



# **INDOOR EXERCISES**

reproduced with the kind permission of  
Gareth Bryan Jones

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following exercises are designed to train specifically one or more skills useful in orienteering, such as map reading, route selection, feature memory, special awareness, identification of significant features on a route. They generally combine these with physical activity, typically running from one side of the hall to the other.

These exercises have been used during sessions held in a Sports Hall but could be adapted for use outdoors.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 1 Exercises should be fun and sometimes competitive.
- 2 The exercises should be suitable for a range of abilities both physically and technically.
- 3 The techniques being taught or practised should be identified and explained.
- 4 Someone should be available to help people who are finding the exercises difficult rather than leaving them to struggle.
- 5 All equipment (e.g. maps, paper, pens and pencils) should be prepared in advance - and kept for future use when suitable.
- 6 If a series of sessions is planned then the exercises can be progressive, using harder ones later in the programme.

## **TWELVE EXAMPLE EXERCISES**

These are divided in to three groups - easy, medium difficulty and hard exercises. However the difficulty can be varied and several levels of difficulty can be used in an exercise on the same occasion.

For each exercise the following information is given:

- Purpose - techniques trained
- Description of the exercise
- How to cater for varying abilities
- Equipment needed
- Possible variations on the exercises

## **TECHNICALLY EASY EXERCISES**

### **1 EASY MAP JIGSAWS**

Purpose - techniques trained -Mainly fun plus recognition of shapes and matching large areas of maps. Familiarity with maps.

#### Description of the Exercise

A number of copies of a map are cut up into pieces. These are placed in heaps at one side of the hall. Each heap has enough cut up maps for about 10 people. Participants then have to assemble complete maps at the other side of the hall. They are only allowed to carry one piece of map across the hall at a time.

#### How to cater for varying abilities

At the easiest level large pieces of a map are used. Progressively harder as smaller pieces or more detailed maps are used. Extra difficulty introduced if maps are cut in random patterns or if mixtures of maps are used. The normal is to set out an easy jigsaw and a very hard one and let people take their choice which they do.

Equipment needed: Cut up maps - keep and use again.

### **2 MASTER MAPS**

Purpose - techniques trained - The ability to recognise features on the map from their position on the map and the uniqueness of the surrounding features. Map memory with physical activity.

#### Description of the Exercise

At one side of the hall are a number of master maps, with an orienteering course drawn on each one. Participants each have a blank version of the same map and a pen. They leave the blank map at the opposite side of the hall from the master maps and then have to transfer the course from the master maps to the blank maps by map memory.

#### How to cater for varying abilities

The standard of the course or the detail of the map (e.g. contour only) can be used to set the difficulty of the exercise. Again grades of difficulty can be run in parallel.

#### Equipment needed

Master maps, blank maps (or maps with a different course) and pens. A good use of old overprinted maps.

#### Possible variations on the exercise

Can be easily adapted as a relay or a detour added to punch a card to distract the mind.

### **3 DESCRIPTION RELAY**

Purpose - techniques trained -Learn pictorial descriptions.

#### Description of the exercise

Best run as a relay, there is a set of cards for each team. On one side of the card is a verbal description and on the other a pictorial description. The cards are designed so that the pictorial description card which matches the first verbal description has on the reverse the word for the second pictorial description and so on.

Each team (of 2, 3 or 4) starts with the card with the first verbal description. The first team member runs across the hall to where the other cards are laid out and finds the card with the pictorial description to match the verbal description. They then run back and hand that card to the second team member who runs across the hall and tries to find the card with the pictorial description to match the verbal description on the card they were handed by the first team member. This continues (for about 20 control descriptions) until the team gets back to the first card. This is much simpler in practice than it appears from this account.

#### How to cater for varying abilities

Can have versions with simple descriptions and other versions introducing for of, side of, middle etc.

#### Equipment needed

Set of cards as described above. One set per team. Possible variations on the exercise  
The verbal descriptions can be replaced with pieces of map with a control drawn on them. The 'game' can then start from the control and try to find the description to match or start with the pictorial description and try and find the control to match.

### **4 DESCRIPTION/MASTER MAP RELAY**

Purpose - techniques trained - Learning pictorial descriptions. Recognition of features on a map. Memorising features on a map and memorising descriptions

#### Description of the exercise

Again run a relay, but could be run individually. Each team has a description list and an otherwise blank map with a start marked. At the other end of the hall is a map with a number of controls drawn on it, but not joined up. These controls match the descriptions on the description list (extra controls can be drawn on this map if desired). Each team member, in turn, memorises the next description on the list, runs to the map at the other end of the hall, identifies the matching control and runs back to the blank map and draws on the control, joining it **tip** to the start or previous control. The winning team is the first to have a map with the course correctly drawn.

#### How to cater for varying abilities

As with orienteering courses vary the map detail, control sites and the number of controls on the course.

#### Equipment needed

Description sheets and maps, either blank or with suitable control sites marked. Each control description should be different, although in a harder version similar features could be used in widely separated parts of the map, the onus being to choose the most likely control taking note of the previous control position.

#### Possible variations on the exercise

Varying the difficulty above. Making it a score course rather than a cross country course.

## **5 SCORE EVENT MASTER AND BLANK MAPS**

Purpose - techniques trained - Recognition of features and their identification on a map. Map memory with physical activity.

### Description of the exercise

At one end of the hall is the master map for a score event, with control circles and a score besides each circle. At the other end of the hall each competitor has a blank map, the object is to draw as many of the score controls on the blank maps as possible - by running from one map to the other and memorising control sites. Done against a time limit and the highest score wins.

### How to cater for varying abilities

Vary the detail of the map, the difficulty of control sites and the number of control sites.

### Equipment needed

Master maps, blank maps and pens.

### Possible variations on the exercise

Can be a team exercise. Do in pairs - one looks at the master and has to describe the control site to the second member of the team who draws it on the blank map. Use of contour only map.

## **EXERCISES OF VARIABLE TO MEDIUM DIFFICULTY**

### **6 SCORE EVENT - CONTROL SITES ONLY**

Purpose - techniques trained - Recognition of features on a map. identification of the uniqueness of particular features. Map memory.

### Description of the exercise

Similar to the score event with the master maps described above but instead of a master map small cut pieces of map showing the control site and a little of the surrounding map are used.

### How to cater for varying abilities

The size of the cut pieces and the choice of features shown, easy if pieces displayed roughly in positions as on the map and correctly orientated. Much harder if positions and orientation randomised.

### Equipment needed

Blank maps and displays on control sites on cut pieces of map.

## **7 FOLLOWING VERBAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION ON BLANK MAP**

Purpose - techniques trained - Map reading. Recognition of features on the map from a verbal description of their orientation, special arrangements and appearance.

### Description of the exercise

The leader has a map with a course (optionally and a route). The leader describes the route in terms of the features, orientation, distance etc., as would be used to navigate around the course - what the orienteer sees and does. The rest of the group have to follow the route and draw it on the map.

### How to cater for varying abilities

The detail of the map and the technical difficulty of the course can be infinitely varied - from simple park land to deepest Scandinavia. This can be made much easier if everyone has the course drawn on their map and they only have to follow the route.

### Equipment needed

Maps with courses and blank maps.

### Possible variations on the exercise

Use contour only maps.

## **8 FILLING IN FEATURES IN BLANKED OUT AREAS OF MAP**

Purpose – techniques trained - Map memory. Recognition of features. Identifying the significance of the features. Spatial awareness

### Description of the exercise

Each participant has a map with areas blanked out – white paper stuck on with “pritstik”  
At the other side of the hall are complete maps. Leaving the blanked map at the starting point the orienteers run across the hall, identify and memorise the features in a blanked area and then run across the hall until the blank map is complete.

### How to cater for varying abilities

Vary the detail, size and position of the blanked out areas.

### Equipment needed

Blanked out maps, complete maps and pens

### Possible variations on the exercise

Use contour only maps.

## **EXERCISE MAINLY SUITABLE FOR EXPERIENCED ORIENTEERS**

### **9 MAP-BLANK MAP SHUTTLE RELAY**

Purpose - techniques trained - Route selection. identification of significant features. Map memory. Spatial awareness. Assessment of scale and direction.

#### Description of exercise

Teams of two. Each team has a blank piece of paper in the middle of the hall. On one side of the hall is a blank map and on the other side a map with a course on it. One team member has the blank map and the other the course - but they must leave these maps at the side of the hall. The object is to transfer the course to the blank map and the only communication allowed is what can be drawn (no written words) on the piece of paper.

#### How to cater for varying abilities

Vary the technical detail of the map chosen the length and difficulty of the course. Contour only is especially good.

#### Equipment needed

Maps - with and without courses, pens and pieces of paper.

#### Possible variations on the exercise

This can be adapted into a relay race. Pairs can swap over or repeat with a second course and swap roles.

### **10 MAP HALL AND PLAN RUN RELAY**

Purpose - techniques trained - Spatial awareness. Relating features to a map. Fine navigation.

#### Description of the exercise

Spread as many objects (coats, bags, benches, cones, etc.) around the hall as available (15-25 is ideal). Each person then makes a map (pencil on A4 paper) of the hall.

Then each person plans a line event on their map - marks it on in pen. Now divide into teams of 4 or 5 people. Each member of the team changes their map with someone else. The relay starts at the shout of "GO" and each team member in turn runs the course on the map in their hand. When they have all finished two adjacent teams exchange maps and everyone runs a second course. The first team to finish wins.

#### How to cater for varying abilities

Balance the teams by mixing experienced and inexperienced orienteers.

#### Equipment needed

Pencils, pens and pieces of paper.

#### Possible variations on the exercise

This can be done outside in a wooded area - map the individual trees, etc. Use an area about 40m x 40m.

## **11 DRAWING ROUTES - FROM PARTNERS DESCRIPTIONS**

Purpose - techniques trained - Route selection. Identification of significant features. Map memory. Spatial awareness. Assessment of scale and direction.

### Description of the exercise

This is like exercise 9 except information is transferred by verbal communication.

### How to cater for varying abilities

As exercise 9.

### Equipment needed

Maps - blank and with a course pens.

### Possible variations of the exercise

As exercise 9.

## **12 DESCRIPTION ROUTES AND FOLLOWING ROUTES ON THE RUN**

Purpose - techniques trained - Map reading on the run. Route selection. Identification of significant features. map memory. Spatial awareness. Assessment of scale and direction.

### Description of the exercise

Similar to exercise 11 but each member of the pair carries their map in their hand and they run around the periphery of the hall. One describes their route whilst the second tries to follow it on the blank map. One can change roles and use different pairs of maps.

### How to cater for varying abilities

Vary the difficulty of the maps and courses.

### Equipment needed

Pairs of maps, one blank and the other with a course.

### Possible variations on the exercise

Use contour only maps. Only allow a look at the map once on each side of the hall.