the length and difficulty of course to suit your physical and technical abilities.

Getting started

No special equipment is needed to start Orienteering – sensible footwear and outdoor clothing appropriate for the time of year, and reading glasses if you need them. Compasses are not necessary for beginners.

A. Simply turn up at an Orienteering event and ask for help at registration.



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depression
- a small hollow



For the young

Orienteering is an ideal sport for developing health, fitness and intellectual stimulation in children.

Short courses are always available at events and enable children to complete a course on their own in safe surroundings. Children gain many important benefits from doing their own course: independence, decision-making, observation and confidence in the outdoors are just some of the learned skills. And great friendships.

Any age, your way!

or Elite Athletes



Orienteering at the elite level places high demands on fitness and technical skills.

Championship races are won in around 90 minutes for men, and 70 minutes for women, with the best orienteers having fitness levels comparable to top runners and multi-sport athletes. There is a strong international program, with many top races held in Europe where the sport is strongest. Both Junior and Senior World Championships are held every year, and New Zealand is always represented at these events.

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boulder

B.

Usually at events, upon paying the entry fee, you will receive a map and clipcard for marking at each checkpoint around the course. Maps may already have your chosen course marked on for you, or you will need to draw your course from a master map located at registration or at the start.

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cliff



Congratulations on completing your Orienteering course.

For the more mature

Orienteering is a wonderful recreation for older people.

You can pick your own length of course and take your time completing it. Orienteering keeps the brain active as well as the body, and the parks and forests offer beautiful surroundings for healthy exercise.



For the competitive veteran, longer and more challenging courses are available and at larger events, five-year or ten-year age classes allow veterans to compete against similar-aged athletes. International competition also exists for veteran orienteers, with the **World Masters Orienteering Championships** and other events held on a regular basis.

Using a Compass

It is not necessary to learn how to use a compass before taking part in an Orienteering event.

Many beginner courses, city, park and farmland events can be done without the aid of a compass.

Learning how to read the map is the more important skill.



However, compass skills are necessary for intermediate and advanced courses.

Two broad skills to learn are:

- (a) orientating the map, and
- (b) setting a compass bearing.

Orientating the map simply involves lining up the magnetic north lines on your orienteering map with the red north needle of your compass.

Setting a compass bearing is best learned by instruction at an event - just ask for help at registration. Compasses are available for hire at most events. At some stage you may wish to buy a compass. We recommend the SILVA brand of compasses – and are available at most outdoor stores, and sometimes are sold at events.