

TECH TIPS

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Using Apple and Google Maps

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Most of us use Google Maps and/or Apple Maps on our mobile devices and cars to find our way around. They operate pretty much the same, so we'll take a high-level look at how they function.

A couple of things to keep in mind

If you're driving, you should use your map app before you get in the car and print out the directions or a map to take with you. If you have a passenger, ask them to use their phone or a printout to read you directions while you do the driving. This is especially true if you have poor eyesight. You can also say "hey Siri" or "hey Google" and ask your mobile device to read turn-by-turn directions out loud to you as you drive.

Map apps tend to drain your battery fairly quickly, so if you're going to be driving for an hour or more, you may need to keep your phone or tablet plugged into a car charger.

Enable location services to get the most out of your maps

Some people have privacy concerns about enabling location services in settings on their mobile devices. However, when you turn on location services, your mapping apps can respond to questions such as "driving directions to the nearest Safeway." Your current

position is displayed on the map as a pulsating small circle, which moves along the streets shown on the screen.

Both Apple and Google maps allow you to share your current location with family and friends so that you can meet them or let them see how far away you are.

Mapping apps integrate well with other apps on your mobile devices

Apple and Google Maps integrate with other apps that work on Apple or Android mobile devices. For example, when you enter an address for a new contact, whether it is a person or a business, a small map icon is inserted with the address, and if you click on that icon you can immediately get driving directions.

You can also say "hey Siri" or "hey Google" to get restaurant locations or menus, for example. The app will show you several restaurant choices (sorted by distance) based on your location. You can also search for nearby gas, groceries, hotels, postal services, and much more. Hovering over the pin next to your searched locations will reveal a box of information with the name, address, phone number and operating hours in it.

Picking routes and checking current and future traffic conditions

When you enter an address into Apple or Google Maps, you can choose how you want to travel to your destination – by car, public transportation, walking, cycling or even ride-booking apps. Once you select your mode of travel, the app will estimate how long it will take you to arrive at your destination.

Getting directions for different modes of travel is as easy as 1, 2, 3, according to the Google Maps Help

page (see link below) – here are the steps along with the icons to look for:

Click Directions 

Click points on the map, type an address, or add a place name.

Choose one of the following modes of transportation:

Driving: 

Transit: 

Walking: 

Cycling: 

Flight:  (option only shown on a computer)

Ride:  (option only shown on a mobile device)

After a map and your directions are displayed, you can add additional stops, or "waypoints" to the middle of the route by clicking on the menu icon (three dots or lines) and then clicking on the "+" icon. You can also do this after you've started traveling, and want to add a point of interest or rest stop along your way.

If you're driving, the map will show you route options with estimated driving times. The routes can also show you where traffic is slow or stopped, or even where there may be an accident, so that you can choose the best route to drive.

Link to the iPhone User Guide for Apple maps: <https://tinyurl.com/using-a-maps>

Link to the Google Maps Help page: <https://tinyurl.com/using-g-maps>

Here's a link to a thorough comparison of both apps (on mobile devices): <https://tinyurl.com/apl-vs-gl-maps>

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