ORIENTEERING STUDY GUIDE

I. WHAT IS ORIENTEERING?
Orienteering is the ability to find your way (navigate) using a compass and map. Competitive Orienteering is a cross-country running sport, demanding physical and mental fitness. The sport emphasizes map reading and the ability to make quick decisions under physically challenging conditions.

II. THE COMPASS
The compass is used to take a bearing, give direction, measure distance and transfer direction from a map to the ground.
A. Important facts about the compass:
   1. The protractor compass is the most familiar and used by hikers.
   2. Never drop or shake (spin) your compass.
   3. Each mark on the dial is 2 or 5 degrees.
B. Important parts of the compass:
   1. base plate
   2. bearing ring (360 degrees)
   3. direction of travel arrow (blue)
   4. orienting arrow (red)
   5. orienting lines (red and black)
   6. magnetic north needle (red/white)
   7. distance measuring scale (inch/metric)

III. DIRECTIONS/DEGREES
A. The Cardinal points of directions and degrees
   1. north = 0 or 360
   2. south = 180
   3. east = 90
   4. west = 270
B. The Intercardinal points of directions and degrees
   1. northeast = 45
   2. southeast = 135
   3. southwest = 225
   4. northwest = 315
C. The sixteen most commonly used compass directions:
IV. FINDING YOUR BEARINGS

A. Definition: A bearing is a direction or angle of travel with respect to north.

There are two ways to find a bearing: by degrees or by landmark.

B. Steps to finding a bearing by landmark:

1. hold the compass waist high so that the direction of travel arrow is pointing toward
   the object you want to find the bearing of.
2. rotate the bearing ring until the red ½ of the magnetic needle and the orienting
   arrow are lined up with each other (red on red).
3. look down at the direction of travel arrow. The bearing lined up with the
   direction of travel arrow is the bearing of the object you are pointing at (hint:
   rotate your body and the compass as one, do not turn the compass.)
4. now you have the bearing (degree) and you know the direction of an object off in
   the distance.

C. Steps to finding a bearing by degree:

1. hold the compass parallel to the ground waist high, keeping the direction of
   travel arrow pointed away from you.
2. rotate the bearing ring, until you line up the bearing you want with the direction
   of travel arrow on the compass.
3. rotate your body and the compass as one, until the red ½ of the magnetic needle
   lines up with the red orienting arrow (hint: line up the red arrows).
4. follow the direction of travel arrow keeping the red arrows lined up as you take a
   walk following this bearing (hint: find a landmark to look at, it will help keep you
   on a straight line).