

KCT Orienteering

Come on out to the Emmons Preserve (57 Gravelly Brook Road, Kennebunkport) this July for a fun, family-oriented challenge! Test your compass navigation skills on our two courses June 23rd - July 23rd. Split up into teams and time yourselves for a winner, or work together to find each point.

PLEASE BE RESPECTFUL OF ALL THE ORIENTEERING TRAIL MATERIALS! RE-PIN ANY FALLEN MARKERS AND SHARPIES IF PULLED OUT OF THE TREE. REMEMBER, THESE COURSES ARE USED BY THE PUBLIC AND BY OUR SUMMER CAMPERS.

Route A

Route A is the easier course. This is a great warm-up for anyone who is rusty with a compass or for younger kids to complete! This is aimed at grades K-5 to be able to complete with mild supervision. You will find 11 markers along this course. Expect to travel on trail and off-trail 10-15 feet into the woods. **Please read the entire How-To before beginning.**

To begin this course, find the Learning Trail trailhead sign & info board marked on the map below. That will be your starting point. Don't forget to download and print your directional key sheet!

Route B

Route B is the harder course. This is a great warm-up for anyone who is rusty with a compass or for younger kids to complete! This is aimed at grades 6-8 to be able to complete with mild supervision. You will find 22 markers along this course. Expect to primarily navigate off-trail into the woods. **Please read the entire How-To before beginning.**

To begin this course, find the power outlet post beside the stage in the Emmons Preserve backyard. That will be your starting point. Don't forget to download and print your directional key sheet!

How-To

Orienteering is an incredibly fun activity and a valuable skill to have! Using a compass to navigate the woods can help you on future hiking and camping adventures when trying to find where to go next on a map.

There are a few things you will need to get started:

- A Compass - Bring a physical compass or download a free app! When orienteering, we use a **baseplate compass** that points to the "direction of go", has a spinning dial, shed, and needle. Monday - Friday 9am-4pm (or when staff is present) check out a compass from the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust office, **but please return!** Want to purchase or download your own compass? See the resources below.
- Route Points - Print and download your Route points sheet! As you navigate the woods and find a waypoint, use the sharpie attached to the marker to color in the point square on your Route sheet. Want to learn if you found the points in the right order? Email a photo of your sheet to bfarris@kporttrust.org.
- Proper Attire - It's buggy in Maine during July, be sure to wear and pack bug spray and to take proper precautions against ticks! Long pants tucked into your socks and closed-toed shoes make a great outfit for the woods. Have a family member help you do a tick check and shower off once you get home. Find a tick? Don't panic! Ticks have to be attached for over 36 hours to transmit diseases. If you have a little buddy attached to you, take a pair of tweezers (or nimble fingers), grasp the tick close to the head, and gently *pull straight up* to remove, then wash your hands and where you got bit.
- Your Starting Point - Both of these courses are located at 57 Gravelly Brook Road, Kennebunkport, Maine on the Emmons Preserve. View the map below to find the starting point for each route.



Now that you have all of your gear, it's time to make sure you know how to use it and how to orienteer! Check out the video below to learn how to use your compass (visit kporttrust.org/kct-orienteeing for video). *Compass 101 - How to Use a Baseplate Compass by MRCA*

Next up... paces!

Now that you know how to find your direction (or bearing), you're halfway ready for our orienteering challenge. The next step (literally) is to learn how to measure a pace! For kids to measure a pace, walk normally and count every time your left (or right) foot touches the ground. Not sure which foot you should count? If you step first with your left foot, count your right foot and vice versa. This is called a double pace!

(Keep in mind, this course was set by an adult counting single paces. Adults may use a single pace measurement as well, counting every footfall. Little legs may fall a little short of where the paces measure out to.)

Practice Makes Perfect

Once you've learned how to use a compass and count a pace, practice makes perfect! Spend sometimes in the Emmons backyard or your own together as a group measuring your paces together and testing your compass skills before you head out.

Tips and Tricks

- Traveling a long distance? Pick an easy point to pace to first, stop, and check your bearing to make sure you're still headed in the right direction before continuing to count your paces.
- Working with a group? Assign roles! One person to count paces, one to keep the bearing, and one to hold/mark the Route sheet!
- Can't find a marker? Search around a 15-foot radius to see if you can find it. All markers are placed on trees, and yes, Route B markers are intentionally hidden sometimes! It is a challenge after all!
- Seriously can't find a marker? Retrace your steps to the last one you knew. Double-check your bearing from there.
- Really really can't find a marker? If you're 100% sure you're in the right area and you can't find the next marker, you can report it at kporttrust.org/kct-orienteeing. Something may have happened to it and it may need to be replaced. If you find a marker on the ground or it falls out when you are using the Sharpie to color your answer key, please re-pin it to the tree at that bearing.

Wow! You're all set and ready to go out orienteering.

If you take any photos along the way, tag @kportconservation to be featured on our story, or just to share with us! Like an escape room though, we don't want everyone to figure out the answers through your photos. Be sure to be thoughtful with what you share before the end of July, such as the exact location of or discerning features around a marker.

Happy hiking!