

# THE COMPASS

A compass is an instrument used for navigation & orientation that shows direction relative to the geographic cardinal directions (or points). Usually, a diagram called a compass rose shows the directions north, south, east, & west on the compass face as abbreviated initials. When the compass is used, the rose can be aligned with the corresponding geographic directions; for example, the "N" mark on the rose points northward. Compasses often display markings for angles in degrees in addition to (or sometimes instead of) the rose. North corresponds to 0°, and the angles increase clockwise, so east is 90° degrees, south is 180°, and west is 270°. These numbers allow the compass to show magnetic North or bearings, which are commonly stated as Direction of Travel. Compasses come in all shapes & sizes, even the most basic does the job (look after it properly). As long as it has a needle pointing north and it has the ability to take a bearing measured in direction / degrees it will work. Pay a bit more to get one that the needle settles quicker, has roamers & magnifiers.

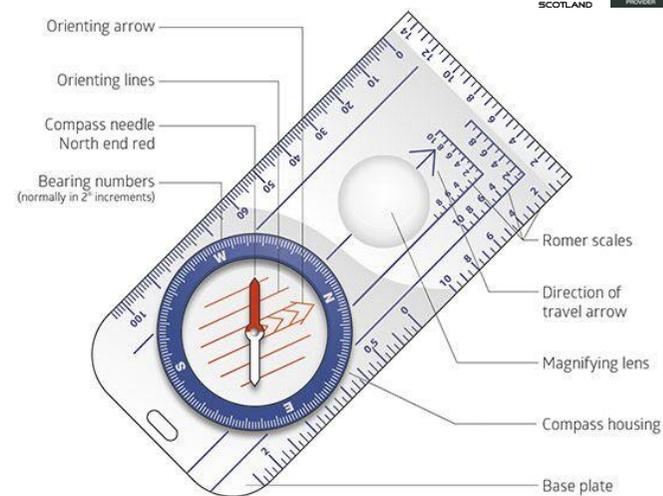


Illustration from 'Hillwalking' © MTUK/VG 2015

## How to take a BEARING from the map.

This will show you which Direction to head to in order to get to your next Destination.

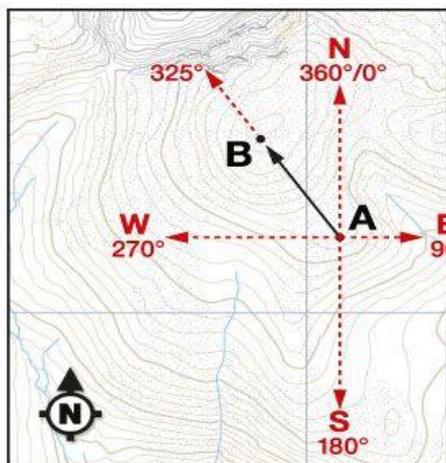
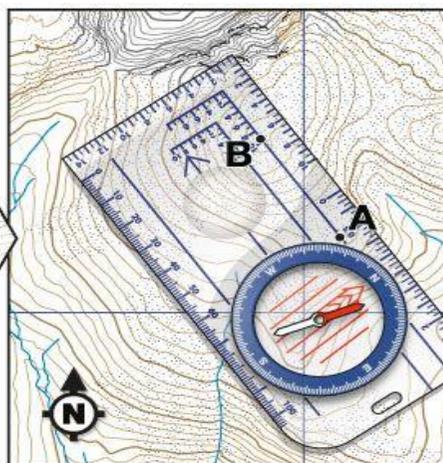
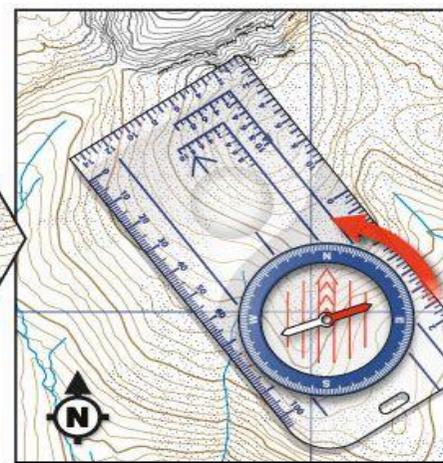


Illustration from 'Navigation in the Mountains' © MTUK/VG 2012

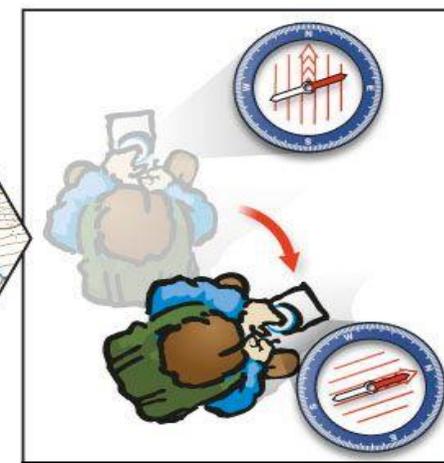
\*Make a quick estimate of what general direction (NW etc) or Bearing (325 Degrees etc) you think it might be.



**1.** First, align the edge or one of the directional lines on the compass along the direction you are going to walk on the leg A→B on the map. It's important that the direction of travel arrow on the compass base plate is pointing the way you want to go.



**2.** Keeping the base still, rotate the bezel housing (that's the twisty round bit that surrounds the needle) until the lines on the base of the needle (the northing lines) match the grid lines running north to south on the map (conveniently also called northing lines). It's worth checking that the base plate hasn't slipped at this point to keep accurate. \*(Add Magnetic variation if applicable)



**3.** Now, take the compass off the map and hold it level in front of you with the directional arrow on the base plate of the compass pointing away from you. Turn your body slowly until the red needle lines up with the red northing arrow in the bezel. An easy way to remember this is to 'put the Red into the Shed', the red arrow looks like a shed. The arrow on the base plate now shows the direction of travel.