

Woodland activity idea

Simple ideas to inspire groups to engage with woods in a safe and fun way

6) Ordnance Survey Maps

Description of the activity / overview	Training in Ordnance survey maps: 1. Understanding your map: the basics 2. History of OS and importance of updated/ current maps 3. Grid lines and scales explained. Exploring both 4 figure and 6 figure referencing 4. National Grid lines and 2 letter codes on maps 5. Reading Contours and relief 6. Quiz
Permissions needed	This is ideally taught in a classroom for at least of some of the session although there is also good opportunities for getting out in the field and exploring
Timescale	A 2-3 hour session
Equipment	OS MAPS (It's good to bring a selection of both explorer versions and landranger ones to demonstrate differences. It is also a good idea to bring old ones to show how they have changed.
Who's enjoyed it in the past?	Walking groups/ existing Actif Woods groups that want to become more independent/more sustainable.
Leader skills and knowledge needed to do the activity (minimum and desired)	An understanding of OS and being prepared for a lot of questions!

Methodology

1. It is good to have enough maps! They are around £8 and it is good to work with a map that the group are familiar with to drum up enthusiasm for the session!
2. You will need plenty of space for this session as the maps are large and people will need space to explore them.
3. Work out a session plan: it's good for the group to know what they will be doing over the 2 hours! See outline above as an example. We started with an introduction to how they used to gather details (citing's/high points) it is also good to give people a reminder of what the symbols are so they are not intimidated by the map reading session.
4. Key parts of a map: What is a map? Photo from the air
5. Identify basic features – rivers, woods, roads , villages etc..
6. CONVENTIONAL SIGNS – Quiz. Ch's important? Cliffs/ outcrops (continuous line)
7. Legend/Key. Access and Rights of Way
8. 'Inaccuracies' – what might change? (Forestry, boundaries – human made)
9. What else can we see on the map? GRID LINES – size of sq? Always 1km, Diagonal distance 1.5km
10. Grid References's used to pinpoint location – 4 figure (Along the corridor, up the stairs)
11. 6 figure – sides of sq split into 10ths (roamer or est) .
12. SCALE - Relation Rel between distance on ground and distance on map. Expressed as a ratio
1:50,000 1cm = 50,000cm (500m) 1km = 2cm
13. X2 detail 1:25,000 1cm = 250m 1km = 4cm
1mm = 25m
14. Different purposes – when would one be better than the other – detail vs clutter, planning/multiple maps, steep mountains (Scotland and contours). Show mountainous map

	<p>15. DISTANCE – Planning – count squares, String/paper Use compass to measure – either in cm or roamer (less mistakes).</p> <p>16. CONTOURS – brown lines on map (every 5th one heavier, heights marked) – enable you to picture the landscape. Shape of lines = shape of hill, spacing/density shows steepness.</p> <p>17. Base contour – coastline (height above sea level). Think of contours as slices of the country every 10m</p> <p>18. Illustrate– even, concave, convex slope; double top, valley (rivers), ridge.</p> <p>19. Numbers right way up/upside down.</p> <p>20. 10 m = a four storey building but won't always be shown. Nobbly ridges inaccurate</p> <p>21. VERBAL DESCRIPTION of route. Anticipation is everything – confirms where you are or ensures you quickly correct any mistakes (don't make it fit what you want it too) – Put everything together. Start at GR, set map (thumb on position, rotate map by landmarks, look for features).</p> <p>22. Direction of Paths, especially in forestry, to locate yourself</p>
Key elements	Map reading, sustainability, OS, route planning
Online links	www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk
Any other considerations	Some of the group might be intimidated by map reading. This is something it can be good to use with experienced groups who want to learn more.
Special TIPS!	Be open! Don't put people on the spot! Use maps familiar to your group and get them to point out features they know!



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