



Systematic Orienteering

How do you orienteer? Have you ever sat down and given a few moments of reflection to this?

Note down what you think you do to successfully (or not!) navigate your way on a leg between controls.

You might note:

1. Set the map with the compass
2. Thumb the map for where I am
3. Work out my route using . . .

Now have a think about ways you could improve your orienteering.

Once you have done this, study the diagram overleaf. This shows 'Systematic Orienteering' – a simple yet consistent tool to work with.

Once you have studied the diagram and reflected on it:

- ▣ What are your thoughts?
- ▣ Can you bring yourself to work with this tool to be a consistent, systematic orienteer?
- ▣ What benefits are there?
- ▣ What do you perceive to be the drawbacks?
- ▣ What training exercises do you need to do to try this out?
- ▣ Go back to the [Better Orienteering website](#) and look under the 'Intermediate' and 'Advanced Techniques' sections.

Everyone has an individual style of orienteering, however the basics need to be robust enough to stand up under race pressure.

The model of 'Systematic Orienteering' also allows you to check post-race for your strengths and areas you need to work on as it is easier to identify if you had a

PLAN – good Direction – accurate Picture – idea of Distance

Plan – Direction – Picture – Distance (PDPD)

1. Plan

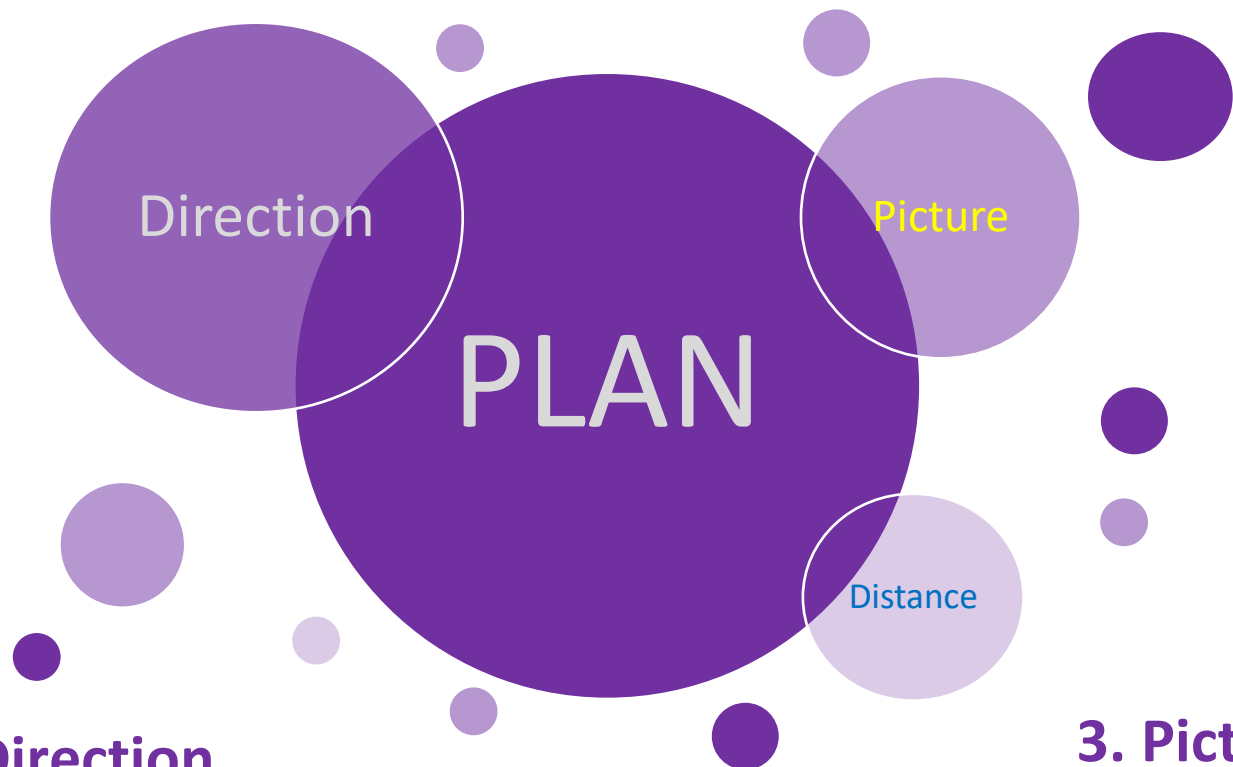
This is the first thing you do – plan your route from where you are to where you want to go.

This will involve RACE (Route, Attack point, Control, Exit) – alternatively CARE (Control, Attack point, Route, Exit).

Always have a plan before you leave a control and ask yourself 3 questions

1. Where are you now and where are you going?
2. What are you going to see on your way to the control?
3. How are you going to get there?

You draw your skills from the 'toolbox' you have; this could involve handrails, route choice, aiming off, attack points, catching features, etc.



2. Direction

What direction are you leaving the control?
What direction are you travelling in on various parts of the leg? You might have to adjust the direction when you reach a clear catching feature.

Can you follow a compass bearing through terrain?

Have you checked the direction of the handrail?

It is important to keep working on this fundamental skill.

3. Picture

Here you are checking from the map to the ground and from the ground to the map.

Ask the question – what do I expect to see on this leg / part of this leg?

The map could be quite complex – so simplification comes in.

If the picture you see on the ground does not match what you expect to see – STOP!!

4. Distance

If 1, 2 and 3 all go Ok, distance is just a back up.

You use distance as a warning system:

- early warning that you are approaching the catching feature / attack point / control
- the 'aarghh' warning that "I have gone too far OR not far enough"