



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was one of the first cities in North America to be designed in a grid pattern with numbered streets.

Be a better navigator

Improve your sense of direction—and avoid getting lost—with these steps.

Navigation skills are what you use to know how to get from one destination to another. You may have also heard these skills described as a “sense of direction.” Even with modern tools like GPS and Google Maps, it’s still useful to have basic navigation skills. You may not always have a digital map or wifi, and strengthening these skills can also increase your confidence that you’ll be able to navigate new places. Here’s how to get started.

Put away the device

You can start building navigation skills with a route you already know well, such as your walk or bike ride to a park. With an adult, take a slightly different path to get there. Pay attention to visual cues along the way. Without GPS, use the clues to find your way back to your starting point.

Look for landmarks

Local landmarks, like architecture and landscapes, can help you determine what direction you’re facing. With an adult’s supervision, step out in your local neighborhood or town and look for the landmarks near your home. For example, do you see hills or mountains in the distance? Do you see a tall building? A highway? Ask a trusted adult if the landmark is north, south, east, or west of

where you’re standing. Practice identifying landmarks when you visit new towns and cities together. For example, pinpoint a landmark building to determine whether you’re heading north, south, east, or west.

Know the street patterns

Many cities have streets arranged in a grid, which is a network of intersecting parallel lines. These cities include Chicago, Denver, Miami, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. Their streets follow a pattern of north to south and east to west. Notice how the streets in a grid may be named according to a theme, like numbers or US presidents. Suburban streets may also have a pattern, like being named for US states.



Commit names to memory.

Get a little creative

Another way to boost your navigation skills is to use creative stories to know where you are. To remember an intersection like Prince and Elizabeth streets, you might remember it this way: “A prince met Elizabeth.” You can also connect details to street names, like Main Street is where the main stores in town are or Lakeside Drive is on the water. You’ll build a mental map and feel more confident navigating your surroundings.

Master a maze



Mazes are fun to explore and designed to be challenging to escape. Here are a few tips on finding your way out of most simple mazes.

Follow the wall. Put your hand on the wall of the maze and maintain contact as you walk through it. You will eventually find your way out.

Always turn right. In most mazes, research shows, the “turn-right rule” works: Keep turning right, and you will ultimately get to the exit.

Ask for help. There will be staff members in or around the maze. If you’re not sure which way to go, it’s OK to ask!