ACTIVITY: BUILD YOUR OWN COMPASS

OBJECTIVE: Develop an understanding of compasses as an orienteer's tool, and basic compass mechanics

INTRO: The compass. Arguably an orienteers most useful tool, after the map. In this week's activity we will be explaining how a compass works and how to use one, and building our own compass out of things you should have around your house.

Fig.1

A Compass Rose

A compass is a navigational device that is based on the four cardinal directions (North, East, South, and West). When used correctly a compass should always point North, indicated by an N on the compass. Knowing precisely which direction is North while you are out in the field is crucial to be able to orient yourself and your map correctly, which will in turn allow you to know where it is you are heading.

FUN FACT

The compass is one of the four great inventions from ancient china. The other three being gunpowder, paper making, and printing!

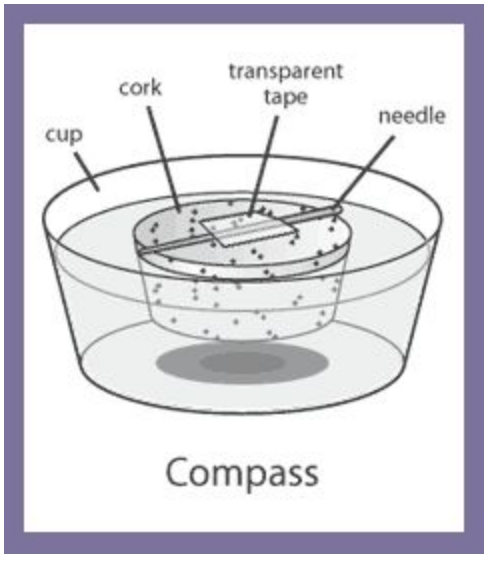
TIME TO BUILD YOUR OWN!

MATERIALS:

- 1 shallow dish or bottle lid *(something small but deep enough to hold water)*
- 1 magnet (a magnet off the fridge will work)
- 1 sewing needle or staple (if you're using a staple make sure to straighten it out before continuing.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Fill your dish/lid with water
- Take your magnet, and your needle/staple, and drag the magnet in one direction across the needle/staple. Doing so will ensure it gets magnetized. Whichever end of the metal you drag the magnet to will point north.
- Place your newly magnetized piece of metal in the water and watch it start to turn towards the north.



ADDED CHALLENGE

- Cut a small piece of cork and label the cardinal directions on it, then affix your magnetized piece of metal to it with tape and place it back in the water.

WE WANT TO SEE YOUR CREATIONS! TAG US ON OUR FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM AND SHOW US!

A compass may help you know which way you're going, but always remember no matter where you are, you're always somewhere.