



Beaundesert Outdoor Adventures

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) & Risk Assessment: Challenge Course

Document ID: SOP-BOA-CHALLENGE-001

Effective Date: January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

1.0 Purpose

To outline the standardized and safe procedure for conducting the Challenge Course activity. This activity is designed to promote teamwork, communication, and physical agility in a fun, low-to-the-ground environment.

2.0 Scope & Leadership Options

This activity is highly versatile and can be run under two distinct leadership models:

- **Instructor-Led:** Supervised and led by Beaundesert In-House Trained staff.
- **Self-Led:** Supervised and led by visiting responsible adults (e.g., Teachers, Scout Leaders, Guide Leaders). *Note: The visiting leader assumes responsibility for the group's safety and adherence to these rules during Self-Led sessions.*
- **Technical Advisor:** Martin Kirby (Operations Manager).

3.0 Location & Ratios

- **Location:** The Challenge Course area.
- **Standard Ratio:** 1:12 (One Instructor/Leader to twelve participants).
- **Maximum Group Size:** 12 participants per active session without additional adult supervision.

4.0 Equipment & Clothing

- **Clothing Mandatory: Long trousers** are compulsory to protect against grazes, debris, and rope burn. Long sleeves are highly recommended.





- **Footwear:** Suitable enclosed footwear (e.g., trainers or walking boots) must be worn.
- **Optional Equipment:** Blindfolds, buckets/cups of water, tyres.

5.0 Safety Briefing & Rules

Mandatory briefing before any participant attempts the course.

1. **Usage:** Elements must be used as designed. Participants must **not** climb on top of or over elements such as the concrete tunnels; they must go through them.
2. **Speed:** Walk or jog carefully. Excessive speed leads to accidents. Instructors/Leaders should increase the difficulty of the task to naturally slow the group down.
3. **Hazards:** Watch out for low elements (hitting heads) and uneven ground (tree roots/stones) between obstacles.

6.0 Session Procedure

6.1 Pre-Session Visual Checks (Instructor/Leader)

Before the session begins, the area must be visually inspected:

- **Wooden Structures:** Check the general structure of the elements for stability and rot.
- **Balance Beams & Poles:** Check for slipperiness. Inspect the "Chicken Wire" (used for grip) to ensure it is not broken or protruding, which could cause cuts.
- **Concrete Pipes (Tunnels):** Ensure the protective padding on the entrances is securely in place.
- **Foam Pit & Camo Net:** Inspect the foam pit and the army camouflage net stretched over it for any hidden hazards, debris, or entanglement risks.
- **General Area:** Remove any loose debris or trip hazards from the paths.

6.2 Introduction & Warm-Up

1. **Welcome & Kit Check:** Ensure all participants have long trousers and proper shoes.
2. **Briefing:** Explain the obstacles and demonstrate the safest way to tackle them if necessary.

6.3 Utilizing Blindfolds (Special Procedure)

If blindfolds are used to increase the teamwork challenge, a strict "build-up" process must be followed:



1. **Open Area Prep:** Start in an open, flat, safe area away from the course.
2. **Pairs:** Put participants into pairs (one blindfolded, one sighted guide).
3. **Trust Games:** Play simple directional and trust games in the open to establish communication.
4. **The Course:** Only once communication is proven, move to the Challenge Course. Sighted guides must act as "spotters," keeping their hands close to the blindfolded participant to prevent falls from balance beams or head collisions with low obstacles.

6.4 Development & Challenges

To develop the session, the leader can introduce rules:

- **The Water Challenge:** Transporting a bucket or cups of water around the course without spilling.
- **Silent Running:** No talking allowed between group members.
- **Linked:** The whole group must hold wrists and navigate the obstacles together.
- **Tyre Carry:** Thread a tyre through all the obstacles.

6.5 Session Conclusion

1. **Pack Down:** Collect all blindfolds, cups, and props.
2. **Review:** Debrief the group on communication and teamwork.

7.0 Risk Assessment

Activity: Challenge Course

Review Date: January 2027

Assessment by: Martin Kirby – Operations Manager

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
Slipping off elements / Wet conditions	Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements built close to ground. • Chicken wire used on wooden poles / benches for grip. • Instructor checks condition of chicken wire for sharp edges to prevent cuts. 	Trivial

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
Debris, Grazes & Rope Burn	Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long trousers are compulsory. • Pre-session visual check to clear course debris. • Briefing to move slowly through Spider's Web. 	Trivial
Hitting Head (Low obstacles)	Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief group about crawling under elements. • Concrete Pipes: Padding on the entrance must be in place. • Foam Pit: Area under camo net checked for hazards prior to use. 	Trivial
Slips, Trips, and Falls (Ground Level)	Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group warned about uneven ground/tree roots. • Suitable enclosed footwear mandatory. 	Tolerable
Loss of Vision / Collisions (Blindfolds)	Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build-up Protocol: Trust games played in flat open areas first. • Spotting: Sighted partner acts as a dedicated spotter to physically guide and protect from head bumps/falls. 	Tolerable
Inappropriate Use / Excessive Speed	Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing: "Do not climb over tunnels". • Challenges made harder (e.g., carrying water) to naturally slow the pace down and focus on control. 	Trivial



9.0 Document Control & Review History

Document Creation

Action	Name / Role	Date
Created By	Martin Kirby – Operations Manager	January 2026
Approved By	Martin Kirby, Luke Chance & Oliver Tombs (OM / SI / AOM)	January 2026
Technical Auth.	Martin Kirby (Operations Manager)	January 2026

Review Log

This document is to be reviewed annually or following any significant incident or change to the activity.

Date of Review	Reviewed By	Comments / Changes Made	Next Review Due
January 2026	MKirby / OTombs / LChance	Document Created (V1.0). Added specific checks for Camo Net, Concrete Pipe Padding, and Blindfold build-up protocol.	January 2027

