

## So you have started orienteering, what next?

### How to join Bendigo Orienteers?

Go to the Eventor website at <https://eventor.orienteering.asn.au> and create an account. Instructions are at the link below. There is a video to watch on how to create an account and then how to join the Bendigo club.

[http://orienteeringaustralia.groovehq.com/knowledge\\_base/topics/how-do-i-register-as-a-club-member](http://orienteeringaustralia.groovehq.com/knowledge_base/topics/how-do-i-register-as-a-club-member)

### Event calendar

To find out when orienteering events are on, check out the Bendigo Orienteers website at <http://www.bendigo-orienteers.com.au> or go to the Eventor website. The Eventor website has details of just about every orienteering event in Australia and it has the results of past orienteering events as well. You don't need to setup an account on Eventor to check out when events are on, or results from past events. You should setup an account if you want to enter events online (not all events can be entered before the event).

### Where is the event?

If you click on an event that is listed on the Eventor website the details for the event will appear. This includes the location (driving directions and a map), entry details (sometimes you need to enter before the event), and start times. Once you have joined the Bendigo club you will be able to enter events from all over Australia that are run by other clubs. You can find out where and when these events run from the Eventor website.

### Start times

Most Bendigo events provide the flexibility to start anytime between 12:30pm and 2:00pm, but some events run during the evening or at night, and there are some events that have a mass start. When an event has a mass start all competitors start at the same time, so it is important to arrive well before the start time so you have the chance to register and listen to the pre event briefing. Controls will normally be collected at 3pm.

### Does orienteering get cancelled if it is raining?

We still orienteer in the rain. It just adds another dimension. Events are rarely cancelled and if it ever happens it will be because it is too dangerous for competitors. These conditions may include code red fire danger days, extreme wind or rain. Where possible, club members are contacted by email if an event is to be cancelled.

### Which course to choose?

Most Bendigo events give you the choice of 5 courses. Course 5 is the best for beginners as navigation is easy, on tracks, and the distance is short. With course 4, the controls are a short distance off the tracks so navigation is a bit harder and the distance is slightly longer.

Course 3 is difficult navigation and another increase in distance. The step up to courses 1 and 2 will see further increases in distance, but not difficulty of navigation.

### **Course etiquette**

If there are other people at the start control when you arrive, it is good practice to wait a couple of minutes after someone else has started on the same course you are doing. Ask the competitors that are there if anyone is doing the same course as you and start when it is your turn.

If you come across someone on your course who looks like they might need assistance, ask them if they are OK. Most times they will be fine, but if they need help you should stop and do what you can.

### **Remote starts**

Sometimes the start or finish control is not near the registration area. These are called a remote start or remote finish. After registering for the event, make your way to the start which may be short walk away. You may get your map at registration or you may have to collect your map at the start. There may be pieces of coloured tape tied to trees to show you the way. Competitors on easy courses may have some legs that are challenging and are also marked with coloured tape to make them easier.

### **What if I get lost?**

There is no shame in not finishing your course and heading back to the finish, especially if you are getting cold or wet. If you are lost you have a couple of options;

- Ask someone who is nearby for help. At local events, you'll find most orienteers will be more than willing to help you out with the next control or how to get back to the start.
- Find a safe bearing. This is a direction that you can head in wherever you are on the map, and you will run into something like a road or train line or line of power poles. From here you can navigate back to the start. It is always handy when you are new to spend some time at the start of the event working out if there is a safe bearing and what direction it is in. A more experienced orienteer can help you with this.
- Sit tight in the one spot and someone will come and get you. All entrants in an event are accounted for, so someone will come looking for you if you don't come back.
- When you are new it is handy to carry a whistle if you need to call for help in case you are lost and in trouble. There are some whistles available for loan, but it's best you look at bringing your own if you can.
- Note – the controls will be collected at 3pm, so don't stay out later than this time.

### **After the event**

Once you have finished your run you are free to head home, but there are plenty of reasons to hang around. You might want a tea or coffee, and if you want to improve your orienteering it is always worth having a chat to other orienteers about the route you took and seeing what someone else might have done. At the end of each event, the organizers will always appreciate some help bringing the controls in. This starts when the course closes (3pm for most local events) and you might only be collecting 5 or 6 controls.

### **SI sticks (Sport Ident)**

Soon you will want to purchase your own SI stick. This will save you having to hire an SI stick each week and will provide you with the added convenience of having your own stick registered with your own details and ready to go at each event. SI sticks can be purchased for approximately \$55.

### **Clothing**

While there is no uniform that is required to go orienteering, you should always wear clothing appropriate for the weather, and clothes that will offer protection while in the bush. When you are ready to purchase shoes, gaiters or pants, take advantage of the advice of other members of the club. Bendigo Orienteering club shirts are available from the club.

### **Compass**

A good compass for beginners will cost about \$50 and is a great investment. These can be purchased locally from outdoors and camping stores. More experienced orienteers often use a thumb compass which is more expensive, but offers better performance when running. When purchasing a compass online make sure to purchase a compass designed for the southern hemisphere. You might not think there will be a difference, but a northern hemisphere compass will work very poorly in Australia.