

The basics of navigation

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“5 D’s” for getting from A to B

Direction: use compass if necessary, orient the map

Distance: how far to next checkpoint, or to the next feature along the way? (pace short distances)

Duration: how long should it take to next checkpoint, or between features?

Description: what features / contours do you expect to see along the way? Keep noticing, tick them off, tell yourself the story

Destination: what are you looking for?

Choosing your line / route between points:
Faster line over open ground in good visibility or safer line following handrails in mist?
Faster but longer use of paths and trods or direct line over rough ground?
Over a hill/valley or round?

Do you need:

A handrail? A feature to follow instead of open ground

To aim off? So you know which way to turn when you hit a feature

An attack point? Easier than from open ground

A catch feature? So you will know if you have gone too far



Notes

When following a bearing – run to the furthest point on the bearing you can see, repeat.

Keep checking what is around you, don't keep running or following a bearing without thinking.

Natural physical features are the most reliable, bearings are only a rough guide and man-made features can change eg paths may not exist, walls fall down, forests can be cut down.

Contours are important – is the land doing what you expect it to from the map?

Beware the temptation to drift off your line downhill because it is easier

Time spent checking the map and thinking is well spent – no point running fast in the wrong direction!

Be especially careful to think properly when cold or tired



Toddies at skills workshop