

Why a Free Wiki World Map?

There are lots of free city plans and maps on the Internet. But most are only for private use and cannot be republished. For example, we would not be allowed to reprint them in a flyer like this. Often, they're not current, not complete, and any mistakes are fixed slowly – if at all.

The key problem is that you only get to view map images, but not access to the data from which they were created. You need that data if you want to create your own maps, or use the map on different devices, for example for outdoor navigation.

OpenStreetMap is a world-wide community project which has people like you and me collecting raw geo-data ourselves – sometimes as a team and sometimes individually.

With our own data and our own software we have the freedom to use the data for any purpose. As with Wikipedia, everybody can take part, and hundreds of thousands of us are already mapping.

Join us today!



How does OpenStreetMap Work?

You can collect map data for OpenStreetMap in various ways. A GPS device and written notes are the traditional tools of the trade; the **GPS tracks** become a recording of the roads and paths that you traveled that day. You can use a notepad or a camera to record the details of what you see on your route. "Mappers" (the name for volunteer surveyors like you) can also frequently make good use of our **aerial imagery**.

Editors especially developed for OpenStreetMap can show you the aerial imagery, the GPS tracks that you and/or others have collected, and also data already present in OSM. Street geometries, building outlines, forests or lakes, etc. can be traced from aerial imagery, but information like house numbers, street names, or points of interest are missing from such images. Such data can only be added if you know the place well — or if you travel there for surveying.

Afterwards, your results are uploaded to the central project database, and the **finished map** is created. Shortly thereafter, the new changes are visible for everyone!

