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But with a system this powerful things start to get complicated, and it isn't always obvious how to do the most basic things you want to do in a mapping app. Whether you're opening up Google Maps for the first time on your new phone or just need a refresher on the app you've kept on your home screen for months, we're here to help. Read along for our quick guide to the basics of Google Maps on Android.Read now: The basics of Google Maps for AndroidFinding placesFew of us are going to open up Google Maps and scroll around aimlessly until we find something interesting — most of the time we're opening up the app with a distinct destination in mind. Luckily Google Maps is driven by the vast search power of Google — just tap the search box at the top of the interface and type (or speak!) anything you need. You may like You can search for states, cities, retailers, types of stores or just a complete address if you know it — and Google Maps will populate results with what it thinks is relevant information. If you just tap the search bar and scroll up rather than type, you can see your most recent searches (on any device with your Google account signed in), as well as an "Explore nearby" section and popular search groups like gas stations and ATMs.Select an item from the search results or suggested items and you'll be whisked away (virtually, anyway) to that location on the map.Explore places around youWhile many of us think of apps like Foursquare, OpenTable and TripAdvisor for finding interesting places to go and dine, Google Maps has a pretty robust listing of places and restaurants for you to discover. When Google Maps is confident that it has locked in on your location — from GPS, cellular networks and Wifi — a bar will pop up on the bottom of the interface with a small star and "Around [location]" on it.Tap that bar, and you'll be taken to a screen of nearby attractions, museums, photo spots, restaurants and interesting things to see nearby. You'll be given information on each location, and the option to dive deeper if you're interested — of course you can get directions in the end if you want to go there. If you're looking for information on a place that you aren't currently at, swipe the map around to the location that you're interested in and hit that explore bar — you'll be given the same kind of results, but for that area.Get the latest news from Android Central, your trusted companion in the world of AndroidOnce you've narrowed down where you're going to go based on your search, you'll surely want a little help getting there. Once you have a location selected on the map, you'll see a circle in the bottom-right corner of the interface — tap it and you'll be taken to the navigation screen. By default you'll be taken to the driving directions, but you can adjust your app settings to default to public transit, biking or walking as well. Tap the route you prefer to take — the top option is the fastest available — and away you go. Google Maps will route you step-by-step to your destination.If you know exactly where you're going before you open Maps, you can just tap the blue navigation button on the main maps screen — again in the bottom-left corner — and enter the starting and ending locations. By default the starting location will be your current location, but you can change that.Rate places you've been toSo you've just used Google Maps to find a great place to go, you got directions and had a full afternoon of fun. Maybe you want to go back and rate those places the next day so others will have your recommendation — that can be done inside Google Maps, too. Whether you're at the place or not, go into Google Maps and find the location you want to rate. Tap it on the map and you'll see detailed information, including reviews.To add your own review, scroll down until you see your Google+ profile picture and an empty set of stars. Tap the star rating you'd like to give the place, and you'll be taken to a new screen where you can add a short review to go along with the star rating. Tap Post at the bottom when you're done, and your review will shortly be viewable by everyone who looks for more information on the place.Save locations for laterMaybe that new restaurant you found with your friends is the best in town — you'll surely want to save that for future reference. Back to the place information page where you just left a rating, under the lead image at the top of the page you'll see a Save button with a star above it. Tap the button, and the place will automatically be saved and synced to your Google Account. If you want to save a specific location that isn't tied to a building, landmark or business, simply long press on a spot on the map and you'll be able to save the location from that point.You'll now be able to access it with other saved locations from the left-edge slide-in panel in Google Maps under the "Your places" button, as well as see a small star when looking at a map on either your mobile devices or desktop. As is the case with any other location, you can quickly navigate to a saved location with just a couple taps in the app.This is just the tip of the icebergGoogle Maps is an amazingly powerful tool, and though it may take a while to figure out all of its features and quirks, we're here to help you figure it all out. You can keep up with all of our Google Maps coverage right here as we post more helpful articles! 1 Download Google Maps. If you don't already have Google Maps on your Android, open Google Play , then do the following: Tap the search bar at the top of the screen. Type in google maps Tap Search or the Enter key. Tap Maps - Navigation & Transit Tap INSTALL Tap ACCEPT when prompted. 2 Open Google Maps. Tap OPEN when it appears in the Play Store. This will open the main Google Maps page. You can also tap the Google Maps icon in your Android's App Drawer. Advertisement 3 Tap the search bar. It's the "Search here" text box at the top of the screen. 4 Enter the name or address of a destination. Type in the name (e.g., "Starbucks") or the street address of the place to which you want to travel. If you don't know the name of the destination or the destination is a private residence, you'll need to enter an address. 5 Tap the destination. In the drop-down menu below the search bar, tap the destination that matches the name or address that you typed in. If you don't see the appropriate destination appear after typing in an address, just tap Search or Enter in your Android's keyboard. 6 Tap DIRECTIONS. It's a blue button near the bottom of the screen, though you may need to scroll down to find it. 7 Enter a starting point. Tap the "Choose starting point..." text box near the top of the screen, then enter the address of the location from which you'll be starting your trip. You'll usually have a Your location option that allows you to select your current location as the starting point. 8 Select a mode of transportation. Tap one of the icons—the car, bus, person, or bike—near the top of the screen to indicate whether you'll be driving, taking public transportation, walking, or cycling to your destination. 9 Start your route. Tap START near the bottom of the screen to begin automated navigation. You'll hear a voice explaining directions to you as you move. If prompted, tap Got it to continue before you begin your route. You can also tap Steps to view the list of directions on a turn-by-turn basis. Advertisement Add New Question Question How do I locate another GPS user? I'm not sure if you can locate another GPS user on the Android itself, but I do know if you want to locate a friend or family member, Life360 is the best one out there! It's free and you can see the person's location and where they have been before. You can even contact them from the app. They also show you where registered sex offenders are in your area. Question How can I send my location to my friend using the GPS in my smartphone? If you're using an iPhone, there is an app called "Find Friends." This allows you to share your location with anyone in your contact list that also has an iPhone. Question Why is it that even though I have already enabled my GPS, there's still a message that says GPS not found? It may take a while for your device to completely locate you, but most of time you have to be outside in order for this to happen successfully. See more answers Ask a Question Advertisement Thanks Thanks Advertisement Thanks Advertisement Written by: wikiHow Technology Writer This article was co-authored by wikiHow staff writer, Jack Lloyd. Jack Lloyd is a Technology Writer and Editor for wikiHow. He has over two years of experience writing and editing technology-related articles. He is technology enthusiast and an English teacher. This article has been viewed 571,324 times. Co-authors: 17 Updated: June 3, 2021 Views: 571,324 Categories: Android Applications Print Send fan mail to authors Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 571,324 times. "Thanks! I've been wanting to learn how to use this phone feature for ages. I didn't even know I already had it on my phone (galaxy S7). It is so simple!"..." more Share your story Who doesn't love Google Maps? The Maps Android app helps those of us with oatmeal for brains find our way anywhere, without having to fire any neurons or exercise any synapses. It even helps us find places to pick up tasty cuisine — like, uh, oatmeal (yum!). But there's much more to Google Maps than meets the eye — and odds are, you aren't taking advantage of at least a few handy hidden features lurking within the Maps Android app. With Android 16 now right around the corner and more shiny new Googley goodies showing up left and right lately, I thought it'd be a fine time to dive deep into this ever-evolving Android anchor and think through some of its more off-the-beaten-path advanced options. Take a few minutes to explore these possibilities the next time you've got Maps pulled up on your phone, and get ready to experience the world around you in a whole new way. [Psst: Love shortcuts? My Android Shortcut Supercourse will teach you tons of time-saving tricks for your phone — stretching far beyond Maps' borders. Sign up now for free!] The most important part of Maps is navigation — right? And yet, the Maps Android app's best navigation experience is curiously tucked away in a labyrinth of options and disabled by default. In fact, most average roaming land mammals would never even know the superior route exists! But hey, you're reading this column. You clearly aren't an average organism. So let's take your Maps adventuring to the next level, shall we? Start by opening up the Maps app on your phone, then: Tap your profile picture in the app's upper-right corner. Select "Settings," then scroll way down and select "Navigation." Scroll down again until you see the section labeled "Glanceable directions while navigating," and flip the toggle within that section into the on and active position. One quick switch, and boom: The next time you search for a specific location, you'll see the detailed steps and ETA info right on the route overview — from the second you hit the "Directions" button. Google Maps' glanceable directions options makes it infinitely easier to see where you're going — at a glance. JR Raphael / IDG Much better, wouldn't ya say?! While we're thinking about smarter directions, make a mental note of this route to higher Maps enlightenment: You can find out how long any specific drive is likely to take at any specific time with the help of Maps' intelligent traffic estimation tool. Just search for a location in the Android Maps app, then tap the Directions button and put in whatever starting point you want. Tap the three-dot menu icon in the upper-right corner of the same box where you typed the address, then select "Set depart or arrive time." You can then specify exactly when you want to leave or when you want to arrive — with a specific day and time — and Maps will show you the likely traffic conditions and estimated travel time for that exact moment, based on mountains of historical data. Here's an interesting one that I only learned about recently by way of some chatter in my Intelligence Insider Community: By default, Maps now gives you directions based on the most fuel-efficient path to your destination. That's great if you're trying to save on gas, but when you're really in a hurry, you may just want the absolute fastest path possible — even if it potentially costs you a few extra pennies. If so, do this: Speed your way back into the Maps Android app's settings and again head into the "Navigation" area. Scroll down to the "Route options" section of the screen. See the line labeled "Prefer fuel-efficient routes"? Tap the toggle next to it to turn it off. And if you would rather stick with the fuel-efficient path, there's still an option in that area you'll want to adjust: Within the "Navigation" area of the Maps app's settings, tap the line labeled "Your vehicles." Select the type of car you're actually using — gas, diesel, electric, or hybrid. That'll help Maps better select routes based on actual fuel (or energy) use for your specific vehicle type, if that's the navigation approach you'd prefer. Why stick with the boring ol' blue dot to represent your location during a Maps navigation? As of a very recent update, the Android Maps app now empowers you to pick your own custom icon to represent your vehicle as you're driving — which can be both fun and practical, since it makes it a whole lot easier to spot yourself at a glance. A custom icon even carries over to a car's display via Android Auto, too, so you'll see it there once you select it. Best of all? It'll take you all of 20 seconds to do. Speaking of making your way around maps, sometimes, it isn't exactly practical — or maybe even possible — to use two fingers to pinch and zoom your way around an area. So remember this useful alternative: In addition to the standard pinch-to-zoom system, the Android Maps app supports a secret gesture for zooming in or out of any map view. Just double-tap anywhere on an active map screen, then keep your finger down and slide it up to zoom out or down to zoom in. You can also just double-tap without the slide to zoom in a teensy bit at a time. Beyond that, you can spin a map around to change your perspective by placing your index finger and thumb on the screen and then twisting 'em together to the left or right — and you can shift into a funky three-dimensional "flyover" view of any area you're examining by placing two fingers on a map together and sliding 'em upward on the screen. I don't know about you, but I tend to be a semi-obsessive planner. And part of that, erm, condition means a burning need to know, anticipate, and — well, y'know, plan things out ahead of time. Maps has a splendid system for this sort of in-advance organization. The next time you're looking at directions to a specific spot, try this: From the directions screen within the Android Maps app — the first screen you see after tapping the Directions button for any given destination — tap the Start button to begin a navigation (even if you aren't actually ready to roll quite yet!). Once the navigation is active, swipe upward on the bar at the bottom of the screen, where you see your current travel time. In the menu that pops up, select "Search along route." You can then type any term into the box that appears to seek out a specific place along the way or look for, say, restaurants, gas stations, or any other type of business imaginable. Searching along a specific route is one of Maps' most helpful hidden options. JR Raphael / IDG Google Maps Android trick #7: On-demand context When you're looking at a specific location within the Android Maps app — be it a restaurant or any other type of business — you can now lean on Google's next-gen Gemini assistant to learn more about it on demand, without having to do any manual digging. You'll need to be using Gemini as your device's default assistant in order for this to work. Provided that's the case, pull up any location within Maps and then summon Gemini — either by pressing and holding your physical power button or using the Hey Google launch phrase. See the new "Ask about place" option above its main prompt area? Gemini integrates with the Android Maps app to offer on-demand info when summoned.JR Raphael, Foundry Tap that — and then, you can simply ask anything you want to know about the place present on your screen. And Gemini will serve up answers. You can ask all sorts of questions about locations and get instant info from Google's Gemini assistant.JR Raphael, Foundry The next time you need a lift somewhere — be it via the actual Lyft service, Uber, or some other ridesharing provider — save yourself some steps and order your ride directly from the familiar Maps interface. Start by searching for a specific place and then tapping the Directions button, as if you were gonna make the trek on your own. Then, look for the icon with a person waving her hand in the air like she just don't care (or, erm, like she's hailing a cab). Your friendly waver should show up within the directions panel at the bottom of the screen, to the right of the biking guy. If you don't see her right away, swipe horizontally along that line to reveal her. The Android Maps app integrates with ridesharing services like Lyft and Uber, provided you have the associated apps installed.JR Raphael, Foundry That'll show you current prices and wait times for both Lyft and Uber, right then and there, and allow you to hop directly into the ride-ordering process within either app — assuming you have them installed. (If you aren't seeing any of this, incidentally, you probably need to install a compatible rideshare app first so Maps will detect it and start showing the associated info.) One of the Android Maps app's most underappreciated features is its ability to let you create collections of places and then revisit 'em or share 'em with other human person-people later. It's like a super-specific sort of bookmarking service that's all about locations and connected directly to your favorite navigation companion. And it's super-practical, too, whether you're looking to get organized ahead of a Very Important Business Trip or even just to plan around a drive to a different part of town for some manner of work-related meeting. To take advantage of the system, tap the You tab at the bottom of the Maps app, then look for the section labeled "Your lists." Tap the "New list" command within that area of the screen, and you can then give your fancy new list a name and a description and decide whether you want it to be private, shared only with specific people, or public for anyone to find. Location lists are a lovely way to save related places for future reference — for yourself or for a group. JR Raphael / IDG With shared lists, you can even opt to let other people edit and add their own items into the mix — an easy way to collaborate with colleagues, cousins, or chinchillas on a list of lustworthy lunch spots or business supply stop-bys. Remember way back in the early days of Android when one of the most popular apps was a simple little tool called Car Locator? No? Well, I do — but then again, I've been writing about Android for approximately 973 years now. (Related: I may or may not be a wise, if somewhat shriveled, tortoise elder.) These days, that app is long gone — but little-known fact: Maps itself can do exactly what it used to do and save any location you want, then help you mosey back to it later. The next time your noggin needs a memory aide, just open up Maps and tap the blue dot that represents your current location. That'll pull up a big honkin' menu, within which you'll see the incredibly useful "Save parking" option — inside a horizontally scrolling bar of buttons toward the top of the panel. (And don't let yourself be fooled: While its official purpose may revolve around parking, you can just as easily use the feature to save any kind of location for any reason you want.) Tap that option, and that's it: Your current location will be burned into Maps' memory. If you want to add extra info to help your own mushy mammal brain later, swipe up on the bar that says "Parking location" at the bottom of the screen. You can then enter notes about your saved location (what level you parked on, how many oatmeal-serving establishments were in the vicinity, and so on), attach photos (you making silly faces in front of various passersby, etc), and create an alert to remind you about the location after a certain amount of time has elapsed. Saving your location may be the best way you put Maps to use, ever. JR Raphael / IDG When you're ready to get back to your car — or whatever sort of spot you've saved — all you've gotta do is tap that same "Parking location" bar at the bottom of the Maps app or look for the "Parking location" notification from anywhere in your phone. Next up: Help someone find you — or maybe just give 'em an update on your whereabouts and progress — by tapping the blue location dot within the main Maps screen and then selecting "Share location" from the menu that comes up. That'll let you send anyone a link to follow your location in real-time on a map for a specific amount of time or until you turn the feature off. You can beam the link directly into another app or service on your phone to get it wherever you need. You can also even ask Maps to give you helpful notifications about someone's whereabouts once they've opted into location sharing with you, if you want. (And yes, this is the same underlying location sharing system now also available within Google's Find My Device app — as well as the Google Contacts app for Android.) Alternatively, if you're in the midst of a navigation, swipe up on the time estimate panel at the bottom of the Maps navigation screen. There, you'll find a handy hidden "Share trip progress" option that'll do exactly what you desire. Did you know Maps can show you live, real-time traffic info as you're navigating with your phone? All you've gotta do is tell it you want that info — a feat that'll require approximately seven seconds of your time. The next time you're in the midst of a navigation within the Maps app on your phone… Swipe up on that time estimate panel at the bottom of the screen. Flip the toggle next to "Show traffic on map." Perform a spritely little jig to celebrate whilst whistling the tune of Tom Cochrane's timeless 1991 hit song "Life Is a Highway." * * Jig and whistling optional but highly recommended On your way to a secret lair? Well, look at you, Bruce Wayne. Pin this bit of info to your amygdala: If you tap your profile picture in the Maps app and then select "Turn on Incognito mode," Maps will temporarily stop saving your location and using it for any future purposes. And no one — not even Google — will know where you are. Not to worry: Your secret's safe with me. Last but not least, you'd be forgiven for forgetting — or maybe not ever knowing — but Maps has its own custom set of voice commands that work whenever you're in the midst of a navigation. All you've gotta do is say "Hey Google" or activate your assistant in whatever manner you prefer, and then shout out the command in question. So buckle up — here are some of the more intriguing possibilities: "How's traffic ahead?" "How's traffic home?" "Show the route overview." "Show an alternate route." "What's my ETA?" "What road is this?" "What's my next turn?" "Navigate home." "Avoid tolls." "Avoid highways." "Find a gas station." "Take me to Best Buy." "Find a restaurant." "Find me somewhere that serves oatmeal, gosh darn it." That last one may or may not work, but hey — it's always worth a shot. Go beyond Maps and get even more Android shortcut knowledge with my free Android Shortcut Supercourse. You'll learn tons of time-saving tricks for your phone! Google Maps has grown over the years to use real-time information for points of interest, street views, navigation directions, traffic updates, plus a whole lot more.It allows millions of smartphone owners to easily get from point A to B, especially when you are in an unfamiliar place.This is how to use Google Maps on your smartphone.You will first need to downlaod the Google Maps app on your iOS or Android phone.The Google Maps is available for download on the Apple App Store and should come pre-loaded on your Android device.After that, you will simply have to tap on the Google Maps icon on your phone's screen.Click the search bar at the top of the screen, type in the location's address or name, then tap search.A helpful tip once Google Maps is up and running is to save your home and work addresses.To do this, click the menu button — represented by three horizontal lines icon in the top-left corner — and enter the information.There you can find entries for Home and Work.Google Maps: The app lets users benefit from real-time information (Image: Google Maps)Google Maps: The app is easy to use on your smartphone (Image: Google Maps)Google Maps: The Street View function gives users a first-person perspective of a site (Image: Google Maps)This lets you ask Google to navigate from these frequently visited place and eliminates the need to constantly enter them.You can also enter searches like "restaurants near work," to receive a list of helpful suggestions.Google Maps Navigation, which offers voice-guided, turn-by-turn directions, is one of the apps most popular features.It can be activated by simply searching for a destination as normal, then touch and hold the blue Directions button at the bottom right, and Google Maps will choose the best route and launch straight into Navigation mode.If for whatever reason you want to tweak the route or change your mode of transport, then just tap it once, make your changes, then select Start.Sharing your location is useful for meeting people on the move.All you need to do is tap and hold on any location to drop a pin.Then click the address section at the bottom of the screen to expand it, and select Share.You are then offered a list of apps to share your location.One of the most innovative features is the street view function, which gives users a first-person perspective of your location.Touch and hold on the map to drop a pin on your chosen location, then tap at the bottom where it says Dropped pin to bring the information up.You should see an image of the location near the bottom of your screen.Tap that, and you will launch into Street View at your chosen location. This guide is designed to show you how to get started with Google Maps on Android. Google Maps is an essential tool for anyone with a smartphone, and Android users have access to its full suite of features. Whether you're a seasoned navigator or just getting your bearings, this guide will equip you with everything you need to know to get the most out of Google Maps on your Android device. 1. Download and Install the App: The Google Maps app comes pre-installed on most Android devices, but if not, you can download it for free from the Google Play Store. Once installed, open the app and sign in with your Google account to unlock its full potential. 2. Explore the Interface: The Google Maps interface is user-friendly and intuitive. Here's a quick breakdown of the key elements: Search bar: Enter locations, businesses, or points of interest to find them on the map. Current location button: Tap the blue circle with a white arrow to center the map on your current location. Zoom controls: Pinch or spread your fingers to zoom in or out on the map. Layers button: Access additional map layers like traffic, public transport, and cycling routes. Navigation button: Get directions to your destination by car, bike, public transport, or walking. Menu button: Access settings, your saved places, and other features. 3. Finding Your Way: Google Maps excels at helping you get where you need to go. Here's how to use its navigation features: Enter your destination: Type in the address, business name, or point of interest you want to reach. Choose your mode of transport: Select driving, walking, cycling, or public transport to get directions tailored to your chosen mode. Start navigation: Tap the "Start" button to begin turn-by-turn voice guidance. Real-time updates: Google Maps will keep you informed about traffic conditions, road closures, and other disruptions along your route. 4. Saving Places and Creating Lists: Stay organized and save your favorite places for later reference. Here's how: Star locations: Tap the star icon next to a place on the map to save it to your "Saved" tab. Create lists: Organize your saved places into custom lists for different purposes, like restaurants to try, weekend getaways, or commute stops. Share lists: Share your saved places and lists with friends and family for easy planning and collaboration. 5. Exploring and Discovering: Google Maps is more than just a navigation tool. It's a gateway to exploring new places and discovering hidden gems. Here are some features to check out: Explore tab: Discover trending restaurants, popular attractions, and upcoming events in your area. Street View: Take a virtual tour of streets and landmarks around the world. Indoor Maps: Navigate inside buildings like malls, airports, and museums. Offline Maps: Download maps of specific areas for offline access, perfect for traveling without data roaming charges. Bonus Tips: Enable location sharing: Share your live location with friends and family for added safety and convenience. Use incognito mode: Keep your searches and navigation history private. Customize your map: Change the map style, enable traffic alerts, and adjust other settings to suit your preferences. Contribute to the map: Add missing information, report errors, and share your reviews to help improve Google Maps for everyone. With these tips and tricks, you're well on your way to becoming a Google Maps master on Android. Remember, the more you explore its features, the more you'll discover its potential to make your life easier and more adventurous. So, get out there, navigate with confidence, and let Google Maps guide you to your next destination! I hope this guide helps you get the most out of Google Maps on your Android device. Feel free to ask if you have any further questions! Image Credit: henry perks Filed Under: Android News, Guides Latest Geeky Gadgets Deals Disclosure: Some of our articles include affiliate links. If you buy something through one of these links, Geeky Gadgets may earn an affiliate commission. Learn about our Disclosure Policy. Whether you want to drive to a new place in the shortest amount of time, navigate a public transit system that you're still learning or get recommendations for things around you, Google Maps is an all-encompassing app that can do it. It offers real time traffic data, transit directions, a massive directory of places and an impressively large set of satellite imagery all at your fingertips.An app as huge as this deserves plenty of your time to learn how to use it just right, so we've pulled together all of our information, help and tips on the subject into one place — the ultimate guide to Google Maps.READ NOW: The ultimate guide to Google Maps You may like The basics: Getting started with Google MapsWhen you're learning something new, you always start with the basics. Unfortunately a lot of the functionality of Google Maps is hidden or not initially obvious, and it takes some poking around to learn. We've got you covered here, with the basics of how to find places in Google Maps, navigate to those places, rate the places that you've been and then save your favorites for later. It's a great primer to learning Google Maps, and it covers the first layer of the app experience.READ: The basics of Google Maps on AndroidGetting around with Google MapsThe unfathomable amount of data that Google Maps has on roads, traffic, topography, transit systems and buildings makes it an amazing tool for navigation. Whether you're getting around by car, train, bus, subway, bike or your own two feet, Google Maps has the information you need to get from point A to B in the most efficient way possible. With Maps navigation, you'll get great turn-by-turn directions assisted by live traffic data, as well as live transit times with step-by-step directions for finding your way. If you want to know everything about navigating in Google Maps, you'll find it here.READ: Finding your way with Google Maps on AndroidGet the latest news from Android Central, your trusted companion in the world of AndroidHow to find and manage your search and location historyWhen it comes to the information that apps and companies hold about you, knowledge is power. Google Maps naturally knows a lot about where you are, where you've been and even where you're planning to go, and that means it's important to know how to check up on and clear out that data if you so choose. Both the Google Maps app on Android and the Maps website have great tools for managing your search and location history that's stored by Google Maps, and we have two great tutorials showing you how to use it.Google Earth or Google Maps: What's the difference?Considering that you can view an impressive amount of satellite imagery in Google Maps, it's not an uncommon question to wonder what the differences between Google Maps and Google Earth are. In some respects they overlap a bit, but when you look at both side-by-side you can see where each of their strengths lie. Google Maps is great for navigation and finding information on places, while Google Earth provides dramatically better imagery for exploring and seeing everything the world has to offer.READ: Google Maps and Google Earth: What's the difference?With Google Maps on your phone, it's pretty tough to get lost. But that doesn't mean that you can necessarily help someone else find their way if they're having trouble. Maps makes it pretty easy to send directions from the app out to someone else, whether they want step-by-step instructions in a simple text format or prefer that you just send a precise location so that they can navigate on their own. Two great options that can bring people together.READ: How to share directions in Google Maps on AndroidTop tips and tricks for Google MapsOnce you feel like you've mastered Google Maps, take a look at these great tips and tricks that will round out your knowledge on the app to master levels. Some hard-to-find features are really great, and can make your mobile mapping experience even better. We compiled 10 great tips and tricks for Google Maps, ranging from dropping pins on specific locations to using your voice to control the app at any time. Perhaps the best part about learning these somewhat-hidden features is being able to teach someone else after you know them yourself.READ: Tips and tricks for using Google Maps on AndroidDon't like Maps? Check out these alternative appsThere's obviously a lot to like about Google Maps, but it's no secret that it isn't universally loved. For that reason there are tons of great alternative mapping apps on Android, and they each offer something unique that could be the killer feature you're looking for. Whether it's complete offline support, a simpler interface or something really specific, there's a chance you could find it in one of these alternative apps. Give 'em a try, and see which work for you.READ: App alternatives to Google Maps on Android