



Finding your way in the woods or on a mountain trek can challenge the abilities of the most experienced outdoorsman. In America's early days, the frontiersmen who opened the unmapped western lands traveled by highly developed powers of observation and memory. They could read the signs of mountain ridges, rivers, and vegetation, wind direction and cloud movements, and the position of the sun, moon, and stars.

Today we have topographic maps and compasses for pathfinders. Being able to read maps, use compasses, and figure heights and widths are the skills needed for orienteering. The sport also requires thinking, planning, decision-making, and stamina. As you plan for this program feature, make sure you provide challenges for Scouts of all skill levels.

Once your Scouts learn the secrets of orienteering, it will help them on all outdoor expeditions. Orienteering makes it possible to use shortcuts to cut travel distance and time. It will also lead them to explore out-of-the-way places of special interest.

The highlight this month will be an Outback Weekend. It might be held at the council's Scout camp or a large park. Plan a weekend of map-and-compass activities that will test both the newest and oldest Scouts in the troop.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts:

- Enhanced outdoor skills, especially in map and compass reading.

- A greater understanding of how to plan and make decisions.
- An understanding of some of the principles of orienteering.
- Growing self-confidence.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, all Scouts should have met the majority of their basic orienteering and camping requirements through First Class. Depending on the campout activities, they may also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—Cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—Flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—Patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—Cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—Flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—Patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

- Outdoor—Cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—Flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—Patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law