



COMPETITORS RULES – FOOT ORIENTEERING ONSW Manual 4.1

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These Rules apply at any foot orienteering event conducted under the auspices of Orienteering NSW (ONSW).

A. GENERAL CONDUCT

1. You Must Return to the Finish

You must report to the finish following completion or abandonment of your course. If you do not report to the finish the organisers will come looking for you!

2. Assisting Injured or Lost Competitors

Injured competitors who need assistance should, if possible, blow a whistle or 'cooee' three times periodically.

Competitors who are seriously lost (ie they do not know how to find the finish) can ask for assistance from another competitor or follow the safety bearing information on the map. Waiting at a control, especially if it is on your course, or staying on a drivable track or roads are sensible options. Orienteers' preliminary searches, after course closure, will concentrate on these. An orienteer lost overnight should stay in one place – police searches are designed to find people who are not moving.

Orienteering Australia Rule 26.2 (below) says: "It is the duty of all competitors to help injured runners." If you hear three whistle blasts or 'cooees' you should investigate, if safe to do so, and report it to the event organiser.

3. Competitors must Obey NSW Road Rules

The following points give the essence of the Road Rules that are particularly relevant to foot orienteering. A pedestrian:

- crossing a road or bicycle path must cross by the shortest safe route and must not stay on the road longer than necessary to cross the road safely. [230 and 239]
- must obey pedestrian, traffic and level crossing lights [231, 232, 235, 235A]
- must not cross a road within 20 metres of a crossing for pedestrians. [234]
- must not cause a traffic hazard by moving into the path of a driver [236(1)]
- must not unreasonably obstruct the path of any driver or another pedestrian [236(2)]
- must not travel along a road if there is a footpath or nature strip adjacent to the road, unless it is impracticable to travel on the footpath or nature strip [238(1)]
- when travelling along a road should keep to side of the road, should face approaching traffic and should not be more than 2 abreast [238(2)].

Breaching these Rules can be dangerous and/or endanger the future of urban orienteering. See Orienteering Australia Rules 26.10 and 27.1 below.

The full NSW Road Rules are available on the Internet. The [numbers] indicate the relevant Road Rule.

4. Dangers in the Competition Area

Competitors who come across an obvious general danger (eg flooded creek, bushfire, person behaving suspiciously) should:

- cease orienteering, return to the finish and inform the organisers; and/or
- if appropriate, warn other competitors of the danger.

5. What to do if Challenged

Competitors whose right to be in an area is challenged by a person must stop, explain their presence, comply with any reasonable request in respect of the area (eg leaving the area) and inform the person making the challenge of the location of the event organiser.

Competitors must give an account of the occurrence to the event organiser as soon as possible.

6. Registration

All competitors shall register in accordance with ONSW Event Registration templates and pay the required entry fee.

If a competitor does not provide the required safety information or “read and accept” the Risk Warnings, Waivers and Statements, the competitor must be prohibited from starting.

7. All orienteers must comply with ONSW’s and the event’s COVID-19 Safety Plan.

8. Pets / Dogs

Pets must not be taken to events held on private land, in nature reserves or similar areas where they are prohibited, or as otherwise advised by the organisers. This includes bringing a pet and keeping it secured inside a vehicle or trailer.

Organisers must provide a statement regarding whether pets/dogs are permitted in the event information/bulletin for each event. In some cases (e.g. Sydney Summer Series), it may be that information for the Series advises that dogs are generally permitted at events, but this is not guaranteed, and dogs should not be brought to any event that specifically prohibits them. The organisers decision regarding dogs being permitted at an event is final. It is the competitor’s responsibility to ensure they familiarise themselves with all information relating to an event prior to attending the event.

B. ORIENTEERING AUSTRALIA RULES AT ORIENTEERING NSW EVENTS

The following have been extracted from [Orienteering Australia’s rules](#). They are the most important rules for competitors.

Italics and dots (...) have been used, where ONSW believes the OA Competition Rules are inappropriate or need to be clarified for the range of events held in NSW. The numbers in [square brackets] reflect OA’s numbering.

1. Competition Rules for Foot Orienteering

a. General provisions

These rules and any additional regulations shall be binding for all competitors, team officials and other persons connected with the organisation or in contact with the competitors. The organiser has the discretion to disqualify any competitor who contravenes the rules laid out in this text. [2.6]

Sporting fairness shall be the guiding principle in the interpretation of these rules by competitors, organisers and the jury. [2.7]

b. Participation

Competitors participate at their own risk. Insurance against accidents shall be their responsibility. [6.1]





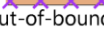












The organisers are entitled to refuse entries from persons whom they consider to be competing beyond their capabilities. A person whose entry has been refused shall be notified immediately and offered an alternative course, or refunded the entry fee. [6.2]

c. Restricted areas and routes

Rules set by Orienteering Australia or the organising Association to protect the environment and any related instructions from the organiser shall be strictly observed by all persons connected with the event (see also Environmental Code of Practice in 3 below). [17.1]

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Out-of-bounds or dangerous areas, forbidden routes, line features that shall not be crossed, etc, shall be marked on the map. If necessary, they shall also be marked on the ground. Competitors may not enter, follow or cross such areas, routes or features drawn with the following symbols [17.2]:

Forest	
ISOM 520 Area that shall not be entered Alternative for NSW events	
ISOM 708 Out-of-bounds boundary	
ISOM 709 Out-of-bounds area	
ISOM 711 Out-of-bounds route (Competitors are allowed to cross directly over an Out-of-bounds route)	
Sprint	
ISSprOM 201 Impassable cliff	
ISSprOM 301 Uncrossable body of water	
ISSprOM 307 Uncrossable marsh	
ISSprOM 410 Impassable vegetation	
ISSprOM 515 Impassable wall	
ISSprOM 518 Impassable fence or railing	
ISSprOM 520 Area that shall not be entered	
ISSprOM 521 Building	
ISSprOM 529 Prominent impassable line feature	
ISSprOM 708 Out-of-bounds boundary	
ISSprOM 709 Out-of-bounds area	
ISSprOM 714 Temporary construction or closed area.	

Compulsory routes, crossing points and passages shall be marked clearly on the map and on the ground. Competitors shall follow the entire length of any marked section of their course. [17.3]

The following two paragraphs apply at events after 30 September 2021.

ONSW allows organisers to disqualify orienteers who breach the rules on restricted areas and routes after the results of an event are finalised. Such disqualifications may be based on evidence such as split times, GPS routes, complaints from other persons. Before this provision is used, the organiser must give the orienteer right of reply (eg by email).

ONSW (President and Technical Director) may disqualify repeat out-of-bounds offenders for a period of time or from all events in a series. Before this provision is used, ONSW must give the orienteer a warning and right of reply.

d. Punching

Competitors shall be responsible for the marking of their card, electronic or otherwise, at each control using the marking device provided. [20.5]

A competitor with a control punch missing or unidentifiable shall not be placed unless it can be established with certainty that the punch missing or unidentifiable is not the competitor's fault. In this exceptional circumstance, other evidence may be used to prove that the competitor visited the control, such as evidence from control officials or cameras or read-out from the control unit. In all other circumstances, such evidence is not acceptable and the competitor must be disqualified.

In the case of SportIdent, this rule means that:

- If one unit is not working, a competitor must use the backup provided and will be disqualified if no punch is recorded;
- If a competitor punches too fast and fails to receive the feedback signals, the card will not contain the punch and the competitor must be disqualified (even though the control unit may have recorded the competitor's card number). [20.7]

Competitors who lose their control card, *and in an event where controls must be visited in a specified order*, omit a control or visit controls in the wrong order shall be disqualified. [20.10]

e. Equipment

Unless directed by the organisers in the invitation and/or the program, the choice of clothing and footwear shall be free. [21.1]

Start number bibs shall be clearly visible and worn as prescribed by the organiser. The number bibs may not be folded or cut. [21.2]

During the competition the only navigational aids that competitors may use or carry are the map and control descriptions provided by the organiser, and a compass. [21.3]

A whistle must be carried if stated by the organiser in the event entry form or program. This may only be used in cases of emergency, the distress signal being *3 blasts periodically*. *If you don't have a whistle, try 'cooee'*. [21.4]

Competitors shall carry a ...punching device according to the system which is in use by the organisers. [21.5]

Competitors may carry phones and/or GPS devices. The phone or GPS device must not be used for navigational purposes, unless it is an emergency or if navigational use is allowed by the organiser. An emergency includes an injured person who needs assistance and a competitor who does not know how to find the finish. ONSW recommends all orienteers download the COVIDsafe and Emergency+ apps. [21.6]

Competitors may not carry telecommunications equipment at International or National (Group A) events or NSW Championships, unless the organiser allows it, ie. OA Rule [21.6] applies.

f. Start

Competitors take their map at or after their start time, *unless otherwise allowed by the organiser*. [22.6]

The competitor is responsible for taking the right map. [22.6]

Competitors who are late for their start time through their own fault shall be permitted to start as soon as practicable. The organiser will determine and record at which time they may start, considering the possible influence on other competitors. They shall be timed as if they had started at their original start time. *Note: at ONSW events this Rule only applies at International or National events or NSW Championships.* [22.8]

Competitors who are late for their start time through the fault of the organiser shall be given a new start time, considering the possible influence on other competitors. [22.9]

Correct and timely relay changeover is the responsibility of the competitors, even when the organiser arranges an advanced warning of incoming teams. [22.11]

g. Fair Play

All persons taking part in an orienteering event shall behave with fairness and honesty. They shall have a sporting attitude and a spirit of friendship. Competitors shall show respect for each other, for officials, journalists, spectators and the inhabitants of the competition area. The competitors shall be as quiet as possible in the terrain. Competitors or spectators shall not interfere with control equipment. [26.1]

Except in the case of an accident *or being seriously lost*, obtaining assistance from other runners or seeking to obtain assistance from other runners, or providing assistance to other competitors during a competition is forbidden. It is the duty of all competitors to help injured

runners. *Note: the first sentence of this rule does not apply to groups that are allowed to run in events, or when shadowing or coaching is permitted at an event.* [26.2]

Doping is forbidden. The Orienteering Australia Anti-Doping Rules apply to all Orienteering Australia events and Orienteering Australia may require doping control procedures to be conducted. [26.3]

Any attempt to survey or train in the competition terrain is forbidden, unless explicitly permitted by the organiser. Attempts to gain any information related to the courses, beyond that provided by the organiser, is forbidden before and during the competition. *Note: this Rule does not apply at ONSW Minor events.* [26.5]

Having crossed the finish line, a competitor may not re-enter the competition terrain without the permission of the organiser. A competitor who retires shall announce this at the finish immediately and shall in no way influence the competition nor help other competitors. [26.9]

A competitor who breaks any rule, or who benefits from the breaking of any rule, may be disqualified. *If a competitor voluntarily reports they have breached a rule, organisers are allowed to record a 'non-competitive' result against the competitor.* [26.10]

Non-competitors who break any rule are liable to disciplinary action. [26.11]

Participation in betting relating to an orienteering event is prohibited for competitors in the event, the team officials and the event officials. They are also prohibited from supporting or promoting betting relating to the event. Additionally, they must not participate in any corrupt practices related to betting. Such practices include fixing the result, manipulating any aspect of the results, failing to perform in order to benefit, accepting or offering bribes and passing on inside information. [26.14]

h. Complaints

A complaint can be made about infringements of these rules or the organiser's directions. ***ONSW strongly encourages*** complaints about other competitors' infringements where the infringement is dangerous or could adversely affect orienteering's reputation. For example: crossing a road and causing a driver to brake, crossing out of bounds areas. [27.1]

Complaints can be made by event or team officials, competitors or anybody else connected with the event. [27.2]

Any complaint shall be made orally or in writing to the organiser or at the registration tent to a representative of the organizer as defined in the Event Bulletin as soon as possible after the results for an age class are complete. A complaint is adjudicated by the organiser. The complainant shall be informed about the decision immediately. [27.3]

There is no fee for a complaint. [27.4]

The organiser may set a time limit for complaints. Complaints received after this time limit will only be considered if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained by the complainant. [27.5]

The organiser's decision in relation to any complaint shall be advised to all competitors affected by the decision. [27.6]

i. Protests

Note: this Section does not apply at ONSW Minor events.

A protest can be made against the organiser's decision about a complaint. [28.1]

Protests can be made by team officials, competitors or event officials. [28.2]

Any protest shall be made in writing to the organiser or at the registration tent to a representative of the organiser as defined in the Event Bulletin, no later than 15 minutes after the organiser has informed the complainant of the decision about the complaint.

Protests received after this time limit may be considered at the discretion of the jury if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained in the protest. [28.3]

There is no fee for a protest. [28.4]

The result of any protest shall be advised to all competitors affected by the decision. [28.5]

2. Guideline to Competitors Regarding Complaints

[OA] Rules 27.1 and 27.2 allow complaints to be made about infringements of the competition rules or the organiser's directions. Although rule 27.3 allows for a complaint to be made orally, competitors should consider making a complaint in writing. The reason for this is that it encourages the complainant to explicitly identify the rule or rules that they consider to have been infringed. [Competition Rules, Appendix 10, section 1]

3. Environmental Code of Practice

Competitors' responsibilities [Competition Rules, Appendix 7, 6.5]

- Read and adhere to organisers instructions.
- Pets and firearms must not be taken to events because of the restrictions that generally apply.
- Fire restrictions must be observed. *Note: Fires are prohibited at all ONSW events, unless the Organiser gives specific approval to a fire being lit.*
- *Leave a gate as you found it. If a gate is found open, it should be left open, and if it is closed, it should be left closed.*
- Report any damage to property to the organisers.
- Avoid spreading seeds and mud when cleaning your shoes and clothing. This can be done by cleaning them at the event site, provided that this does not spread material from an infested area on the course to a 'clean' arena. If cleaning at home, dispose of the material so that it is not spread elsewhere. Do not leave the cleaning until you arrive at the next event site.
- Avoid fauna and stock as much as possible. Cattle trapped at fence corners or in a confined area can stampede and should always be given a wide berth.
- Try to avoid disturbing wildlife. Keep a distance whenever possible to avoid stressing any animal.
- Remove your own rubbish. Do not leave it for the organisers to collect and take away. Drive and park as directed by the organiser. The organiser is responsible to ensure you do not cause damage by becoming bogged or by trampling sensitive vegetation or pasture.
- Wherever possible avoid damage to sensitive areas such as wetlands, marshes and soft earth embankments. Mossy rock surfaces should be avoided to prevent damage and also because they could be slippery and dangerous.
- Respect the rights of other users of the area such as walkers, picnickers, and of course resident land owners. Do not approach farm residences.
- *Smoking at ONSW events is discouraged and prohibited at events where there is a risk of fire.*

4. General Hygiene

[Competition Rules, Appendix 4, section 1]

- It is the responsibility of all orienteers and event officials to maintain strict personal hygiene, as this is the best method of controlling the spread of infectious diseases.
- All orienteers with prior evidence of infectious diseases are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation.

5. Athlete Code of Conduct

[Member Protection Policy, Appendix D4]

You must ... in any activity ... *under the auspices* of Orienteering Australia:

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow players, coaches, officials and spectators.
2. Do not tolerate acts of aggression.
3. Respect the talent, potential and development of fellow players and competitors.
4. Care for and respect the equipment provided to you as part of your program.
5. Be frank and honest with your coach concerning illness and injury and your ability to train fully within the program requirements.
6. At all times avoid intimate relationships with your coach.
7. Conduct yourself in a professional manner relating to language, temper and punctuality.
8. Maintain high personal behaviour standards at all times.
9. Abide by the rules and respect the decision of the official, making all appeals through the formal process and respecting the final decision.
10. Be honest in your attitude and preparation to training. Work equally hard for yourself and your team.
11. Cooperate with coaches and staff in development of programs to adequately prepare you for competition at the highest level.
12. *Not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.*

Adopted 19 March 2024; Effective 20 March 2024

Reason for update 19 March 2024:

New clause A8 regarding pets/dogs at events.