

## Orienteering in Central Park Plymouth



This activity is available to anyone who is mobile

Within the Park a number of Orienteering Courses are available for anyone to have a go at. You can enjoy this healthy activity with no previous experience. It will help if you have but it's really not necessary. Regular users of the park who train to run will find that selecting a route will add new interest to their activity. Parents with children can have fun and quickly pick up the techniques together. The activity is suitable for organised groups of all kinds with some thought to supervision. For groups a sample risk assessment can be downloaded via links on the web address below.

When you first start you can run or walk, using a map to find the most efficient route. Understanding the map though is the first priority and you should take the time to get the hang of this. No specialist equipment is necessary although you are advised to take care on steeper slopes, dress for the weather and consider your footwear carefully, particularly when the grass is wet.

There are 4 courses set out in Central Park for you to choose from. They are colour coded for difficulty to provide both an introduction and a progression.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Length (km)</u>	<u>No. of Controls</u>	<u>Difficulty</u>
White	1.3	10	Beginners
Yellow	1.8	9	Bit harder
Orange	3.0	13	Moderate
Light Green	3.7	14	Difficult

You will be provided with:

- An Orienteering Map showing your course. Study this closely before you start, particularly the key to colours and symbols on the right hand side.
- A Control Description. This lists the Controls you have to visit on your course, the order in which you must visit, and describes the feature you are looking for at each Control.
- A Control Card, which you mark at each Control to prove you have visited.

The Start is shown on your map by a red Triangle, and the Finish by a red double circle. These are co-located on the Central Park courses, but this is not always the case. The Controls are marked by a red circle and have a number alongside. This number corresponds to the list on your Control Description. Controls are joined by red lines in the order you must visit them. Choose your own route between Controls.

You are advised to start with White if you have never done this before. Distances and difficulty of route finding increase and so if you enjoy one you can come back and test yourself again. Write down the time that you start on the control card and again

when you finish to see how much time you have taken. Younger children under 12 are strongly advised to stay in at least pairs for safety. Parents supervising children would be advised to walk or run with your children for the first few controls to make sure that they have grasped the idea. It's not a search activity but one that uses the map to guide you to the correct position. Remember that there are other courses out there and so you may well come across controls that are not on your course.

Tips from the British Orienteering web site:

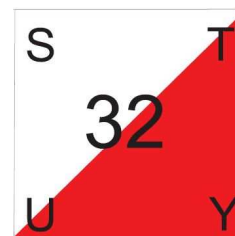
- Fold the map to show only the section you are in
- Mark your progress by holding your thumb over where you think you are. (This is called "thumbing the map" and will help you to see the bit of the map you need.)
- When you look at your map it will always help if the detail on the ground is in line with that shown on map. Line features, like paths fences and hedges help you do this. This is called "setting" or "orientating" the map
- Only move at the pace with which you can read the map. Too fast and you will get lost.
- If you do loose your position go back to where you were last confident and start again from there, always have at least two things that confirm you are where you think you are on the map.
- Before you set off from one control to the next try to estimate how far it is (how many paces it will take you) and how long it will take to get there, and what from the detail you can see on the map would make you realise if you have gone too far.
- Follow the easiest route along line features until you get to an obvious point close to the control and then approach the last bit really carefully, pacing the distance if you know how to do this.



When you arrive at a Control site, you should see a post with a Red & White marker(see picture left).

The marker looks like the example on the right.

The number in the centre should tally with the code on your Control Description. You mark your Control Card in the appropriate box with one of the letters in the four quadrants to prove that you have found the Control. You then move on to your next Control.



We really hope that you enjoy this activity that has been provided for you through a partnership between the City Council Parks and Children's Services, Devon Orienteering Club, and the College of St Mark and St John.

If you want more information on orienteering visit the Devon Orienteering Club web site at [www.devonorienteering.co.uk](http://www.devonorienteering.co.uk) . There are links from there to other orienteering web sites, including other permanent orienteering courses in Devon. New members are always welcome, and Club members will provide help for beginners.