



NAVIGATION

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The Further Reading list references some of the many books written about navigation. Map reading isn't new to school geography pupils and maths graph x & y coordinates are similar to grid references. We all know how to navigate around the house, to the school, shops etc. But once we get into open country it's a potentially dangerous wild world, requiring competent map reading and accurate navigation.

In any team it's advisable to have two fully competent navigators - the second to act as navigation checker and to be ready to take over if the main navigator has to fall out. However, all of your walkers need to be able to read a map and to be able to navigate.

There is a tendency for walkers to avoid navigating because they are afraid of making a mistake. Get everyone involved by spreading the task around, have a navigation day in close country, question walkers while walking or check pointing, divide the group into pairs, put some micro-navigation into the route. The National Navigation Award Scheme (NNAS) Outdoor Navigation book has some useful teaching ideas.

Your walkers need to know how to use three basic tools: a map (I prefer 1:25,000 for its detail despite having to re-fold it from time to time), a decent sized compass (a minimum baseplate of 100mm) and a stop watch.

Electronic navigation aids are not permitted on The Ten Tors Challenge but it may be a useful safety back up for teams to carry one while training – switched off in an opaque container.

Maps. The Dartmoor Training Area map has the advantage of being single sided, overprinted with the Rare Bird Nesting Areas (RBNA) and depicting the range boundaries (useful handrails) and flagpoles. However, you will either have to get it laminated or keep it in a map case. Note that the RBNA on the Dartmoor Training Area map 1:25,000 Edn 2, which will be issued at the Briefing have been changed by DNPA. If you use

Ordnance Survey Explorer OL28, printed on both sides. The Active Series can be purchased laminated or you can arrange this yourself. Firms supplying this service are shown on the Ten Tors website.

All your trainees need to be able to identify features on the map; in Dartmoor's case, high points, valleys, rivers and bogs. Upland Dartmoor, despite being featureless, isn't difficult to navigate but in poor weather conditions with low visibility it challenges even good navigators.

Orientating the map to the ground while walking, so that the navigator is looking along the direction of travel is much easier, especially when tired.

Check Points. During the training, Team Managers should locate Check Points away from the tops of tors to help avoid creating worn routes and stops at exposed locations.

Route Planning. Routes must be planned carefully in advance paying particular attention to water features, rivers, leats and bogs. Think about river crossing and alternatives before the actual trip then choose the appropriate route for conditions actually encountered.

Consideration should be given to dividing the route between check points into legs and thinking through the best option of following tracks, contouring or walking on a bearing either using time or pacing. Your walkers should also understand how catching features, aiming off and boxing can help them especially when mist limits visibility.

Escape routes must be planned with the same care as the intended route. If the weather turns nasty or an emergency occurs, your walkers need to be able to follow their emergency plans without having to work out the new route.

Use of the Compass. Confident use of a compass is vital. Key points are:

- NEVER take a compass reading while moving. ALWAYS stand still and hold the

compass square on in front of the body so that one is looking down on it.

- NEVER hold the compass near metal objects or another compass. Beware of steel in reinforced concrete.
- ALWAYS check before taking a second or subsequent reading that the compass has not accidentally been altered since it was set.
- Trust your compass!

National Navigation Award Scheme. You might wish to consider encouraging your walkers to take part in the NNAS, which provides a structured

and progressive awards scheme from bronze to silver (the standard needed for Ten Tors) through to gold (the level required for Walking Group Leaders). There are several local providers. More detail is available at:

http://www.nnas.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=1

The Challenge. Before the Challenge, I require my teams to mark up all the manned locations and the Rare Bird Nesting Areas so that they are aware of where they can get help and areas they must avoid..



12. From Princetown towards Plymouth

Elizabeth Kitson