



Map Applications Comparison Chart

		GAIA GPS	CALTOPO	ON X	FATMAP	GOOGLE EARTH	QGIS
ROUTE PLANNING	ROUTE DRAWING AND EDITING	★★	★★★★	★★		★★	★
	3D EXPLORATION	★	–	★	★★	★★★★	–
	USER FRIENDLY	★★★★	★★	★★	★★	★	★ ¹
	TRACING TRAILS, RIVERS, ETC.	★★	★★★★			★	–
	PUBLIC TRACKS	★★★★	–			–	–
	FEATURE ORGANIZATION	★	★★			★★★★	★
	PRINTING	★★	★★★★			–	★★★★
SHARING	IMPORT/EXPORT	★★	★★★★			★★★★	★★★★
	SHARING	★★	★★★★			★	★
NAVIGATION APP	DESIGN	★★★★ ²	★★	★★	★★	–	–
	3D EXPLORATION IN APP	–	–		★★★★	–	–
LAYERS	NUMBER OF LAYERS	★★★★	★★★★	★	★	★★ ³	★★★★
	NRT SATELLITE IMAGERY	★	★★ ⁴		–	★★ ⁵	★★★★
	SUN EXPOSURE	–	★★★★	–	–	★ ⁶	
	SLOPE ANGLE SHADING	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★ ³	
	LAND OWNERSHIP	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	–	★★ ³	
	WINTER IMAGERY/FEATURES	–	–	★★	★★★★	★ ⁷	
	INTERNATIONAL TOPO	★★			★★★★		

v2024.01: This chart is based on my experience and biases. Not all features have been evaluated.

Start & End at Home wilderness risk management and trip planning:

<https://courses.thingstolucat.com>

★★★★ More ★s are better

– Not available

Unknown

Best

⁴ See notes →

1) QGIS is not beginner-friendly. This should be negative stars.

2) The navigation apps are similar but Gaia has been through the most design iterations.

3) CalTopo layers can be viewed in Google Earth. Requires a CalTopo premium subscription.

4) CalTopo offers Sentinel-2 imagery but at a slightly lower resolution than NRT websites.

5) NRT images can be downloaded and then viewed in Google Earth.

6) Google Earth offers a sun exposure feature but it is not accurate.

7) You can use the time control to search for winter imagery.