

How to Use a Watch Bezel As a Compass



The Army Ranger handbook describes a simple method for locating the compass directions using a wristwatch with hands and the sun. This method has been published in many other survival books over the years and still remains the same from the original Ranger's handbook. The technique is easy to learn and only requires a bit of practice. After this technique is understood, you can use the watch bezel to track compass directions regularly.

Skill level: Moderately Easy

Things you need

Wristwatch with hands

Instructions

Northern Temperate Zone

1 Determine if you are in the northern or southern temperate zone. The

northern zone is located between -4.77 and 19.2 degrees C north latitude, and the southern is between 23.4 and 66.6 degrees south latitude. A local map or Internet search can help determine this answer for your area. If you are in the northern area, move to step 2. Otherwise, move to the second section.

2 Push a small stick or other straight object into the ground, in full view of the sun so that it casts a shadow.

3 Lay your watch on the ground, and point the hour hand directly down the shadow of the stick.

4 Locate the point midway between the hour hand and the 12 o'clock marker on your watch. This marks south. The direct opposite of it will face north.

5 If you have a movable bezel on your watch, move the arrow on the top to indicate a specific direction (your choice). This will help you keep a specific direction in mind, but be sure to check north on a regular basis, as it is easy to confuse directions.

Southern Temperate Zone

1 Push a small stick or other straight object into the ground, in full view of the sun so that it casts a shadow.

2 Lay your watch on the ground, and point the 2 o'clock marker directly along the shadow.

3 Locate the midpoint between the hour hand and the 12 o'clock position. This indicates the north-south line, with north being the

direction between the hour and the 12 o'clock, and the opposite being south.

4 If you have a movable bezel on your watch, move the arrow on the top to indicate a specific direction (your choice). This will help you keep a specific direction in mind, but be sure to check north on a regular basis, as it is easy to confuse directions.

Tips and warnings

Be careful when tracking compass directions with a bezel, as you can easily become disoriented. Recheck your direction often.