

Try Orienteering!

A Newcomer's Guide to the Icenian Weekend

This is a fairly in-depth guide that hopefully answers any questions about orienteering you might have. There's no need to read it fully and our volunteers will be more than happy to help you on the day!

What is Orienteering?

Orienteering is an exciting outdoor adventure sport that challenges both the body and mind. Participants navigate, using an orienteering map and, optionally, a compass, to find a series of checkpoints (known as "controls") in the fastest time possible. Unlike a normal running race, orienteering requires more strategic thinking and quick decision-making. Cambridge University Orienteering Club (CUOC) is hosting the Icenian Sprint Weekend 2025, offering an excellent opportunity for newcomers to experience this unique sport in a fun and supportive environment!

These events are *Sprint* Orienteering events, which take place in urban areas and are more approachable for those without navigation experience. The speed and complexity of urban areas still makes it a good challenge!



An orienteer approaching a control



Extract from an orienteering map/course

How an orienteering race works

What to Bring

- **Clothing:** Comfortable running clothing. The courses are mainly on paved surfaces, and grass. Road running shoes will be fine, although trail shoes may help if it's wet.
- **Equipment:** You will be provided with anything else you need. This includes an electronic timing chip (see below) and a map.

Dibber/SI Timing System

- Our Orienteering events use a **Sportident (SI) electronic timing system**.
- Each competitor carries a SI card (**dibber**), a small electronic device that records times at each control.
- At the start, each control, and the finish, you must insert or tap (**Punch**) your dibber into the electronic unit to register your visit.
- Many orienteers have their own dibbers, but we have plenty available for hire too (1£). If you are hiring a dibber, collect it from the event centre before your race.



Start

- Follow the marked route to the **start area**, located ~500m from the event centre.
- One person per course starts each minute, rather than all at once like in a road race
- For newcomers there is flexibility in when you can start, just show up and we'll slot you in.
- Usually you'd receive a map after you start, but if you're new and want to look beforehand that's ok!
- Make sure to punch the **start control** before moving onto your first control.

On the Course

- Using your map, navigate to each **control point**, marked with an orange-and-white flag.
- Controls must be punched **in the correct order** using your dibber.
- Check the number on the control to make sure you're at the right control!
- Plan your route carefully—**shortest isn't always fastest!**



Finish

- Once you reach the finish, punch the **finish control**.
- Congratulations!

Download

- After finishing, **go straight to the download station** at the event centre.
- This is a vital **safety check** to ensure all competitors have returned safely.
- You're welcome to return to the finish afterwards to cheer on other competitors!
- Your results will be available online shortly after downloading.

The Icenian Sprint Weekend 2025

CUOC's Icenian Sprint Weekend (March 22-23, 2025) is a two-day orienteering event, with races in Trumpington, Cambridge (Saturday) and Huntingdon (Sunday). You can take part in one or both days as you wish and results for the two days are separate.

Day 1 (March 22) – Trumpington

- Two-part sprint race in different parts of Trumpington, a prologue race in the west of the area, followed by the final in the east section
- Morning and afternoon races are 2-4 km each.
- Results based on the sum of morning and afternoon times.

Day 2 (March 23) – Huntingdon

- Single race event, with the option to run either a Sprint course (~4km) or a longer course (2-11km)

Entering the event

Please enter in advance via [SiEntries](#). Entries close **Sunday, March 16, 2025**. Most orienteers will run individually, but you are welcome to run as a small group too.

Choosing a course

Both days have a wide range of courses available. Whilst age classes have been assigned to each course, you can enter whichever you want. See our recommendations below for each day on which course may be most appropriate, you can also contact us for more advice. Note that the distances listed are for the optimum route, you may well run further than this, and the map reading is likely to slow you down compared to a conventional road race! As such you may wish to choose a shorter course. NB you must return by 1400.

To enter your age class simply select it on SiEntries. To run a different course choose the "Course x" option

Day 1 (March 22) – Trumpington

- 2 part race. You run a short course in the morning, and a second one ~2.5hrs later
- Course 5 would be a good choice for beginners. If you're feeling confident you're more than welcome to enter your age class recommended course! Courses 6 and 7 are designed for younger competitors and do not cross roads, they are however interesting.
- **Under 16s can only enter course 6 or 7, and under 12s course 7 only**

Course	Class	Morning Course Length (km)	Afternoon Course Length (km)	Notes
1	MO	4.0	4.1	Suitable for over 16s.
2	MV (M40+), WO	3.6	3.1	All the same technical difficulty
3	MSV (M55+), WV (W40+)	3.2	2.9	
4	MUV (M65+), WSV (W55+)	2.8	2.8	
5	MHV (M75+), WUV (W65+), WHV (W75+)	2.3	2.1	
6	MJ (M16-), WJ (W16-)	3.0	2.7	Suitable for over 12s
7	YJM (M12-), YJW (W12-)	2.0	1.6	Suitable for under 12s

Day 2 (March 23) – Huntingdon

- Single race event, with the option to run either a Sprint course (~4km) or a longer course (4-11km)
- Course 5 would be a good choice for beginners. If you're feeling confident you're more than welcome to enter the sprint course or your age class recommended course! For those unsure of their navigation, you could try course 7 which is navigationally easier. If you finish your chosen course quickly and want to do more, you may be able to go out again on a different one.
- **Under 16s can only enter course 6 or 7, and under 12s course 7 only**

Course	Class	Optimal Length (km)	Notes
Men's Sprint, E1	MSprint	4.0	Men's and Women's Sprint courses, These are open to everyone (16 or older) and are shorter courses with more a focus on fast navigation and decision making
Women's Sprint, E2	WSprint	3.6	
1	MO	10.8	Adult (16 or older) urban courses. All the same navigational difficulty, and are longer and less technical than the sprint courses.
2	MV (M40+), WO	9.3	
3	MSV (M55+), WV (W40+)	7.9	
4	MUV (M65+), WSV (W55+)	5.9	The age class offers a guide of which one to enter to be competitive, but you're welcome to enter whichever you prefer.
5	MHV (M75+), WUV (W65+), WHV (W75+)	4.2	
6	MJ (M16-), WJ (W16-)	4.3	Suitable for those over the age of 12
7	YJM (M12-), YJW (W12-)	2.0	Easy, short course, suitable for under 12s

We hope to see you soon! If you have any questions feel free to email us.

- **Event Website:** [Icenian 2025](#)
- **Entries:** [SiEntries](#)
- **Contact us:** captain@cuoc.org.uk