

# Orienteering Made Easy

## BASIC

# Working With Your Compass



Metal foreign objects can cause your compass to give inaccurate directions of travel. Make sure that objects such as rings, belts, lanyards, etc. don't alter your compass. You can test this by moving the object close to the compass and see if the needle moves. If it does, then don't wear those objects while orienteering.

# Working With Your Compass

- ▣ Don't make it harder than it is.
- ▣ There are different styles of compasses.
  - Buy the one that works best for you.
  - The sighting compass will be the only style used in this lesson.
- ▣ There are three parts to orienteering. If you know two of them, you can figure out the third.

# Several Compass Types



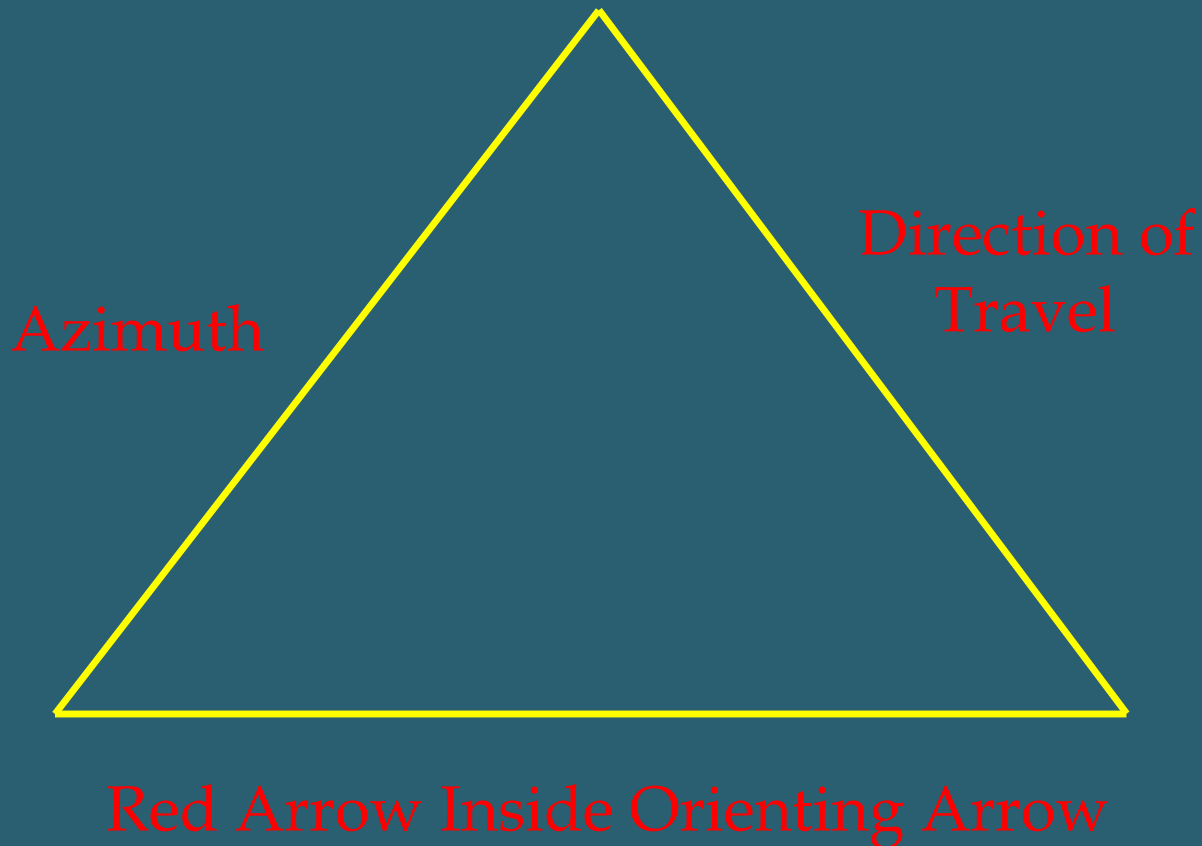
Sighting Compass



Lensatic Compass

These are 2 popular types but there are others on the market. Spend the money on a good compass. For this lesson, we will use the type shown on the left.

# Three Pieces of the Puzzle





A

# Azimuth

- ▣ This is the heading which you will travel.
- ▣ An azimuth is given in degrees.
  - This is a number between 0 and 360.
- ▣ 0 and 360 degrees denote North.
- ▣ 90 degrees denotes East.
- ▣ 180 degrees denotes South.
- ▣ 270 degrees denotes West.

Azimuth  
Numbers



# Direction of Travel

- ▣ The compass will tell you which way you will be traveling.
- ▣ Look through the sight on the compass & identify an object. Lower your compass and walk to the object. Sight another object and repeat.
  - In an open field, the object could be far away.
  - In heavy foliage, the object may be very close.

sight



# Direction of Travel

## Which Way Do I Walk?

New handlers seem to make the same mistake. They get confused and start turning the compass around in circles. Remember to always hold the compass in your hand and extend your arm in front of you. **Don't turn** the compass in your hand.

Stand up, extend your arm at eye level, look through the sight piece and walk toward the object you see. If you need to change direction then turn your whole body with arm extended.



# Direction of Travel and Azimuth

- ▣ These two parts of the triangle are important in their relationship on the compass.
- ▣ Remember the compass is held flat in the hand with your arm extended.
- ▣ The direction of travel is sighted through the top of the mirror.
- ▣ The azimuth is read at the dash mark which lines up with the arrow on the bottom of the mirror.

Direction of travel

Azimuth reading



# Correct Posture

## Using A Sighting Compass

- ▣ Hold your arm at the length that allows the azimuth numbers to be in focus in the mirror. Compass is flat in the hand and arm is  $90^{\circ}$  to the body.
- ▣ Some people set up the lanyard to be worn around their neck while sighting.
  - If this makes your lanyard so long that your compass hits you in the thighs while walking , you may choose to go with a shorter one as shown here.
  - Do what's comfortable for you. This may take a couple of practice sessions to see what works best for you.



# Red Arrow Inside Orienting Arrow

Red in Red

- ▣ The compass that is shown here is meant to be held at the same level as your eyes and your direction of travel will be where your arm is pointing.
- ▣ Pictures show incorrect positioning and then correct positioning. This is accomplished by turning the bevel until the red arrow lines up with orienting arrow.



# Red Arrow Inside Orienting Arrow

- ▣ Hold compass at eye level.
- ▣ Swivel mirror and sight downward until you can see the top of the compass readings inside the mirror.
- ▣ Use opposite hand to turn the bevel until you have red in red.



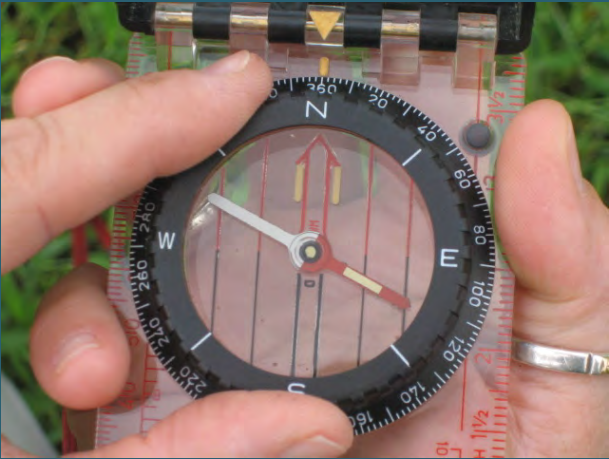


# Problem Solving And Practice

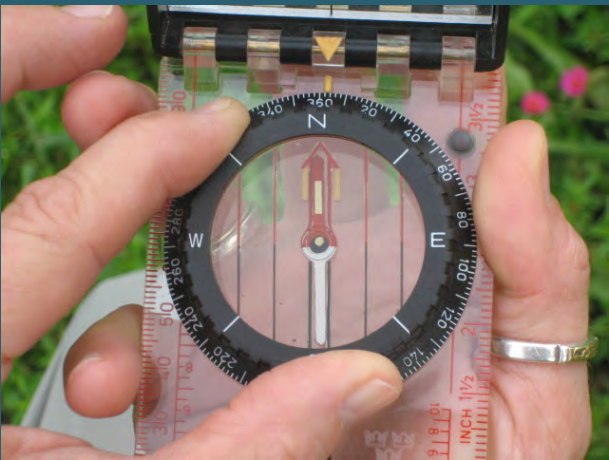
It's a really good practice to always orient yourself to North anytime you are in an unfamiliar area. When you arrive on scene to a search or training, quickly orient yourself so when you are briefed on your assigned task you are already thinking about North, South, East, and West. This will help to understand where your assigned search area is in relationship to Base Camp.



# Which Way Is North?



Hold compass at waist level.  
Turn bevel until “N” is lined  
up with directional arrow.



Holding compass at waist level, turn  
your body until the red arrow is in  
the red orienting arrow.

Look Up! You are facing North.

# Problem Solving And Practice

Remember the three sides of the triangle. Have it in front of you and it will help you solve the problems. If you have two of the sides, you can always get the third side which solves the problem.

# Problem

- ▣ You are standing in the open field.
- ▣ Your azimuth is 300 degrees. (NW direction)
- ▣ **What is your direction of travel ?**



# Solution

- ▣ What you do know.
  - Turn the bevel to 300 degrees.
  - Hold the compass and turn your body until you get Red in Red.
- ▣ **What direction do you walk?**
  - Look through the sight.

The direction of travel will be to the light pole. From there you could take another sighting and continue through the fields.



# Problem

- ▣ You are holding the compass and have the bottom of the front left leg of the windmill tower in your sight. (Direction of Travel)
- ▣ What azimuth do you need to travel to get there?





# Solution

- ▣ What you do know.
  - Direction of travel.
  - Turn the bevel until you get Red in Red.
- ▣ What is the azimuth?
- Look at the compass and get the degrees reading.



Azimuth/Degrees

# Conclusion

- ▣ There is more to orienteering than what is covered in this lesson.
- ▣ Become very comfortable using your compass and solving problems at this level before moving to the intermediate lesson.
- ▣ Moving too quickly causes confusion with the terminology and how to use the compass.
- ▣ Make up your own scenarios and remember that you can practice anywhere (wooded areas, open fields, playgrounds, parking lots, etc.).