

START-O' DIRECTOR'S GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Start-O's are preferably run in an area that is open enough for a supervising adult to keep an eye on the participant without following them around, thus allowing the child to move about independently.
- The mapped area is preferably about 70-200 m in diameter, giving a scale of about 1:300 to 1:1000.
- The map should give detail such as asphalt, picnic tables, fences, boulders, fallen logs, streams, individual trees (preferably with size indication), bushy areas, etc. Blow-ups of regular orienteering maps may give an outline of the area to serve as a starting point but usually do not give enough detail to be useful by themselves.
- Use premarked maps. To keep costs low, we copy the master map, draw controls on the copy, make about 30 duplicates of the latter in black and white, and then highlight the controls with a red marker on each final copy. We typically use 10 controls and design the course to be completed in 10 to 30 minutes. Check with the meet director to ensure no interference with the regular course controls.
- In general, do not purposefully hide controls unless the feature is very obvious and requires almost no map reading to find. Another way to increase difficulty in very open, visible areas is to set 3 or 4 clusters of 2 to 4 controls; this makes the faster kids slow down and look carefully.
- Use separate, or detachable control cards so that the child can keep the map afterwards. For small children it is helpful to temporarily attach the punch card to the map (e.g., staple it to the back), so that they don't get lost while out on the course. Use large enough punch boxes to allow overpunching mispunches.
- Any kind of control flag (plastic cup, 10-cm mini control, etc.) is acceptable but it is preferable to use one that is distinct from the regular course controls. Regular orienteering punches are preferable to crayons or markers because they do not break and hold up better in rain and hot weather.
- Cancel Start-O's in case of rain, as low turn-out of children does not warrant the effort. Hopefully, last-minute cancellation can be notified by the Hotline or BayOnet.
- Setup the Start-O' start area as close as possible to the main registration and/or start areas to allow recruiting participants as they register for the regular event. Recruiting is one of the most important functions of the Start-O' director because many participants are unfamiliar with meet procedures.
- Preferably, keep the course open into the afternoon for those who want to do a regular course first.
- Record the name, age, time around the course (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.), start and finish times, and if the child had help from a child who had already been on the course or an adult.
- Encourage the children to go alone so that they can each have a map and make orienteering judgments, at least for the first time around the course. Once on the course, sharing information is entirely acceptable. Adult help is often desirable for young or novice children. Avoid pressure to perform; remember that the goal is to learn and get enthusiastic about orienteering.
- Some kids tend to run off before they get oriented and may then get frustrated. Make sure the child has some feel for the map before giving a start time. For newcomers, explain map symbols, punches, and procedures. Emphasize that the course can be done in any order, that there are no numbers on the controls, and that they need to know their location on the map to decide which box to punch.
- If personpower is short or the main event has light participation, the finish timer for the main event can give out start and finish times for the Start-O'.
- Results are scored in the following order:
 - 1) Children or groups of children who did the course alone for the first time
 - a) the most correct punches (a correct overpunch of an incorrect punch is accepted to emphasize that learning to correct mistakes is as important as getting it right the first time. Presumably a child that had to punch twice has lost time.)
 - b) the shortest time, with equal correct punches.
 - 2) Children who did the course with the help of another child who was on the course before, in the same suborder as in part 1).
 - 3) Children who did the course with adult help, in the same suborder as in part 1).
 - 4) Missing punches (DNF's) are treated the same as incorrect punches, and the entrant ranked in the regular order if a finish time was obtained. Untimed DNF's are placed at the end.
 - 5) All else being equal, place younger participants above older ones.

In the results listing, report the name(s), age(s), number of correct punches, and time.

START-O' EVENT PLANNING GUIDELINES / CHECKLIST

BEFORE THE MEET:

- Report plans to have a Start-O' to the bulletin, hot-line, and other publicity media well in advance.
- Find out from the regular meet director the location of the start / registration area.
- Obtain the map from the Start-O' coordinator, or if necessary, make the map. Sometimes the meet director can be persuaded to do this, or get help from the Start-O' coordinator if you need it.
- Design the course and check with the meet director for possible conflicts with the main event start / finish areas and overlapping control locations.
- Make copies of the map (usually 15 - 20 are enough) and highlight the control locations with a colorful marker.
- Obtain the controls and Start-O' signs or arrange to have them brought to the meet.
- Check that there are enough punch sheets with the controls and make copies if necessary. You will also need pencils, clipboard(s), and a watch or timer. These are usually in the box of controls.
- Arrange for help if you plan to run a regular course yourself.

AT THE MEET:

- Set up the controls and sign(s) by the start of the regular meet (usually 10:00 AM).
- Set up the Start-O' start as close as possible to the regular registration area.
- Recruit children as they are arriving and registering.
- Explain the procedures and give a start time. When the course is finished, collect the control sheet and give a finish time. Allow the child to keep the map.
- If possible, keep the course open until about 2:30 for those doing a regular course first.
- Evaluate the results, sort them, and hang them up and/or give them to the meet director for inclusion into the bulletin. (Meet directors sometimes aren't familiar with the placing priorities, so it is best to do that for them.)
- Collect the controls and give them to the next user or the coordinator.