

BEYOND THE BASICS: SIMPLIFICATION

Simplification can be applied to map reading, the terrain and the compass.

Map simplification:

1. Beginners: read only the large features:
 - a) handrails (e.g. major trails, streams, fences, fields).
 - b) catching features (buildings, trail junctions, large hills & depressions).
 - c) simplification is easier on larger scale maps.
2. Intermediate: read large features (as above, plus large contour features).
3. Advanced: look for the most significant, distinct, unique, relevant features (these features could be smaller than those used by intermediate orienteers).
4. Intermediate & Advanced:
 - a) Use map simplification in both rough & precision map reading.
 - b) Use simplification to highlight features hidden by other similar details.
 - c) Use simplification to identify features disguised by thick vegetation, or by dark colours on the maps (green or yellow).
 - d) Be aware of index contours.
 - e) Distance estimation can sometimes replace pace counting.

Terrain simplification:

1. Eliminate/ignore all but the most significant features in the terrain.
2. Look in the terrain for distinct large features.
3. Minimise the detail surrounding the distinct large features.

Compass simplification:

1. Thumb compass is simpler than baseplate (protractor) compass; some steps are automatically eliminated.
2. "Running on the needle" (for advanced only).

Simplification WHILE MOVING:

1. Progress from standing -> walking -> jogging -> running
2. To simplify successfully, you must first be competent at the skill to be simplified.
3. Holding the map correctly aids simplification skills.

What to practice today:

1. Hold the map & compass correctly all the time.
2. Beginners: Look for distinct handrails & catching features on the map & in the terrain.
3. Intermediate & Advanced: Study a leg, then sketch (or imagine) a simplified version, then orienteer using your simplified version.

