

FIELD TEST

GPS Showdown!

We put the latest global positioning systems—for the wild and the truck—to the test

A GPS not only can save your life, but can also save you from driving around aimlessly as you try to find that state forest entrance. We tested the year's most cutting-edge systems and rated them based on their features, ease-of-use, satellite acquisition and durability. —Logan Kugler

FOR THE OUTDOORS

MAGELLAN TRITON 2000

EASE-OF-USE: ★★
 FEATURES: ★★
 DURABILITY: ★★★
 SATELLITE ACQUISITION: ★★★

The Triton 2000 boasts a 2.7-inch touchscreen, a 3-axis electronic compass, a barometer, an LED flashlight, a music player and even a 2-megapixel digital camera and voice recorder. It's the first handheld GPS compatible with *National Geographic* topo maps and has an SD card slot. However, the system froze and crashed several times during testing.

PRICE: \$499 BATTERY TYPE: AA
 CONTACT: MAGELLANGPS.COM



GARMIN COLORADO 400t

EASE-OF-USE: ★★★ FEATURES: ★★
 DURABILITY: ★★★ SATELLITE ACQUISITION: ★★



The Colorado 400t is a great and innovative new backcountry GPS unit. It's both intuitive and elegant, feels good in your hand, and is the most durable of the units we tested. Its speedy click-wheel interface makes the 400t glove-friendly, so you don't have to worry about baring your fingers in cold weather just to mark a waypoint. At more than \$600, it's the most expensive of the bunch, but with many of the latest features in GPS technology all crammed into such a compact package, it's worth the bounty. PRICE: \$639 BATTERY TYPE: AA CONTACT: GARMIN.COM



BUSHNELL ONIX 400

EASE-OF-USE: ★
 FEATURES: ★★★
 DURABILITY: ★
 SATELLITE ACQUISITION: ★

With XM satellite radio and satellite imagery capability, the Onix 400 is unique and advanced. Sporting an extra-large 3.5-inch full-color LCD display, the Onix 400 retrieves real-time NEXRAD weather data for your location, and a 30-minute forecast via XM Weather. We found it has an extremely steep learning curve, but once you figure out what you're doing, it's good to know you've got the most advanced technology at hand.

PRICE: \$577 BATTERY TYPE: RECHARGEABLE LITHIUM-ION
 CONTACT: BUSHNELL.COM

Rating Key

EASE-OF-USE	FEATURES	DURABILITY	SATELLITE ACQUISITION
★ Difficult	★ Lacking	★ Fragile	★ Slow
★★ Medium	★★ Plentiful	★★ Sufficient	★★ Average
★★★ Easy	★★★ Overflowing	★★★ Rock-solid	★★★ Fast

ALL PHOTOS: EDDIE BERMAN

FOR THE ROAD



MAGELLAN CROSSOVERGPS

EASE-OF-USE: ★★★ FEATURES: ★★
SATELLITE ACQUISITION: ★★

If you're on the road as much as you're in the great outdoors, Magellan's CrossoverGPS is a decent compromise. Sporting modes for both the actual jungle and the concrete jungle, it keeps you informed no matter where you find yourself. True to its rugged roots, the CrossoverGPS features an ultra-sturdy mount and has what looks like a brilliant optional marine navigation mode, called BlueNav, which shows nautical traffic lanes and restricted zones. (Unfortunately, we weren't able to test this feature.) What we didn't like: its less-than-attractive Hertz NeverLost-type interface and its bulky feel.

PRICE: \$399 CONTACT: MAGELLANGPS.COM



TOMTOM GO 720

EASE-OF-USE: ★★★ FEATURES: ★★ SATELLITE ACQUISITION: ★★★

2008
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CHOICE
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The Go 720 is a well-designed, simple-to-use, feature-packed GPS. Its huge 4.3-inch touchscreen is super-responsive, route recalculations are made at lightning speed and the map page is very readable. The spoken voice, "Mandy," is actually pleasant to listen to. Other features include a built-in FM transmitter for your iPod, Bluetooth connectivity for your phone and a setting that asks what time you'd *like* to arrive at your destination—rather than telling you what time you *will* arrive. Optional features include real-time traffic and weather. Our only complaint: Mandy would simply say, "Turn right," where the Navigon 2100 would tell us the street name. PRICE: \$500 CONTACT: TOMTOM.COM



NAVIGON 2100

EASE-OF-USE: ★★ FEATURES: ★★★ SATELLITE ACQUISITION: ★★★

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While some GPS makers have lost their way over the years, regurgitating the same tired technology, Navigon has reinvented GPS technology. Features on the Navigon 2100 include an assist mode to help identify the proper lane for exiting the highway, real-time traffic, realistic depictions of complicated intersections and an advanced 3D highway Reality View. And it's the first GPS with a restaurant guide, complete with customer reviews from Zagat.com. This small GPS even has the speed limit built in for most major highways. As for its mounting system, it's the best we've seen. The interface navigation is slightly sluggish and less than intuitive, but for under \$250, it's difficult to beat. PRICE: \$249 CONTACT: NAVIGONUSA.COM

How We Test

The trail units were tested during a 3-hour hike through rugged terrain to a crested peak halfway up a mountain in the backcountry of Southern California. The durability test included tossing the units several times down a 10- to 20-foot rocky hillside. The road units were tested on the drive to and from the mountain.