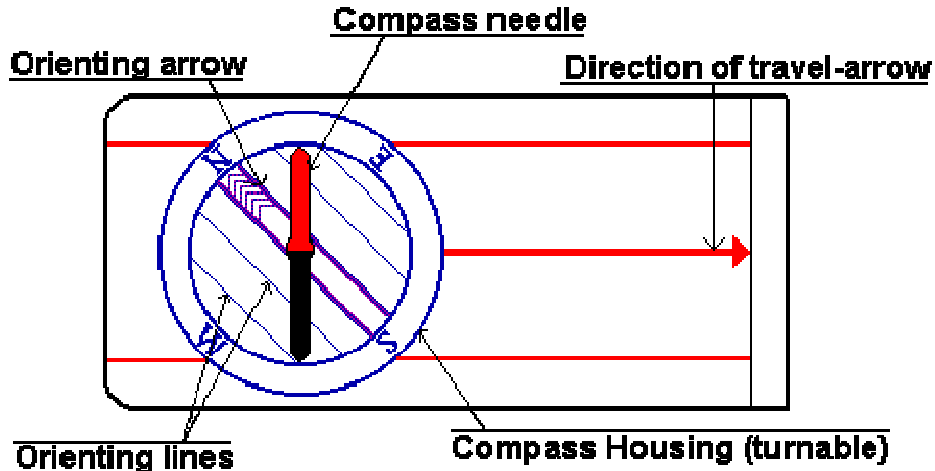


How to Use a Compass

The first thing you need to learn, are the directions. **North, South, East and West**. Look at the figure and learn where they are. North is the most important.

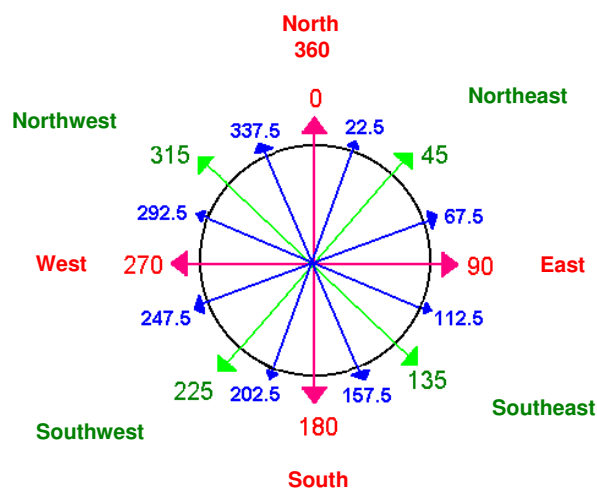
There are several kinds of compasses; you are using a Silva Compass. Here is a diagram of it:



You see this red and black arrow? (On your compass, the black part may be white.) This is the compass **needle**. The red part of it is always pointing towards the earth's magnetic north pole. Notice the **Travel Arrow**? On your compass it may be blue. In any case, this is the direction that you will walk when using the compass.

Hold the compass against your chest with the **Travel Arrow** pointing out. Always hold the compass against you for the most accurate results.

Turn the **Compass Housing**. Notice that it has numbers on it. These are degrees. There are 360 degrees in a circle. The circle represents North (360) South (180) East (90) and West (270). Turn the **Compass Housing** so that the "N" 360 or 0 degrees is pointing towards the **Travel Arrow**.



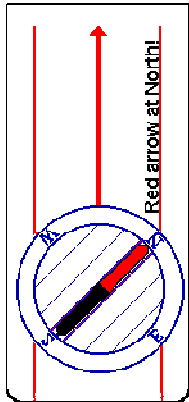
Review:

Always hold the compass touching your chest with the travel arrow pointing away from you – the same direction that your feet are pointing.



Local magnetic attractions may interfere with your compass pointing North. If you are carrying something made of iron, it might disturb the arrow. Even a staple in your map might be a problem. Another problem may be that you are not holding the compass flat so that the *Compass Needle* is free floating. If you are having problems, check these two common errors before continuing.

Next step: Now turn the *Compass Housing* so that 315 degrees or “Northwest” is pointing in the direction of the *Travel Arrow*. Turn your body around until the red floating needle is inside the *Orienting Arrow*. You are now set to walk NW or 315 degrees.



This is how the compass should look to you. Practice with several other bearings until your entire group can get it correctly. Have your instructor check.

As you walk, walk in the direction of the *Travel Arrow*, making sure the compass needle, which always points North, stays within the *Orienting Arrow*. It is helpful to choose a landmark in the distance and walk towards it, glancing down now and then to make sure your compass stays in the proper position.

Once you feel comfortable with 0 (360) degrees (N), 45 degrees (NE), 90 degrees (E), 135 degrees (SE), 180 degrees (S), etc., try the Compass Walk below.

Compass Walk

1. Place a penny or other small marker between your feet.
2. Set the compass for 40 degrees (40°) Choose a landmark in the distance and walk in this direction for 10 paces. STOP
3. Set the compass for 160 degrees (160°) Choose a landmark in the distance and walk in this direction for 10 paces. STOP
4. Set the compass for 280 degrees (280°) Choose a landmark in the distance and walk in this direction for 10 paces. STOP
5. The penny or other object should be directly between your feet.
6. Practice this until you succeed. Make sure you set the compass precisely; take the same size steps each time. Also make sure you turn your body so that the compass needle is inside the orienting arrow each time you rotate the compass housing.



Why do you need a PACE COUNT?

Some compass exercises will ask you to ‘go 10 paces’. Since everyone’s pace is different, depending upon their size and gait, it is wise to do a PACE COUNT for a measured distance such as 100 yards. One person may take 50 steps in 100 yards, another might take 80. This is important when following a compass hike of any distance.

How To Do a PACE COUNT

1. Stand with both feet on the start line or near the starting pole marker.
2. Step off with your left foot first and walk casually to the end marker, like you would when hiking.
3. Count one pace every time your right foot hits the ground.
4. Count the total number of paces you take to walk 100 yards.
5. Repeat the process several times and average the results. This is your pace count.
6. Remember the number.