

# FINDING YOUR WAY IN THE DARK

Navigating by night is considerably harder than by day. Distant hills become all but invisible, making it tricky to orientate your map correctly; and even nearby features are obscured or can appear different. How to safely find your way?

World expert on navigation Lyle Brotherton has a few golden rules...

## 1 CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE CAREFULLY

If you know that you'll be walking partly – or entirely – in the dark, ensure your route is more straightforward than you'd choose during the day. You're more likely to misjudge the terrain, so avoid steep ground, waterfalls, gullies and crags, and steer clear of boggy, low-lying areas.

Keep navigation simple by using linear features like paths, tracks and walls. But walls and fences are not always wholly reliable, so regularly cross-reference with your knowledge of the ground.

As in daylight, break down each part of your journey into 'legs', with visible markers to aim towards, such as boulders or tussocks of grass. These are your 'attack points'. At night, choose ones that are both larger and nearer than you would use in daylight hours, and ideally less than 100m away.

Be aware that objects appear nearer in the dark and can easily be misinterpreted. For example, I have mistaken Friesian cows for boulders – mind you, they soon let me know!

## 2 PREPARE YOUR KIT

Always carry back-up batteries for your headtorch, and ideally pack a second, back-up light in case the bulb fails or the torch gets lost or broken. Even if you're planning to navigate using your own natural night vision, take a headtorch with you as conditions can change quickly and you might actually need it.

Your compass has luminous elements; boost these under a bright light before you leave civilisation, then during your journey expose it to your headtorch beam for five minutes.



## 3 IMPROVE YOUR NIGHT VISION

On moonlit nights you can walk without your headtorch, but remember that your eyes will take time to adjust to the dark. After 5-7min most people's natural night vision will be working at 30 per cent of its capacity, and after 30min it will be at full capacity. So, after turning off your torch, wait at least 7min before deciding if you are going to navigate unaided.

Protect your night vision by covering your dominant eye with your hand when you need to switch on your headtorch. Using a red filter can also help preserve your night vision.



Technical data	
LED	High End Power LED
Weight (incl. batteries)	155 g
Operating temperature	-20 to +50 (°C)
Luminous flux max. (Power Boost)	200/250 lm*
Batteries	4x AAA batteries
Energy bank	7.2 Wh**
Burning life min. (Power)	12 h*
Burning life max. (Low power)	60 h**
Beam distance max. (Boost)	150m*
Splash-protected	IPX 4
Smart Light Technology	4.1.2