CENTRAL TEXAS
SPRING-O
SCOUT ORIENTEERING CHALLENGE

One Page Event Summary

April 24, 2027 at Lost Pines Scout Reservation

The Central Texas Spring-O is an Orienteering event for all ages. The main event is a point-to-point course, it is a race through the woods/trails of Lost Pines to find all of the control points on your map. When you reach a control point, punch your card to show you found the point and race to the next until you find them all! It's like a treasure hunt!

It is a race for time (for a given age group and course level) and the fastest times go home with MEDALS! (and everyone goes home with a patch). Many people ignore the clock and go for a fun hike while tracking down the control points. It is great fun no matter how you do it!.

Choose from 4 courses that range from beginner to advanced

- **White**: Easiest, for beginners, 2-3 km
- **Yellow**: Experienced beginners, 2-3.5 km
- **Orange**: Intermediate, 3.5-4.5 km
- **Green**: Advanced, 4.5-5.5 km (15yr+)

Other Activities

- **Beginner Clinic**: beginners learn the basics of Orienteering
- **Maze-O:** follow a map to find the points on a grid in the right order
- **Zig-Zag Compass Challenge:** follow various compass bearings on a short zigzag course
- **Pace Count Station**: Check your walking & running pace count and make your own Ranger **Beads** for fun (Pace Count Beads)
- **Merit Badge Class**: attend morning and afternoon sessions to complete Req 1,2,3,4,5, & 6. Req 7 requires three courses (3rd in evening). Req 8,9,10 on your own (see Event Guide). Limit to first 60 Scouts.
- **Night-Orienteering**: Test your orienteering skills tracking down control points after sunset. Bring your flashlights to look for the reflective markers!

Lodging

Camping is optional and limited to Scouts BSA members, reserve on the event registration (~50% of attendees typically camp)

Meals

Hotdog lunch option with registration, (hotdog, chips, Gatorade).

Registration:

https://scoutingevent.com/564-117935
Early registration by Sat Apr **3**, 2027 (midnight)
Pre-order optional t-shirt by Apr **3**, 2027(midnight)
Registration closes Thursday Apr **22**, 2027 (midnight)

Meet Fees:

BSA CAC members: $20 early, $25 regular
Non CAC Members: $20 early, $25 regular
Non-participants: $5 early, $10 regular
Order t-shirts during registration or for t-shirt-only orders HERE by Apr 3 midnight

Forms:

- BSA Health Form (Part A/B) (for campers)
- Orienteering Waiver (for non-BSA members)

Cancellation

- See BSA-CAC policy here. Generally, days before event >30 days 100%, 15-29 days 50%, <14 days 0%

Schedule of Events

Friday, April 23
6:00 pm to 9:30 pm - Check-in (Campers Check in at the gate, then check in at the Log Cabin for Orienteering info)

Saturday, April 24
7:30am to 10:00am - Check in @ Log Cabin
8:45am to 10:40am - Scouts BSA Merit Badge Part 1 (at Eagle Quest)
9:15am to 9:45am - Beginner Clinic @ Log Cabin
10:00am - First start-time (all courses open)
10:45am - First start-time for Merit Badge Participants
11:30am - 1:30pm: Lunch
2:30pm - Awards Presentation (all courses closed)

3:00pm - 4:40pm Scouts BSA Merit Badge Part 2 (at Eagle Quest)

7:30pm Night-Orienteering check-in (at Log Cabin)
8:00pm to 8:45pm Night-O Competition
9:00pm Night-O Awards (at Log Cabin)

Sunday, April 25
Check out by 10:30am, inspection by Camp Ranger

Free Time Activities (9am-12pm & 1:30pm-4pm)

Maze-O; Zig Zag Compass Challenge; Pace Count; Ranger Beads

10th Annual

CENTRAL TEXAS SPRING-O

SCOUT ORIENTEERING CHALLENGE



Orienteering is a Rain-or-Shine sport, so be prepared!

www.scoutOchallenge.com

This is NOT a drop-off event. Scouts must have adult leadership at the event.

The Central Texas Spring-O is an exciting event for everyone to experience the sport of **Orienteering**. The event is open to all Scouts and Scouters, ROTC units, Orienteering Clubs, and other youth organizations. **Groups or Individuals are welcome.**

What is Orienteering? Orienteering is a challenging outdoor activity where you use a detailed TOPOGRAPHIC MAP to navigate through a series of checkpoints called CONTROLS as quickly as you can. It's like a treasure hunt! IT IS A RACE!!!! It is extremely popular around the world and a lot of fun for any age!
https://orienteeringusa.org/explore/what-is-orienteering/

Bearings and Pace-counts?? Don't get hung up with the complexities of compass work. If you can find the bathroom on the map at the local zoo, you can go orienteering. There are course levels for everyone.

While this Spring-O is not part of a local club, we do get help from the **Austin Orienteering Club** and the **Houston Orienteering Club**. Check out their websites to learn more about the sport and find other opportunities to have fun Orienteering! http://austinoc.com/ https://hoc.us.orienteering.org/ https://www.lonestaroc.org/ http://ntoa.com/

Members from Longhorn Council have also helped make this event happen; check out the Sid Richardson **Spring-O Orienteering** event for Scouts in **North Texas, Longhorn Council**: https://www.longhorncouncil.org/event/spring-o/

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Note: Check for fire ban in Bastrop County here: https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/Burnbans/

When/Where

- The event is Saturday Apr 24, 2027
- Camping is optional Fri and/or Sat
- Lost Pines Scout Reservation, 785 FM1441, Bastrop, TX 78602

Registration

- Register at www.CentralTexasSpringO.org/registration
- Event Patch may not be available for those registering <30 days before the event
- Registration fee for participants includes: park activity use fee, patch, map, ranger beads
    - BSA Capitol Area Council Members: $20 early reg fee, then $25
    - Non-Members: $20 early reg fee, then $25
    - Non-participating attendees $5 early reg fee, then $10
- Optional Lunch: $6

Payments: Payments must be made via credit card in advance to avoid handling of cash on site.

T-shirts

Pre-Order only. Optional Event T-shirts can be pre-ordered by midnight on 4/3/27 ($20, $23 for 2-3X sizes). Order with your event registration --or-- for t-shirt **only** orders here:
https://www.cognitoforms.com/Troop8787/_2027SpringOTshirtOrderForm
The above link may have a limited number of shirts available after the deadline.

DRAFT artwork for 2027



Schedule of Events

Fri Apr 23, 2027

6:00pm – 9:30pm	**Check-in** at Log Cabin (get your event patch, punch card, etc) Please check in at the gate for a single vehicle in your group to be escorted to camp site

Sat Apr 24, 2027

Participants are free to leave at any time, however if you started a course you must check in at the finish area or check-in desk to let us know you are leaving (and not lost).

7:30 am – 10:00 am	**Check-in** at Log Cabin (get your event patches, punch card, t-shirts, etc)
9:00 am – 10:40 am	**Scouts BSA Merit Badge Clinic Part 1**; Eagle Quest area
9:15 am – 9:45 am	**Beginner Instruction**; north side of Log Cabin
10:00 am	**1st Start-time**; no assigned start time, first come, first to start
10:45 am	1st Start-time for Merit Badge Class scouts; firsts come, first start
2:30 pm	**Award Presentation;** orienteers checked in to FINISH or HQ
3:00 pm - 4:40 pm	**Scouts BSA Merit Badge Clinic Part 2**; Eagle Quest area

Bring sack lunch is advised if not purchasing lunch with reg. Dinner on your own, please come prepared if you are sticking around.

7:30pm	**Night-O check-in** at Log Cabin
8:00 pm – 8:45 pm	**Night-O mass start**
9:00 pm	**Night-O Awards**

Free Time Activities are open from (9am-12pm and 1:30pm-4pm)

Maze-Orienteering Follow a map through a short maze of points to find the control points (easy to challenging courses)
Zig Zag Compass Challenge Learn and/or practice following a compass bearing
Pace Count Station: check or walking and running pace count
Ranger Beads: make your own paracord craft pace-count-beads

Sunday: Check out by 10:30am with Ranger (remember to leave no trace)

Beginner Clinic

Posters will be hung so that you can get an intro to Orienteering at your convenience. We recommend beginners take a look before the clinic begins. The instructor will review the same info and answer questions. You can also check out this great source here. https://betterorienteering.org/beginner/

If you are bringing a group with many that are new to orienteering, have them watch the video at that link.

Courses

The Central Texas Spring-O has many fun orienteering and navigation activities!

Point-to-Point Courses (the main event, many people come just for this)

There are four courses that you can choose from:

- **White**: Easiest — suitable for absolute beginners. The course is on trails, roads and/or fields. Length: 2-3 km
- **Yellow**: Easy —for slightly more advanced beginners, course mostly on trails/fields with some controls a short distance into woods. Length: 2-3.5 km
- **Orange**: Intermediate — a mix of easy and more challenging control points. Length: 3.5-4.5 km
- **Green**: Advanced, medium length — difficult navigation, moderate physical challenge. Length: 4.5-5.5 km (limit to 15yrs old and up)

Maze-O: You get a map of a Maze in a small open area. Easy courses show the points on the grid you must visit and punch your card for the fastest time. There are more challenging courses where you are only shown a segment of the map with your last point and next point which can be oriented differently. This is a fun free-time activity that you can come back to and repeat at your leisure. Learn how to bring Maze Orienteering to your Scout meetings: https://www.centraltexasspringo.org/maze-o/

ZIG-ZAG Compass Challenge: This is a short course designed to help practice following a bearing. From the start, follow a bearing a short distance to a marker to find a new bearing, follow these short legs in a zig-zag while writing down the codes you find at each point. Can you find the correct markers in the fastest time? Instructors help get you started. Free time activity. Learn how to bring the Zig-Zag to your Scout meetings: https://www.centraltexasspringo.org/zigzag/

NIGHT-O: After sunset, there is a Score Orienteering event where you use flashlights to help you find as many of the reflective markers that you can, before the time runs out. High scores within the limited time win medals! Give yourself a little time to sign in and get a map before start time.

Getting Ready

What to bring: pen/pencil, pants, poncho, water, sunscreen, a whistle, a snack, watch, compass (helpful, but not necessarily needed for beginner courses) first aid kit. **Flashlight is a must-have for the Night-O.**

If you are participating in the Merit Badge Class, please bring a compass (you knew that, right?)

Don't forget **lunch** and **dinner** if you are hanging out for all of the activities or camping out. We do have a lunch option for additional charge but you can bring your own. There is limited time for lunch, **we recommend a sack lunch** so you don't miss out on any of the day activities.

Paperwork

- **MED FORMS**: handled on a unit by unit basis.
- Orienteering Waiver required for participants that are not members of BSA (here)

Camping (info from CAC LPSR Ranger)

- Camping is limited to BSA Members. Non-members should look for camping at nearby Bastrop State Park (10-12 min drive) or Buescher State Park (20mins)
- Please be aware that all vehicles must remain in the parking lot; during check in hours you can have one vehicle in group escorted to your campsite to drop off.
- The only place a ground fire is allowed are in the campfire rings. If you have a fire in this ring, please make sure it is cold to the touch when done.
- Please be aware that hammocks are not allowed on Capitol Area Council properties.
- Close-toed shoes are required in camp.
- Do not leave trash in the campsites. Lost Pines has compost, recycling and landfill dumpsters beside the commissary.
- All running water on camp is potable and safe to drink.
- If you have not been to this camp before, please review the camp map at https://www.bsacac.org/activities/camping/lost-pines
- During the point to point and night course, **please expect that runners may run through your camp site**. We will not put markers in your camp, but it is not practical to ask runners to avoid running through camps. **This is the nature of an orienteering competition on a scout property with limited route choices.** Please be respectful to campers if you must go through a campsite during the competition.

Food:

Order optional lunch during registration, it includes a hotdog meal: one hotdog, chips and Gatorade. If you bring your own lunch, we highly recommend that you make it quick and easy, like a sack lunch. The day is loaded with activity so you don't want to bog yourself down preparing a meal on site.

Facilities: **There are bathroom facilities and potable water on site.**

Safety Plan

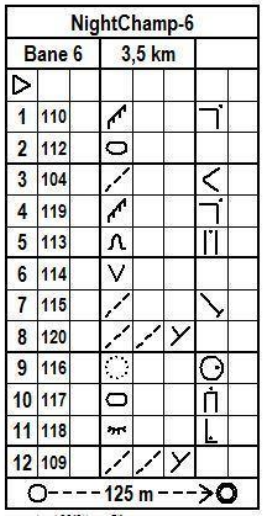
- Units (Troops/Packs/other) are required to provide their own medical kits for their units. Basic First Aid is done on a unit level. There is a medic at Linsey Lodge.
- For all major emergencies, authorized adult leaders will contact the local Fire department (911) first.
- The Point-to-Point courses are done with scouts traveling into the woods in pairs using the buddy system. Scouts 10 & under must participate with an adult participant. All runners **must** check in at finish so we can be sure all scouts are off the course.
- All established rules related to scouting as outlined in "Guide to Safe Scouting" are strictly enforced. Details of these procedures and rules are outlined on the Internet at http://www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/index.html.
- If medical treatment is needed, for minor emergencies, several medical facilities are available in Bastrop.

Meet Rules: Point-to-Point Course (will be reviewed at Beginners Clinic)

The Point-to-Point race is the main event. 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, staggered start intervals

- **Check-in**: Check-in Friday evening or 7:30-10:00 am on Saturday.
  - Check in at Log Cabin
  - Turn in your waivers, get a welcome packet and event patches
  - Get your team's punch card and some direction about what to do next
  - While waiting for start-time, visit the Pace-Count Station to check your pace-count (required for the Merit Badge) and make Ranger-Beads (pace count beads) for you to keep
- **Starting**:
  - There are no assigned start-times. Starts can begin at 10am (10:45 for Scouts in the Merit Badge Class)
  - Line up at the colored course that is specified on your punch card. First in line, first to go (bring your punch card to be scanned to record actual start time). The Merit Badge classes get out later so runners in line at 10am will avoid that crowd.
  - Starts will be released in 1-2 minute intervals at the Starter's discretion.
  - At the start line you will be staged before starting. This is where you collect:
    - plastic bag for your map
    - clue card for your selected course level
    - Course map (staple it inside the bag with the punch card and clue sheet). Maps will be different for each course level (color)
- **Running the Course**: Follow the points in order. Don't follow another team (that's not cool); if you are too close behind them, try to pass them.
  - **Punching**: When you get to a control point, check that the **three digit control code** on the marker matches the three digit code on your control sheet before you punch your card. For example, there will be more than one control point #1 (because there are multiple courses) but only one will have the control code for your course. Use the pin-punch to punch your card, make sure to punch it in the right spot.

Your map shows a list of each control point and its corresponding unique number



When you get to a control point, check to make sure it has the unique number on it that you are looking for. If not….it's the wrong one, keep looking.



Your team's **punch card** will look like this. Make sure it has your team name, course, and competition class filled out. When you get to control #1, make sure it has the same code on it as control #1 on your clue sheet has, then punch your card with the pin-punch.



- **Finish**: When you arrive at the finish:
  - turn in your card to the finish table. Your card will be scanned in to record your time. Cards with missing or incorrect punches will be DQ (not eligible for awards).
  - If there are several teams finishing at once, the timers will record the time of each arrival. Stay in order of arrival until your punch card is taken so the timers know which timestamp is yours.
  - **EVERYONE needs to check in at the finish table (even if you did not finish the race) so we know that you made it back safely**. Please don't make us start a search-and-rescue.
  - Keep your map. If you are working Merit Badge requirement 7, you will need to review your route with your counselor. Otherwise keep the map for fun.

Zig-Zag compass Challenge

Free time activity. Go here when you have time between the main scheduled events.

This is a compass skills practice, it occurs in a small area where everyone is in view. Start at one of three starting markers and get a compass bearing. Spot the marker in view at that bearing, walk there, write down the code at that marker and repeat for the next bearing. Check your answers with the leader at the station.

Awards

While some people follow the course for ***fun (Recreational or Map Hikers)***, some will run the course for ***time***. Runners with the best times, go home with medals or ribbons. There are awards for the Point-to-Point event (and each course level).

Award Classes:
Ages, based on the day of the event.

Participants 10 years old and under must participate with an adult participant. This is the only age group that can participate with an adult and still be eligible for an award. Two scouts and adult(s) is ok too. **Max two medals per team**.

For any age bracket, participants eligible for awards must run in teams with max of two (2). Teams of 3 or more are recreational (non-competition).

Teams will be classified based on the oldest person on the team (e.g. it is ok for an 11 year old to be on a team with a 14 year old; for awards purposes, their team is classified as "13-14"; an 11yo with an adult compete in "18+"). Exception: 10-and-under with a registered adult compete in 10-and-under class for a medal.

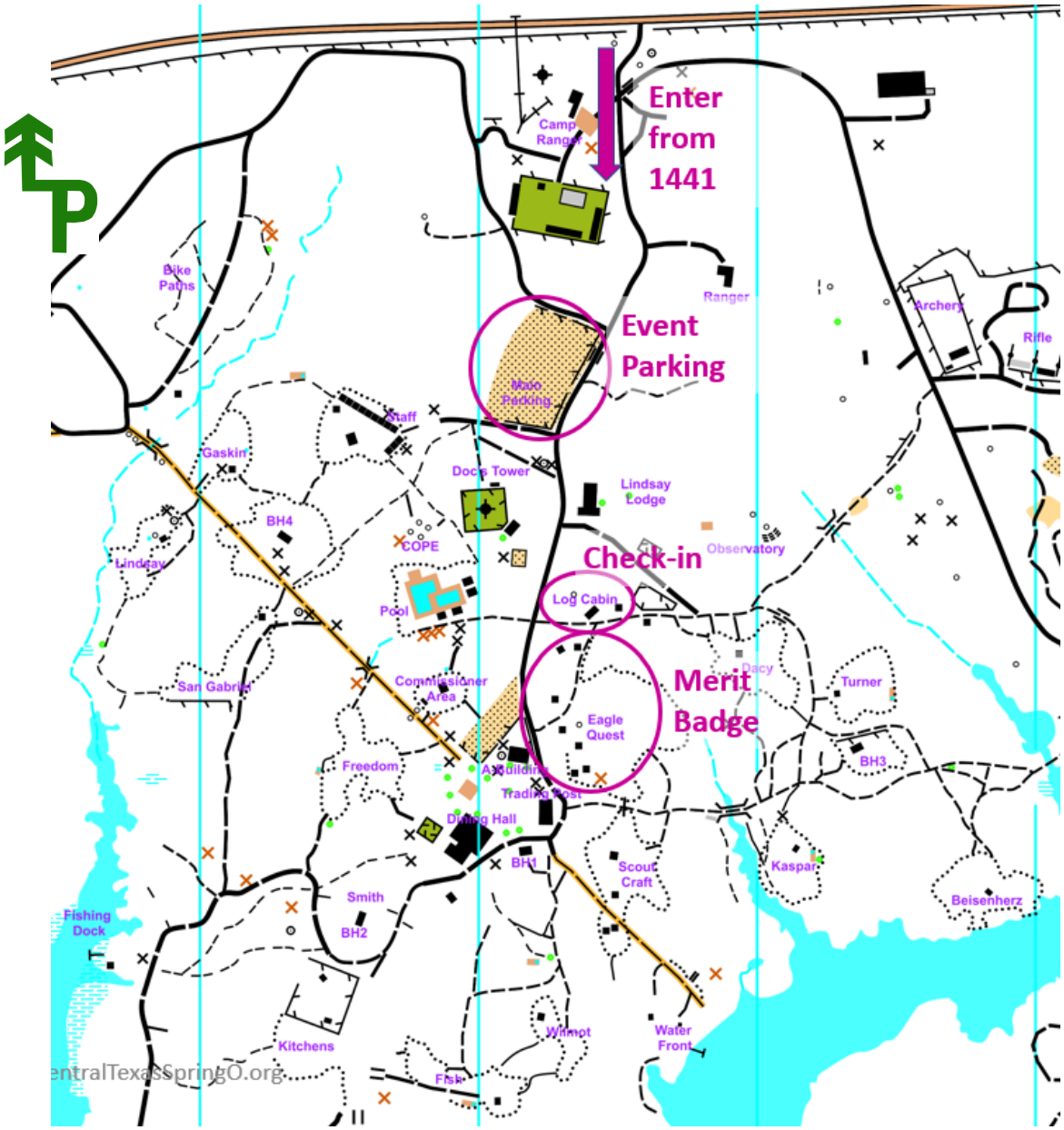
Adult participants are eligible for awards individually or teams no greater than 2 (Venture Scouts 18+ and all other adults compete here)

Awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each of the competition classes below for each Course level:

Competition class**	**White Course** (beginner)	**Yellow Course** (advanced beginner)	**Orange Course** (intermediate)	**Green Course** (advanced)	**Night-O**
10 and under w/adult	<=10	<=10	**n/a**	**n/a**	**<=10**
Age Group	11-12 13-14	11-12 13-14 15-17	13-14 15-17 18+	15-17 18+	11-12 13-14 15-17 18+

****The event organizers reserve the right to combine classes with 5 or less teams competing**

Lost Pines Scout Reservation



Orienteering Merit Badge Clinic (limited registrations)



This is a preliminary plan for the Merit Badge Clinic
Worksheet: http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/images/1/13/Orienteering.pdf
NO prerequisite is required, but this instruction is pretty handy, HERE and HERE

The Merit Badge Clinic is intended to cover the Orienteering specific requirements that scouts may not be able to cover in routine meeting settings (may reshuffle at discretion of MBC). Scouts will receive a card with their assigned group at check in.

Important note: This is a very popular event. We can only accommodate a limited number of Scouts in the Merit Badge Clinic. **We have a Merit Badge registration limit of 60 Scouts and then a waitlist (Scouts BSA only).** A beginners clinic is also available to help beginners that may not be working on the merit badge (no limit to beginner clinic).

AM Session (three rotations, 30 mins each)

- #1 First Aid, #2 Explain what Orienteering is
- #3 Compass and taking bearings
- #4 Orienteering Map

PM Session (three rotations, 30 mins each)

- #6 Orienteering Symbols and Techniques
- #7 Maze-Orienteering; #9 Officiate a course
    - this is 1 of 3 courses required to complete MB (Point-to-Point & Night-O are the others)

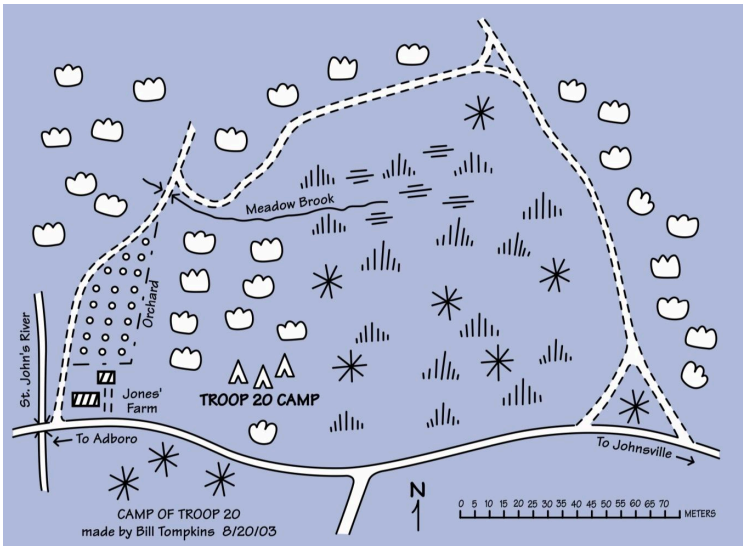
On your own

- #5 100-meter pace-count (on your own, offered before noon near check-in area, write your counts on your card for sign off)
- #8 Designing a Course
- #10 Teach orienteering techniques to your patrol/troop (on your own, see below)

Tips to complete the Merit Badge after the event:

#8 Setting your own course (if you didn't do it at the event)**:**

1. While you can work on this alone, for safety, you should have a buddy with you to set the course. We recommend 2-3 scouts work on this requirement together.
2. Look for a nearby property that is large enough, such as a local park. See our maps here.
3. Either hand draw a map of the property or print one from online (parent permission, observing internet safety). You do not need to make a CAD drawing or anything too sophisticated. The Orienteering MB book shows an example of a hand drawn map (below).



4. A Scoring event is recommended for this requirement (although you may also do point-to-point if you have enough space)
5. Mark 20 locations on the map that will be recognizable (you're NOT supposed to "hide" them). A Score-O does not typically have a clue sheet. You choose a point value for each point based difficulty level (recommend 1,2, or 3 points each). Write the points on the map next to the mark so the runners know which are more valuable.
6. Go to the property with your buddy (and parent permission) and place a marker at each point. Recommend hanging an index card with a string. The index card should have a code that your participants should write down to prove they found it.
7. Double check your map. Runners can be discouraged if they search for a point that was placed in the wrong spot.
8. You've completed requirement #8

#9 Act as an official and #10 teach techniques (if you didn't do it at the event)

1. One option is to contact a local Orienteering club (such as Austin Orienteering club) and ask them to allow you to volunteer. However, you just created your own course, so ask your Patrol or Troop or other group of friends to come run your course.
2. On the day of your race, get your group together and teach them some of the techniques that you learned (handrails, collecting, attack point, contouring, etc). You've completed requirement #10
3. Give them a copy of your map and a place to write down the codes they find. A score-o is a mass-start (everyone starts at the same time and it is a mad dash to find as many points as they can within a 30min time limit. As an official, you keep time and collect the code sheets as the runners finish. Record their finish time and deduct points for each minute late. The official checks the codes, calculates the points earned and determines the winners! You've completed requirement #9!

BSA Scout Rank Requirements

There is not an organized program for rank requirements, however if you take a look at the Navigation requirements, you will see you could do quite a bit while you are here.

Second Class: 3a (how a compass works, orient map, identify 5 symbols)
First Class: 4a (complete an Orienteering course, measure height of designated item)

Webelos Walkabout

There is not an organized program for Webelos Walkabout, however if you take a look at the requirements, you will see you could do quite a bit while you are here.
https://www.scouting.org/cub-scout-adventures/webelos-walkabout/

Venturing Ranger Award Land Navigation Req 5

There is not an organized program for Venturing, however by participating in the Merit Badge sessions and completing the point to point course, you can accomplish core requirements 5a,5b, and 5c. 5e can be completed if you are one of the volunteers helping to teach other scouts (contact us about volunteering).

The Central Texas Spring-O is a scouting event sponsored by Troop 8787 (Blackland Prairie District) of VFW Post 8787 in Austin, TX. www.troop8787.org

Contact orienteering@troop8787.org for more info or to volunteer at the event.

Girls Scouts

There is not an organized program for Girl Scouts, however with some planning you can complete the "**Finding your Way Badge**" (this has been discontinued by Girl Scouts)

Other GS activities: **Junior Camper Badge Activity and this Navigation Activity**

QR Codes

Leader board, p2p, maze, night,

Maze leader guide (sticker at table)

Zig zag leader guide (sticker at table)

Event leader guide, at check-in

Mbc link

Schedule + qr

Ranger bead instruction and video

Venmo