

Longhorn Council Orienteering

Score-O Participant Guide

Sid Richardson Scout Ranch

Score-O is a fast paced team orienteering competition. It has been held continuously at the Sid Richardson Scout Ranch every year since 1996. It is the Longhorn Council's largest Scout event and one of the largest orienteering events held in the United States. The event is open to Scouts, Venturers, Explorers, Webelos and adult Scouters.

Using a map and compass teams navigate to find marked controls and score points. The goal is to score as many points as possible within 3 ½ hours. Controls are assigned different values based on their difficulty and distance from 5 to 30 points.

This event provides a great opportunity for your unit to apply core scouting skills in small teams to solve problems in the field. Scouts build their confidence in the outdoors and improve their navigation skills and teamwork all while having a great time at Sid Richardson Scout Ranch.

This guide is intended to provide unit leaders with the necessary information for planning and preparation to attend Score-O. The registration form and other event details are available on the Longhorn Council Score-O registration page at <https://scoutingevent.com/662-ScoreO25>

The Longhorn Council Orienteering Committee welcomes your feedback.

New map

The council orienteering committee is very happy to announce that the Sid Richardson orienteering map was completely revised in 2025. Symbols and colors have been updated to reflect the latest international standards. Many features were added or corrected. It is our sincere hope this will make a great event even better.

Mass Start

In 2025 we will be returning to our original Score-O race format. All teams will start and finish at the same times.

Teams should gather on the parade ground in front of the dining hall by 12:30 pm. Maps will be handed out to all teams at 12:40 pm and competitors will have 20 minutes to plan their strategy. All teams will start together at 1:00 pm.

Check-In

When you arrive at Sid Richardson Scout Ranch please proceed all the way to the main camp area near the Dining Hall. Units arriving on Friday evening will be stopped at the crossroad by the Campmaster and directed to their assigned campsite. If your unit arrives on Saturday you will be directed to either your campsite or to a parking area.

Event check-in is at the Dining Hall. Units may check in Friday evening from 7 until 9:30 pm. Check-in opens Saturday morning at 8:30 am and ends at 11:00 am. No new entries will be accepted after that time. Saturday arrivals should send a unit representative to the Dining Hall as soon as possible to complete event check-in.

If your unit pre-registered you will need:

Any fees owed

Medical forms

Team info

You will get:

Campsite assignment

Event schedule

Event/meal wristbands

Team entry forms

Last minute info

Your unit will be given a colored wristband for each participant. Please ensure all unit members wear their wristbands during the event.

You will be given as many team entry forms as needed. Please be prepared to complete and return them immediately. See the Team Classification section for information on setting up your teams.

Vehicle Traffic in Camp

When you arrive in camp you will be directed to your campsite or a parking area. Please park your vehicles as instructed by the Campmaster. All facilities are within walking distance.

Please remind the drivers in your unit of the need for safety. DRIVE SLOWLY in camp at all times. Encourage your members to carpool when possible to help reduce traffic in camp.

Riding in the beds of pickups is strictly prohibited.

Camping

Units may camp Friday and/or Saturday night. If you are planning to camp you **MUST** pre-register. Webelos must camp with a Scout Troop. If your unit is planning to arrive on Saturday please allow plenty of time to get to your campsite and setup. Campsites are assigned by the camping registrar based on unit size. Once the Camp 9 area is full units will be assigned to campsites along the road north of the Climbing Tower.

The main camp will be full and smaller groups will be asked to share camping areas. All Camp 9 sites have roofed shelters and latrines. Tower campsites have no facilities. Porta-potties will be provided. Water is available at the COPE latrine nearby. Tower camps provide an excellent opportunity to emphasize and practice Leave No Trace camping skills. You may request a tower camp if you are a LNT Troop. **DO NOT BUILD NEW FIRE RINGS** in tower camps. Please comply with parking instructions. Do not drive off road. Leave No Trace.

Campsite assignments will be posted the day before the event on the Score-O page of the Council website at <http://www.longhorncouncil.org/event/score-o/> and a copy sent to the email contact for each unit. Campmasters will be on duty Friday evening to direct you. Campsite assignments are also available at the Dining Hall during check-in.

Please follow these guidelines in the main camp:

- Keep the footprint of your camping area **COMPACT** in one section of the campsite.
- If you arrive **FIRST**, *please* move to the back or side of the campsite so as not to block others who may arrive later.
- ALL units must share the campsite shelter for cooking areas.
- No camping in shelters.
- Please do not park in campsites. Unload your gear and move your vehicle to a parking area.
- Please do not park in someone else's campsite.

Water will be on at latrines in campsites. Water is always available at the all-weather faucet located at the rear of the Dining Hall. A water buffalo will be placed near the climbing tower. Provide your own containers.

The ranch is frequently included in county fire bans. Check the Council website for current status when planning your meals as cooking over an open fire may not be allowed. Please note the following rules regarding fires in camp:

- **NEVER** leave a fire or stove burning unattended.
- Stoves must be elevated and away from all brush and leaves.
- Do not build fires outside established fire rings.

- DO NOT BUILD NEW FIRE RINGS.
- Keep fires small.
- Use only charcoal or fallen wood for fuel. Do not cut green or standing trees.
- Extinguish all fires completely when leaving camp.

There are no dumpsters at camp. Be prepared and haul your own trash home for proper disposal.

Meals

Meals are not included in the event fee but are available for purchase separately. They must be reserved in advance along with your unit registration. If you choose to purchase meals your unit will be given colored wristbands and assigned a time to report to the dining hall. Please ensure all unit members wear their wristbands. Bring your own snacks.

Equipment and Clothing

Score-O is a rain or shine event. Participants should check the forecast and prepare for Fall weather. Hiking boots or good trail shoes are essential for navigating the steep, rocky terrain you will encounter. Briars and cactus make long pants or gaiters a wise choice.

A clear baseplate orienteering compass is the best choice. As time is a critical component of Score-O each team should have at least one watch.

Every participant should have a water bottle or canteen. Water will be available at several places around the camp which will be marked on the map. Cups are NOT provided.

THE USE OF GPS OR OTHER ELECTRONIC NAVIGATION AIDS IS NOT ALLOWED.

Training

Brief training sessions are offered every 30 minutes beginning at 9 a.m. at the Dining Hall. These sessions cover basic orienteering map reading and compass use along with a review of the rules for Score-O. Tips on strategy and time management are included as well. First time participants are strongly encouraged to attend one of these sessions so they may become familiar with the event and its rules.

The Scout Handbook and Fieldbook, and the BSA Orienteering Merit Badge pamphlet are all great sources of information on skills and techniques to help your group navigate the course successfully. To truly master the skills pick up a copy of Bjorn Kjellstrom's excellent book [Be Expert With Map and Compass](#) at one of our local Scout Shops. Practice before you come!

Tip: Focus on map reading; compass use is mainly to keep the map oriented.

This is also a great opportunity to review Leave No Trace principles as a unit. The Participant's Guide discusses ways to minimize impact while orienteering in the Leave No Trace Orienteering Section, and should be reviewed with your unit prior to the event.

Advancement

Scouts can take advantage of their participation in Score-O to meet both rank and merit badge requirements. Scouts and Scoutmasters will have to assess their own needs to best utilize the program. Event staff will not sign off on

requirements but will provide basic instruction. Advanced instruction, examination and record keeping are the responsibility of unit leaders. With a little effort Scouts should be able to meet the following:

1st Class requirement 4a to complete an orienteering course that covers at least one mile. Scouts will need to recreate their own route and make measurements on the map to be sure they have satisfied the minimum 1 mile (1.6 km) distance. Scoutmasters must add the measuring of the height and width of objects (flag pole, tree, creek, etc.). That instruction is not provided.

Running the course will satisfy Orienteering Merit Badge requirement 7a. The Scout will be best served if he will immediately complete 7b as well. The intermediate training clinics will provide instruction covering requirements 2-6 but no testing is done. It is the Scouts responsibility to complete these requirements with a merit badge counselor.

Team Classifications

Teams are divided into the following classes based on their Scouting role so they will be competing against others of the same age and skill level.

Scout: Scouts only from the rank of Scout to Eagle Scout. Adults may not accompany Scout teams.

Webelos/AOL: Made of Webelos & AOL. At least TWO registered adults must accompany each Webelos team

Crew: Members of Venturing, Explorer or Sea Scout units

Adult: Eighteen is the magic number for running with the old dogs. Let's see how good you really are!

Senior Patrol Leaders and Scoutmasters should give a little thought to team makeup. Patrols make natural teams and using the existing Troop structure has many advantages. Not only is this an excellent opportunity to emphasize leadership and teamwork but you can promote a little friendly competition within the unit. Bragging rights are valid for one year.

Sometimes it may make more sense to field teams based on experience level. This allows beginners, accompanied by an instructor, to learn, practice and build their orienteering skills. It also provides an opportunity for Scouts who are veteran orienteers to really shine and compare their abilities with others at the district and council levels.

Adults who accompany Webelos teams are encouraged to take advantage of this educational opportunity. Learning to read maps and use a compass are skills used throughout life. Encourage all of the youth to take turns navigating for the group and help each other when they have mastered a skill. Orienteering is a classic example of "fun with a purpose". Practice before the meet so you are prepared to answer all the questions that will arise.

Team Entry forms will be provided when you check-in. Completed Team Entry forms must be submitted on the day of the event before check-in closes. Hint: It will save time on event day if your unit has worked out team assignments and team names prior to arrival at camp.

The Maximum team size is 8. The Minimum team size is 3. Team sizes should range from 3-6. Teams that do not adhere to size limits will not be eligible for awards. Please adhere to the 8 person maximum team size limit. Smaller teams move faster and have less impact on the land.

What you need to know for each Team:

Unit number

Unit type (Troop, Pack, etc)

District name or number

Team Type (pick one)

Scout

Webelos

Crew

Adult

Names of all team members

Team Name (max 32 chars)

Competition

The Event Schedule has the detailed schedule for the weekend. It is available on the website and you will receive a copy in your registration packet at check-in.

Teams should assemble in front of the Dining Hall 30 minutes prior to the Start Time. One member of each team should line up by unit number. Map handout will commence precisely 20 minutes prior to the Start Time. Once each team receives their maps they will have 20 minutes to strategize and plan their course. Teams must remain in the Start Area during this time. No early starts are permitted.

Score-O is a mass start event. At the Start Time a horn will sound and all teams will head off for an afternoon of orienteering. The Participants Guide contains the rules and other essential information. Please review it with your unit prior to attending the event.

There is a significant penalty for being late to Finish. Emphasize the importance of finishing on time with all members of the group.

Unit Leaders: If one of your teams is late enough that their continued presence on the course is delaying road opening you will be asked to meet them in the field with your vehicle and transport them back to the dining hall for check-in. Your cooperation with camp staff on this issue is appreciated.

First Timer? Here's how it works on race day:

1. Check in at the Dining Hall
2. Fill out and turn in Team Forms at the Dining Hall
3. Get some training. Important: Map reading, time management
4. Eat lunch; hydrate; get ready to run
5. All teams gather in front of Dining Hall by 12:30 pm
6. Get maps for everyone on team; make a plan to find as many controls as possible
7. Run, find control, punch correct box, repeat often
8. Return to Finish no later than 4:30pm
9. Pick up patches at Dining hall; visit Trading Post; relax and cook supper

Leave No Trace

As Scouts we have all been introduced to the principles of Leave No Trace. As you participate in Score-O be a good steward of our natural resources by being respectful of nature and wildlife. Practice these key Leave No Trace principles:

Travel on Durable Surfaces – Use trails and hard surfaces when possible. Have your group spread out when off trail to avoid creating new trails. Walk softly and avoid damage to plant life. Be sure to stay on the trail if it is muddy or wet. If you walk around the muddy section, it widens the trail and causes further erosion.

Pack-it-in, Pack-it-out – Carry out all of your trash. Don't leave snack wrappers, water bottles, etc. Be careful not to drop "micro-trash" along the way. Micro-trash is small pieces of trash such as bottle caps or strips of wrapper torn off when opening a snack. Pick up any trash that you find.

Leave What You Find – Don't take souvenirs ... Except for trash – pack it out.

Respect Wildlife – Don't disturb wildlife or livestock, observe from a distance. Never feed wildlife.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors – Let faster teams pass. Keep the noise level down – so that everyone can enjoy the surroundings.

START TOGETHER --STAY TOGETHER--FINISH TOGETHER--BE ON TIME

Read more about these, and other, principles of Leave No Trace in your Scout Handbook.

After the competition

After the race is over and your team has checked in you will have time to relax and rest...you've earned it! You can head back to camp and start supper or visit the Trading Post for a cold soft drink.

The roads will remain closed until all teams are accounted for. Shuttles stop about 20 minutes before the End Time as teams converge on the Finish. This usually takes at least 30 minutes after the end of the race. Please advise your drivers accordingly.

If any teams or individuals remain unaccounted for the Camp Ranger will initiate a search. The roads will remain closed and nobody will be allowed to leave camp until the missing parties are located. The safety of our participants is our primary concern. Please emphasize the importance of checking in at the Finish Line to all the members of your unit and help us prevent extended road closures.

Patches and souvenir maps will be available at the registration area as soon as the race ends. Please send only one representative from each unit to pick up the patches and maps. Tee-shirts will be at the Trading Post.

Awards

Awards will be presented to the top three teams with the highest net scores in each category and to the units with the highest average scores (average of all youth team scores in a unit). In case of a tie the earliest finish time wins. All teams receive a participation ribbon.

Scoring will be finished Saturday night and preliminary scores will be posted at the Dining Hall. Preliminary scores will also be posted on the Longhorn Council website. Protests are allowed for ten days before scores are declared final.

Teams that do not adhere to team size rules will not be eligible for awards.

Competition maps will be returned after Score-O at your District Roundtable.

Trading Post

The Trading Post is located just east of the Dining Hall off the parade ground and will be open before and after the race. Drinks, snacks, tee shirts and supplies will be available. Cash, check and MC/Visa are accepted.

If your unit pre-orders tee-shirts they will be available at the Trading Post when it opens on Saturday.

The Trading Post is closed on Sunday.

Volunteers

If you have extra adults coming to Score-O who would like to help out with finish line/team check-in, map scoring or event photography, please sign up at registration. For those who would like a little extra orienteering practice come and join us Sunday morning to pick up the control markers.

Score-O Rules (Abridged)

1. This is a team event. All team members must register.
2. The Maximum team size is 8. The Minimum team size is 3. Team sizes should range from 3-6. Teams that do not adhere to size limits will not be eligible for awards.
3. All team members must be present at the Start line. No early starts. All teams must START together, STAY together, and FINISH together. **Teams that do not report to Finish will be disqualified.**
4. Each Webelos team must have a minimum of TWO registered adults.
5. This is a mass start event; all teams start at the same time.
6. Teams have 3 1/2 hours to score as many points as possible.
7. Controls can be visited in any order.
8. Control point values vary as specified on the score sheet. Points are scored by locating the control and punching the score sheet with the punch attached to the control. Punches must be contained within the numbered square that matches the number on the control or no points will be awarded.
9. All team members must be present at the Finish line. Finishing time is recorded after ALL team members have crossed the finish line (including adult Webelos Leaders accompanying a Webelos team).
10. Crossing the finish line after the specified time limit will result in points being deducted for each minute past the time limit. The penalty is -5 points per minute or fraction thereof.
11. All teams must report to the Finish Line even if finishing very early or very late. Do not return to your campsite or leave the property without checking in.
12. There is an automatic 30-minute penalty for maps with no finish time.
13. Do not enter out of bounds areas marked on the map.
14. Follow all safety and event instructions provided in registration packets and in the event training sessions prior to the event start.
15. Tampering with the course, control markers, interfering with other teams, disrespect for camp or personal property, disrespect for wildlife, or unsportsmanlike conduct will result in disqualification.
16. Teams may not collaborate or share information with other teams except for safety or medical emergencies. Teams are expected to help others in emergency situations. Adult Webelos Leaders accompanying a Webelos team should focus on ensuring the safety of their group.
17. The use of GPS, smartphones, pedometers, altimeters or any other electronic device as a navigational aid is not allowed. Phones may be carried in case of emergency.
18. Awards will be presented to the teams with the highest net scores in each category both overall and in each district. In case of a point tie the earliest finish time wins.