SPRINT MAPS
– Uncrossable features

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There is now an increasing number of Sprint events occurring regularly throughout Australia. However, there are only a limited number of urban areas suitable to map to the highest Sprint standard. Because we rely on retaining access to areas such as schools, and universities to conduct Sprint events, it is important that as competitors we do not break the basic rules, such as running across areas that are mapped as Out of Bounds, uncrossable, or forbidden to cross. We do not want to lose access to maps because someone was trying to save a few seconds. Sometimes this may occur because competitors are not familiar with the symbols and colours used on Sprint maps to depict such areas.

One simple case in point is the use of the colour 'olive green' which is used to show areas that are 'forbidden to cross'. Mostly it is used to show the boundaries of gardens, but it can be used anywhere that the landowner does not want orienteers to go and where a symbol in the colour purple is inappropriate.

Forbidden to cross

On some Sprint maps there are thick hedges which should be shown with a very dark green line (that has small black dots in it). This symbol represents a feature which is 'forbidden to cross'. Of course, there can be other hedges, drawn with a lighter green line, that usually have gaps in amongst the bushes and where it is permissible to cross. Where this occurs, care needs to be taken not to damage any plants.


Forbidden to cross

**May be possible to get through or jump over**

Uncrossable walls have caused some orienteers confusion, even at World Championships. The thin black line that is used to mark the outline of some gardens, paths, walkways, etc can obviously be crossed. However, the next thicker line has options to cross (such as the boundary of a bitumen road, or an area of bitumen parking). Where this same line is used to depict the outline of a building, it is 'forbidden to cross'.
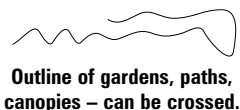
Outline of gardens, paths, canopies – can be crossed.

**Outline of buildings – cannot be crossed.**
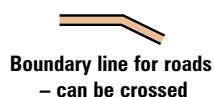

Boundary line for roads – can be crossed

Buildings often have open areas underneath through which the orienteer can pass, (shown as light grey) but where the outside wall, of part of the building, prevents passage, the line here is generally NOT drawn any thicker than that used for the building outline. It should be obvious to see where you cannot get through, as it will be a building wall, a closed side of a verandah or even the closed side of a covered walkway.
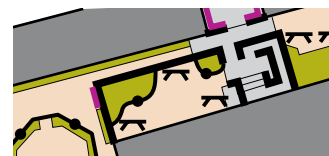

Building can be entered by crossing the thin black line.
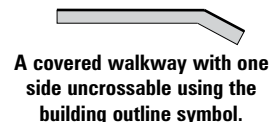
A covered walkway with one side uncrossable using the building outline symbol.
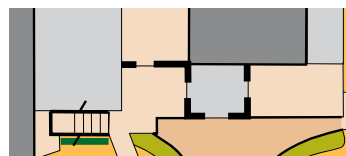
**Two examples of uncrossable walls using the thick black line.**

The uncrossable wall symbol, which is a very thick black line, is generally used when the wall is free standing, or is part of a special entrance to a building or church, or used in landscaping and in areas where the ground level changes.

Example of an uncrossable wall on side of covered canopy where there was no room to use thick black line (the wall was galvanised iron) and then to the north where there was room to use the thick black line, the wall was brick.

Fences may be marked as uncrossable even when it looks easy to get over them. Inevitably, there is a wall below the fence which cannot be seen from on top. Therefore crossing it becomes dangerous. The mapper is responsible for identifying all points of danger and the controller should then ensure that the course planner does not place legs across, or close to, such areas in case it encourages such risk taking.

The uncrossable fence symbol can be difficult to identify on the run and there are a lot of stories where orienteers did not recognise what was ahead of them. They either turn back and look for an alternative route, or climb over the fence, which can affect the outcome of an important race. Often it is difficult to draw the symbol in the space that is left. Maybe a thick black line is a better option.
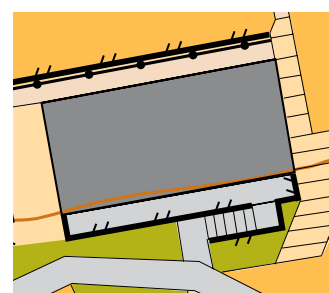
Example of a high fence which from the top side looks crossable, but it has another wall on the bottom side. It is not always possible to fit the wall into the room remaining.

Also the uncrossable fence shown on the verandah of the building is because the front of the building is quite high and it is dangerous to cross. Orienteers have to trust that the mapper has depicted the area properly and fairly.

The symbol for a low wall is a fairly thick grey line which is difficult to read on the run, and it looks out of place on the map, because of its thickness. Where the wall is made of rock, brick, besser block, or something similar, I have started using the symbol for a low rock wall. This makes the low wall easier to identify.

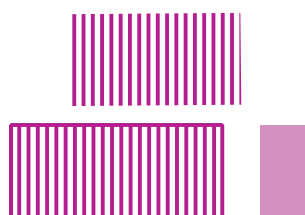**Standard crossable wall.**

Crossable wall on side of covered area.

Crossable wall symbol I use for timber

Crossable wall symbol I use for rock, brick, concrete etc.

Of course, orienteers should be aware that anything marked as Out of Bounds, or temporarily Out of Bounds, will be marked with purple or magenta coloured lines and is 'forbidden to cross'.

Out of bounds

Another 'forbidden to cross' line is one marked by a series of purple, or magenta coloured crosses. This was used in an event earlier this year in Queensland, where a high, electrified dog fence was marked this way to help orienteers see more clearly where this fence was located.

Forbidden route.

In summary, the following symbols are part of the 'forbidden to cross' group; Impassable cliff, Impassable body of water, Impassable marsh, Impassable vegetation, Impassable wall, Impassable fence or railing, Building, Area with forbidden access (olive green), Impassable pipeline, Uncrossable boundary, Out-of-Bounds area and Temporary construction or closed area. Mappers should consider highlighting these 'forbidden to cross' symbols on their Sprint maps.

Further details about these symbols are contained in the IOF's *International Specification for Sprint Orienteering Maps* (ISSOM) – January 2007 and all Sprint mappers, course setters and controllers should familiarise themselves with these.
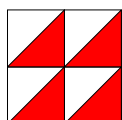
In memory of Rex Saye, the orienteering software which he designed and wrote (OTrack and Corpse version 7 with new features) is now available free of charge at
www.o-ware.com