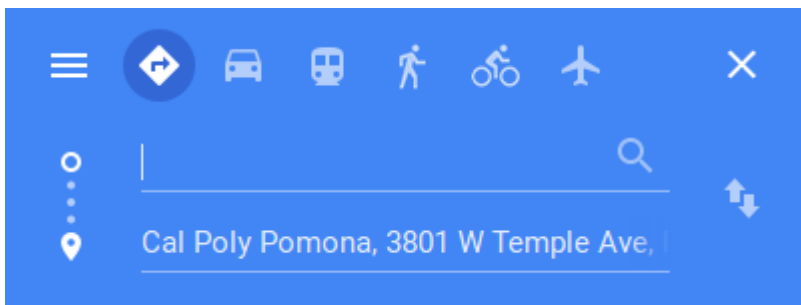Write a short (approximately 1 page) description of the best user interface you have used and why it is so good. What could be done to make it even better?

One of the best user interfaces that I have used is Google Maps. The layout of the web page is very simple and straightforward. In particular, the simple page that the user initially arrives at only has a single search bar. This constraint makes it obvious to the users that they are to begin by typing in the name of a location.

Additionally, Google Maps makes good use of universal icons which can be seen in the snapshot in Figure 1. The use of icons makes the application more appealing across a greater range of people since there are no language barriers to overcome.

Figure 1: Simple search bar with universal icons

These intuitive design choices make Google Maps very appealing to novice users. However, there are also many additional functions and features that appeal to more advanced users. For example, a user may customize route options such as mode of transportation, or they may specify the time of day to depart at in order to anticipate traffic conditions.

There are also features that encourage users to continue to use Google Maps rather than alternate mapping or routing applications. Google Maps is able to save location history in the same way some browsers allow users to bookmark web pages. This helps to establish a user history that may help determine future location queries.