

Sessions Woods Compass Course

Every outdoor user should know how to use a compass. A compass can help navigate unfamiliar terrain and sometimes be a life saver. This leaflet is designed to teach the basics of a compass and its use. It is not designed to teach the use of a compass and map together.

The compass courses at Sessions Woods consist of four different difficulty levels: Beginner, Intermediate, Difficult and Expert. All of the Beginner and Intermediate level markers are within the trail loops or are within sight of a trail. Markers can be far beyond the trails on the Difficult and Expert course levels. It is recommended that you start with the Beginner course and work your way up to the Expert level.

All four courses start at the Outdoor Classroom from the Northeast corner of the podium (See the trail map). All bearings are to magnetic north. Each course consists of a series of markers. Each marker is a 4x4 inch wooden post with an aluminum disk with a symbol on top. Many of the posts in the woods have a 3-inch white band around the top of the post. Advance through the course from marker to marker in order. To confirm your location, compare the symbols on the markers to the symbols listed in this pamphlet.

Beginner Starts and ends at the NE corner of the podium at Outdoor Classroom.

	<i>Distance Feet</i>	<i>Distance Meters</i>	<i>Bearing</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
1	246 ft.	75 m.	28°	6
2	262 ft.	80 m.	22°	4
3	328 ft.	100 m.	310°	T
4	295 ft.	90 m.	318°	□
5	557 ft.	170 m.	180°	9
6	311 ft.	95 m.	306°	7
7	410 ft.	125 m.	178°	5
8	328 ft.	100 m.	75°	S
9	279 ft.	85 m.	134°	Podium
Total	3,016 ft.	920 m.		

Intermediate Starts and ends at the NE corner of the podium at Outdoor Classroom.

	<i>Distance Feet</i>	<i>Distance Meters</i>	<i>Bearing</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
1	246 ft.	75 m.	28°	6
2	689 ft.	210 m.	295°	7
3	410 ft.	125 m.	178°	5
4	852 ft.	260 m.	62°	4
5	525 ft.	160 m.	252°	9
6	475 ft.	145 m.	344°	2
7	738 ft.	225 m.	260°	8
8	1016 ft.	310 m.	43°	3
9	770 ft.	235 m.	152°	T
10	672 ft.	205 m.	175°	Podium
Total	6,393 ft.	1,950 m.		

Difficult Starts at the NE corner of the podium at Outdoor Classroom and ends on the Waterfall Trail. To return, head north approximately 125 meters on Waterfall Trail to Beaver Marsh Trail and follow it back to Education Center.

	<i>Distance Feet</i>	<i>Distance Meters</i>	<i>Bearing</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
1	279 ft.	85 m.	314°	S
2	508 ft.	155 m.	15°	T
3	738 ft.	225 m.	218°	5
4	492 ft.	150 m.	164°	B
5	738 ft.	225 m.	228°	A
6	820 ft.	250 m.	120°	C
7	508 ft.	155 m.	202°	X
8	1,115 ft.	340 m.	288°	Z
9	1,148 ft.	350 m.	348°	○
10	721 ft.	220 m.	238°	◊
Total	7,066 ft.	2,155 m.		

Note: This course traverses steep and heavily vegetated terrain.

Expert Starts at the NE corner of podium at Outdoor Classroom and ends 80 meters SSW of the Beaver Marsh Trail. To return, head approximately 80 meters NNE to Beaver Marsh Trail and follow it back to the Education Center.

	<i>Distance Feet</i>	<i>Distance Meters</i>	<i>Bearing</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
1	672 ft.	205 m.	355°	T
2	295 ft.	90 m.	310°	□
3	525 ft.	160 m.	15°	△
4	1,721 ft.	525 m.	247°	▱
5	754 ft.	230 m.	320°	☆
6	475 ft.	145 m.	235°	▭
7	1,475 ft.	450 m.	148°	○
8	721 ft.	220 m.	238°	◊
9	967 ft.	295 m.	122°	□
10	934 ft.	285 m.	75°	◊
Total	8,541 ft.	2,605 m.		

Note: This course traverses steep and heavily vegetated terrain.

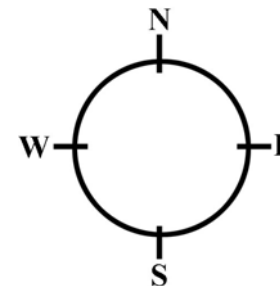
Practice Bearings

	<i>Distance Feet</i>	<i>Distance Meters</i>	<i>Bearing</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
A	79 ft.	24 m.	99°	◆
B	66 ft.	20 m.	274°	◆
C	161 ft.	49 m.	213°	◆

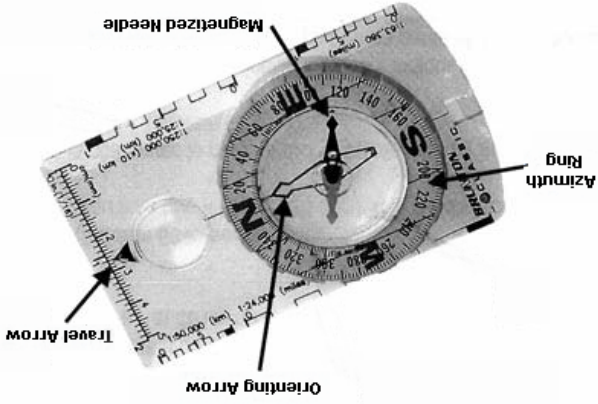
For each practice bearing, start from the NE corner of the podium in the Outdoor Classroom. Take the bearings and distances listed above to white diamonds on the back side of trees.

Using a Compass

The basic directions are North, South, East and West.



Compasses like the one seen below are available in the office (with a deposit) for use on these courses.



A compass has a moving magnetic needle. The red end of the needle will point North (magnetic North pole of the earth) when the compass is level. All of the bearings are based on magnetic north. The movable azimuth ring is divided into 360° degrees (N=0°, E=90°, S=180° & W=270°).

To set the compass on a bearing, rotate the azimuth ring the bearing degrees you are to use to line up the travel arrow. This must be set accurately. Hold the compass level and rotate the compass with your body until the needle is lined up with North on the azimuth dial.

To travel to the 1st marker, aim down the direction of travel arrow, with the needle correctly lined up with North, to a landmark as far away as possible. Walk toward that object stepping off the distance you are directed to go. Make sure you start from the podium in the Outdoor Classroom. In forested terrain, you may have to use several compass readings in a row to reach the marker. Continue until you have reached the distance or have found the marker. If you do not locate the marker nearby, search the surrounding area or go back and

retake the bearing from the beginning. In some cases, more than one marker may be in the area. Compare the symbol on top of the marker to the symbol column on the course table. Follow the same procedure to locate the other markers.

Determining the length of your step

If you know the average length of your step, that length can be used to measure the distance between markers. A 100 ft. distance, marked with red rectangles, is laid out behind the podium in the Outdoor Classroom. The first rectangle is 116, 40 ft. from the podium. The 100 ft. distance is at 5° from the first rectangle. Count the number of steps it takes to walk that distance. Divide 100 by the number of steps to determine the length of your step.

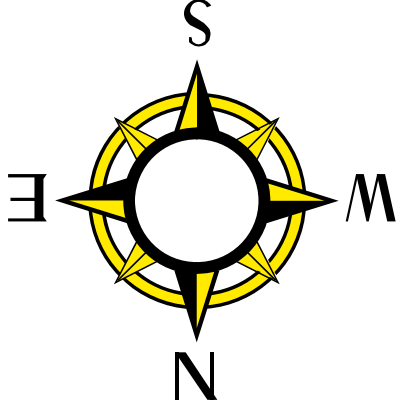
Use your step to pace off the required course distance between markers by dividing the distance by the length of your step. This will give you the number of steps to take to cover the required distance. Keep in mind that your step will be shortened as you travel up hill and lengthened as you go down hill. Rough terrain will also vary the length of your step. Compensate as needed.



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Compass Courses



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