



Orienting the map and taking a bearing

AT A GLANCE



What

Finding the way to a destination with map and compass



What for

Hikes, expeditions, wide games, orienteering



Memory aid

Red in the shed – then the arrow shows the way



30 minutes



from 10 years



baseplate compass, 1:25,000 map



The parts of a baseplate compass

Needle

The red end points north.

Housing

Rotating ring with degrees and an orienting arrow.

Edge

The straight edge to lay along the map.

Direction arrow Shows the direction you walk in.



Step by step

- 1 Lay the edge of the compass on the map from where you are to your destination. The direction arrow points to the destination.
- 2 Turn the housing until its north lines are parallel to the north–south lines on the map and the orienting arrow points to the top of the map (north).
- 3 Take the compass off the map and hold it flat in front of your stomach.
- 4 Turn your whole body until the red needle lies exactly inside the orienting arrow: **red in the shed**.
- 5 Now the direction arrow shows your direction. Pick a tree or rock in that direction and walk towards it.



Orienting the map and taking a bearing

☀ North without a compass

- **At night:** find the Plough (Big Dipper) and extend its back edge about five times – there is the Pole Star, almost exactly in the north.
- **By day:** around midday (about 1 p.m. in summer time) the sun is roughly in the south (in the northern hemisphere).

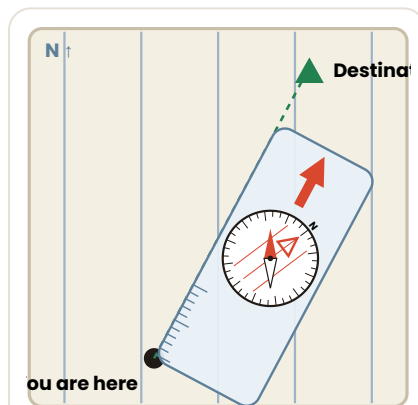
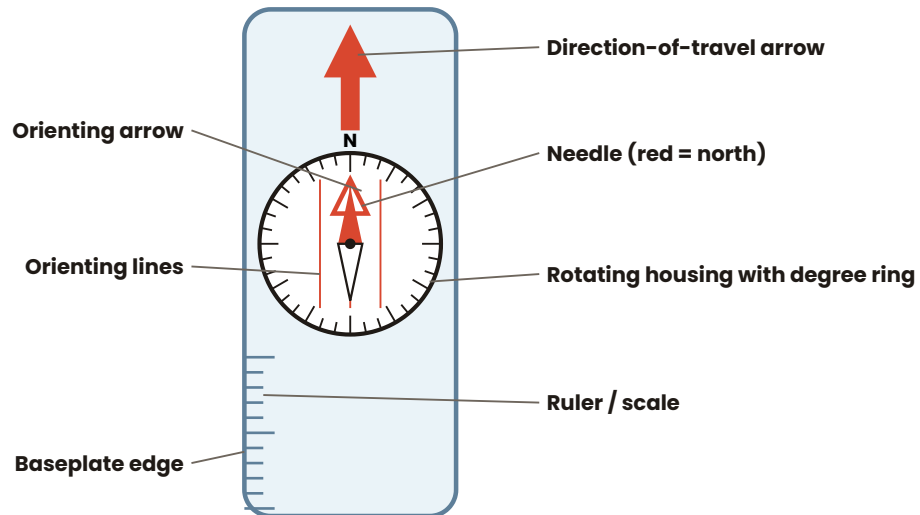
 **Good to know:** The compass needle points to magnetic north, the map to true north. In much of Europe the difference is only a few degrees – for hikes you can ignore it. Elsewhere, check the declination on your map.

✓ Exercise for a group meeting

- Five trees in a meadow as targets: everyone takes a bearing to each tree.
- Then go orienteering (see group meetings, Scouts 12–16).

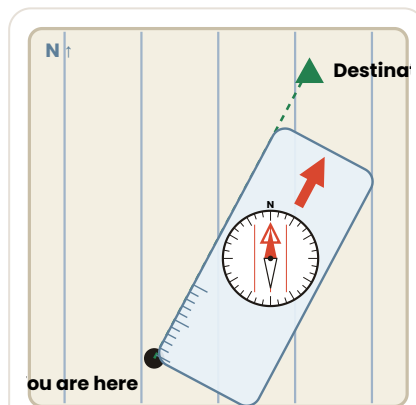


The baseplate compass – parts and three steps



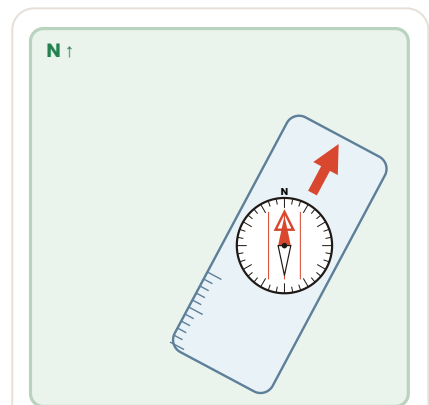
1 Line up

Place the edge on the map from where you are to your destination. The direction arrow points to the destination.



2 Turn the housing

Turn the housing until the orienting lines are parallel to the map grid and the orienting arrow points to the top of the map.



3 Red in the shed

Hold the compass flat in front of you and turn until the red needle sits in the orienting arrow. Then follow the direction arrow.