

GPS apps that let you know where you've been

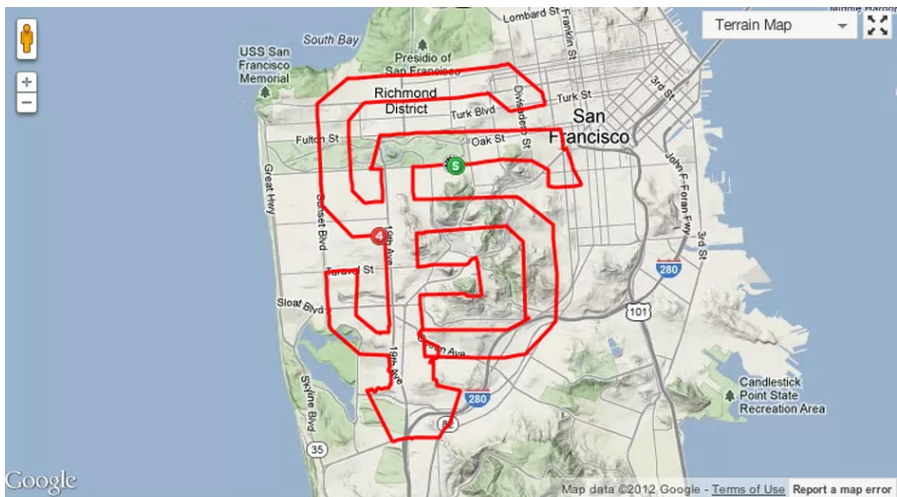
We round up a handful of GPS logger apps that record your position and path for fitness and fun.



Antuan Goodwin 

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Cyclist Chris Phipps made creative use of GPS to show his support for the San Francisco Giants.

Strava user Chris Phipps

When most of us think about GPS apps for smartphones, we're thinking about navigation apps that help you to get wherever you happen to be going. However, there's a whole range of GPS logger apps that are designed to keep track of where you've been.

Tracking your historic position, movement, speed, and elevation is very useful for fitness, as evidenced by the selection of fitness apps below, but it can also be fun. For example, after exporting the .GPX data from a GPS logger app, it can be imported into Google Earth or similar software to create a 3D flyby or, as is the case in the image above, 2D virtual artwork on a massive scale.

Google

My Tracks (Android)

Fire up My Tracks on your GPS-enabled Android device and it will silently record your GPS position and elevation. Your live trip can be viewed on a Google Map and saved for playback later. My Tracks has the capability to export popular GPS data formats (such as GPX or CSV) for import and playback in mapping software, such as Google Earth or many of the fitness apps listed below.

Runkeeper

Runkeeper (Android, iOS)

Runkeeper is probably one of the better known GPS tracking apps around, at least it is in the circles that I run in (pun intended). Tracking your position can be as simple as loading the app and hitting record, but Runkeeper has a fitness focus

so it also tracks your pace, calories burned, and other metrics when you tell it more information about you and what your method of motion is (running, walking, cycling, hiking) I especially like that Runkeeper will let you easily export all of your data for with in other software (such as Google Earth).

Endomondo

Endomondo (Android, iOS, other)

Although, anecdotally, I know more people who use Runkeeper, I'd be willing to bet that there are just as many (if not more) runners who swear by Endomondo. Both apps let you record your position as you engage in an outdoor activity (running, hiking) and share your route with your friend. There is also a wide range of fitness data relating to, for example, pace, caloric burn, or heart rate that is stored alongside your GPS data.

Strava (Android, iOS)

Strava is similar to Runkeeper, but interestingly splits its Running and Cycling apps into separate downloads. I'm still scratching my head over whether that's a good or bad thing, but this decision does take an extra step out of the activation process for those who only run or cycle. Like the rest of the apps, Strava is a "hit record and go" affair. ~~However, unlike the rest of this list, I couldn't find an export option in this app or on its Web site, so once your data is in Strava, it's probably there for good.~~ **Update:** Apparently, you can export GPX data for each logged journey from an Actions menu.

Dirk Stichling

MyTracks (iOS)

The name is similar, but the iOS app "MyTracks" is not the same as the "My Tracks" app for Android. However, its functionality is similar. After loading the

app and hitting record, MyTracks records your GPS position, creating a virtual thread to track where you've been on an OpenStreetMap. Photos can even be captured, geotagged, and marked on the map while you're recording. When you're done, the route data can be exported to the MyTracks app for Mac OS X.



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