

## The Obvious Benefit of Auto Navigation Systems

If you've been in the market for a car, truck, or SUV recently, then I'm sure you've seen the vast number of vehicles sporting shiny new auto navigation systems as part of this or that package upgrade. These systems are delightfully handy when you find yourself stuck in traffic that is moving slower than the snail that just passed by or that roads are closing due to nasty weather or traffic pile ups. The truth of the matter is that they can come in equally handy when faced with every day driving if you allow them to be.

Many people unfortunately purchase these systems because they seem like a good idea at the time and then never really get their money's worth. Very few investments in technology are worthy if you aren't going to at least get your money's worth. Auto navigation systems are great when you find yourself lost in the woods so to speak, but they can help you find alternate routes when traffic is busy on your traditional drive to the grocery store. They can help you avoid roads that have been closed for maintenance, or even find a quick way around work that is being performed along your route. These devices can also help you find shorter routes to events and such than you may have been aware existed before and they aren't commanding nearly the price they brought in a mere two years ago. In other words, this convenience is becoming much more affordable.

One thing you must keep in mind when considering a new car or a new auto navigation system for an existing car is how much you think you will actually use your system. Even if you save it for emergency use alone, it is quite possible that in an emergency this nifty device will be worth ten times what you originally paid for it because it could save jobs, time, or even lives (particularly if you are lost and searching for a hospital). For me, it is hard to put a price tag on the comfort that owning a device such as this would bring but it is definitely worth the \$500-\$1,000 that is currently being charged. Keep in mind that when these systems first hit the market \$1,000 was on the ultra low end.

If you never use this system and only get it because it looks cool, then you definitely are not getting your money's worth. Technology is only good when it's useful to someone. Sitting there unused it is assisting no one and is essentially a waste of money. On the other end of the spectrum however, you have people like me. By 'like me' I mean those of us who could get helplessly lost and flustered finding our way out of the driveway on dark and moonless nights. I use my auto navigation system like an extra pair of eyes. My system is not the top of the line system that advertises an uncanny ability to help you parallel park your car, but it is nice enough to help me figure out where I am and how to get where I'm going from there. For me, that is exactly enough to be worth every

penny.

Beyond that, my navigation system doesn't require tricky folds or my pulling off onto the shoulder in order to read. It talks to me (without losing it's temper) and tells me where to go, I love that about my system. I don't know about the rest of you, but map reading is not something I've ever been gifted at. That fact may have a little to do with the fact that it was not something I was ever terribly interested in. Couple that with my poor attention to landmarks and I was a driving disaster. Literally, I got lost at least once, if not twice a week before making the move into the modern world of navigation. I have absolutely no regrets and while I can't promise that you will love your auto navigation system as much as I love mine (all systems are not created equal), I can pretty much bet that your driving, particularly on long road trips, will go much more smoothly than without one.

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