GPS Reviews

Garmin & Magellan GPS Reviews:Â

Any model GPS in our REVIEW section will work with the Baja GPS Guidebook.Â If you do not see your GPS listed here, please email us with your make/model.

Garmin Review:

Garmin's name stands out for a reason.Â They are the number one in GPS sales currently.Â Garmins are higher in price and the customer service is slow, but these GPS'sÂ have continued to evolve with easierÂ to learn layouts.Â Quality is a reputation Garmin has earnedÂ while consistently providing us with cutting edgeÂ technology before any other brand.Â

Garmin Montana 650 Series GPS:

This is my current favorite on the market, but make sure to read about the 78 and Rino below before choosing as they all have different features that may better suit your situation.Â The Montana 650's have the largest screen size and come with the best sunlight screen on the market (great for high sun glare).Â This is a touch screen that works with gloves on!Â Gotta love that. I'm extremely partial to larger screens for easier & safer navigation.Â You can touch and move the map on the screen to look around without having to toggle with the up/down keys, which is also a bonus.

Difference in Series:

This is important to understand.Â Current models come with a number (like 650 series) and some letters (like T).Â Here's the scoop you'll want to understand:

Montana (very similar to Oregon and Dakota, but bigger better screen-well worth skipping the other 2 and getting the Montana).Â These GPS come in 600 or 650 orÂ 650T.

ONLY Difference in Montana Versions:

Montana 600: Cheapest $465.99 (Discounted on this site), no camera, no sunlight readable screen (bummer), NO preloaded maps (preference: if you want 100K US topo), 3.0GB instead of 3.5GB of built-in memory (both is a lot so no big deal), less detail on tide charts.Â Very good choice for a GPS, but personally the sunlight readable is worth the extra $50 bucks to me - perhaps no you though!

Montana 650:Â Middle priceÂ $525.99 (Discounted on this site),Â has camera,Â has sunlight readable screen (worth it!), NO preloaded maps (preference: if you want 100K US topo), 3.0GB instead of 3.5GB of built-in memory (both is a lot so no big deal),Â more detail on tide charts.Â My personal favorite for the buck and the camera allows you to take a photo on a route and view it (like a starting point you are looking for.... cool bones and something I decided to pay for)

Montana 650T:Â Higher priceÂ $595.99 (Discounted on this site),Â has camera,Â has sunlight readable screen (worth it!), HAS preloaded maps (preference if you want 100K US topo), 3.5GB of built-in memory (3.0 is a lot too too though),Â more detail on tide charts.Â I own this unit and love it.

Garmin 78 Series:

I like the 78 as my second choice to the Montana.Â I like the software functionality probably a little better than the Montana; it's easier to navigate and easier toÂ glide intoÂ from other Garmin GPS's (similar to older units).Â The buttons are

easy to use on the fly and I like it's shape & construction better than the 62 series (same GPS different shape except the 78 floats).Â The 78 does not have a touch-screen and has a smaller screen size (2.6" diagonal vs. 4" diagonal on Montana), and theÂ built in memory is 1.7GB vs. 3-3.5GB (1.7 beingÂ plenty for basic use like uploading the E32 map or Baja Nav Map). Â The storage capacity is also quite different from the 78 VS. the Montana by about double on waypoints 2000 vs. 4000 (Routes are the same at 200 / Tracklogs are the same at 200Â w/ 10,000 bread crumbs) -Â this kind of storage of waypoints on the MontanaÂ is great for people that just don't want to learn the software and store everything in the device, butÂ for basic use 2000 waypoints is plenty. Â The 78 is a nice unit and much lesser price than the Montana (the screen size/detail is what sold me on the Montana).Â Oh, and none of the 78's offer a camera, but all the 78 series GPS has the same internal memory of 1.7GB.Â If you are on a budget this is the King for the mula.

ONLY Difference in 78 Versions:

GPSMap 78: Cheapest $245.99 (Not sold on this site),Â non high speed USB cable (you'll never know the difference),

no preloaded maps (preference), no barometric altimeter (how often do you use that?-never), but a big bummer that I would not go without for safety: NO electronic compass.Â That's why we don't sell it.

GPSMap 78S:Â Middle priceÂ $345.99 (Discounted on this site),Â has high speed USB cable (but you'll never know the difference), NO preloaded maps (preference),Â has barometric altimeter (how often do you use that-never), but has the electronic compass (major bonus).Â This is a great buy GPS with a good price point!

GPSMap 78SC:Â Higher priceÂ $445.99 (Discounted on this site), has high speed USB cable (but you'll never know the difference),Â has barometric altimeter (how often do you use that-never),Â also has the electronic compass (major bonus), and the only GPS in this series that has preloaded maps (preference: if you want the 100k US topo) for US for an extra $50.Â This is the same as the 78S with the preloaded map.

GarminÂ Rino 650/655Â Series:

Now this model is a totally different bird all together!Â I can't say enough about the Rino with a well-rounded fully packed gismo:Â 20-mile radius radio. In testing this unit, we found it to be very impressive range; we were able to talk clearlyÂ in mountainous & valley areas too (we live in Colorado).Â Beyond the communication radio, the Rino also allows you to send your partner its location for tracking - you can see your buddy right on your map screen, moving or stopped, so you can track their position and see how far away they are located.Â The unit can transmit GPS waypoints as well as short 'texts' between them for aid in rescue or lost n' found, and has a schedule and alarm clock.Â Along with all these features, you can tune into NOAA weather station for up-to-date weather in your area.Â I like the software on the 650 much better than the other models - it is very comprehensive and easy to learn without reading the manual (love that).Â I am extremely fond of the Rino 650 and if you have a consistent riding partner, this is a great purchase.Â What detours me is the screen size ONLY, but what's funny is that the screen size is the same as the old 76 used to be; now, there's just bigger screens.Â I'm still thinking of investing here because I absolutely love the other unique features, but I ride in smaller packs, so I have not yet purchased these for my collection.Â If you ride in large numbers..... this is the GPS to buy for safety and fun! One for the front guy and one for sweep will keep your crew together. It's also a great buy for tour guides (2 or 4 distributed throughout the group).

ONLY Difference inÂ Rino 650/655Â Versions:

Rino 600: Just the fact that the 600 only has a 5-mile radius radio and no electronic compass kills this unit for me.Â This GPS is known for its safety features and this version doesn't size up.Â We don't offer it here.

Rino 650: Middle priceÂ $495.99 (Discounted on this site), built in memory is at 1.7GB and it has NO camera, an NO preloaded maps (preference) otherwise it's the same as the 650T.Â Great buy!!

Rino 655T: Built in memory is at 4.5GB for the heavy map user, and it hasÂ the camera (kinda cool for documenting

entrances on your routes, etc. but more of a novelty item), and HAS theÂ preloaded map 100k USÂ (preference).Â This baby is packed with all kinds of love.Â

Garmin 72H:

Enticing cheap price and I don't really mind the black n white screen (great contrast and easy to see), however I don't recommend this GPS because it does not have the ability to load maps, it has NO internal memory,Â and No electronic compass (very well needed) making this GPS what I feel as unsafe for proper navigation as well as enable to function with maps :(.Â There's just too many new items on the market to purchase without these capabilities.

Garmin Rino 520 & 530 Hcx:

These 520/530 unitsÂ make you fumble with the operational buttons on the 'side' of the unit that are hard to use on the fly plus the joystick really sucks operationally on a motorcycle.Â The 520 series got this together with just on/off button on the side (no biggi) and page button (not so bad).Â This series:Â FRS & GMRS 2-way radio communication gets youÂ a 13-mile radius rather than 20 (520).Â In testing this unit, we found it to be very impressive range; we were able to talkÂ relatively clearlyÂ in mountainous areas too.Â Beyond the communication radio, the Rino also allows you to send your partner its location for tracking - you can see your buddy right on your map screen, moving or stopped, so you can track is position.Â The unit can transmit GPS waypoints between them for aid in rescue or lost n' found, and has a schedule and alarm clock.Â Set the alarm for 6am, shut off the GPS, and it will automatically turn on and sound the alarm at 6am sharp for the days ride without depleting your batteries.Â Along with all these features, you can tune into NOAA weather station for up-to-date weather in your area.Â NOW, as for the differences between the 520 and 530, they are exactly the same GPS except the 530 offers the electronic compass andÂ altimeter for an extra $25.Â One thing to know about these GPS is that they are capable of downloading tracklogs to the SD card (any model with an "X") increasing the number of tracks you can save on the GPS.Â You cannot, however, upload tracklogs from the SD card (download them to software and upload from software).Â

Garmin Colorado Series GPS:

All features between the CO 300 and 400 are the same EXCEPT:Â The Colorado 300 comes with 384Mb of memory and no basemap.Â With the Colorado 400, you've got choices for a basemap: topo USÂ (T series), inland lakes (I series), or BlueChart g2 coastal charts (C series) and comes with 120Mb of memory.Â It's your choice forÂ whatever base map is best for you (the topo US is popular).Â Â A generalÂ special feature of the Colorado Series GPS is that they will take up to a 4Gb SD Card of any brand; that's the most of any other GPS (2Gb).Â You can have maps both in the Internal Memory and on the Data Card in the case of the Colorado only. When you transfer maps from Mapsource you have the option to choose where those maps goÂ to the internal memory or on the data card. If you want maps on both internal and external memory then you will have to make 2 data transfers from Mapsource.Â I much prefer the features of the Montana's screen over this unit butÂ sometimes the $buck$ matters.

My TOP 4 picks:

With all of my 'work' aside (because I use the GPS so much more intensley), if I were a normal (never been called that before) GPS user loading the guidebooks, the E32 or Baja NavÂ Map and doing mainly navigation with a bit of my own tracklogging and routing, my first choice wouldÂ be the Montana 650 (the one without the camera and lowerÂ built in memory (1.7 is still plenty).Â If that price made me squirm, I'd get the 78S (inexpensive butÂ probably theÂ most practical unitÂ on the line up).Â If I wanted all the bells n whistles (with a box of hundreds begging me to spend), I'd get the MontanaÂ 650T.Â Â Truth be told, I bought the Montana 650TÂ so I could really use all its features and get back to you guys on what's cool and what's 'novelty' (perhaps the camera but I kinda like it).Â Don't be afraid of the 78S - it's not a step down but rather a fantasticÂ choice I'da made myself.Â NOW, depending on my riding partner situation, I'd purchase the Rino 650 if I rode consistently with a partner with the same unit.Â Hands down this Rino is worth every penny!Â You can't use the features without someone else using it too, so if I had that box of hundreds, I'd purchase a set myslef (2) and use them on all my rides with whoever came with me.Â The small screen?Â I'd seriously suffer it for the Rino features.... heck, the screensÂ used to be even smaller on all the units available just a few years ago!Â Those are my top 3 picks:Â Montana 650T, Montana 650 and 78S.Â I'dÂ buy the Rino 650 with a partner or buy a set ifÂ affordable!Â Good luck out there and be safe!

Magellan Review:Â Â As a bonus, Magellan GPS's are a bit less expensive than other GPS manufacturers.Â They offer extremely great casings armored in shock resistant rubber.Â Screen sizes in general are decent, but don't match the Montana 650 at a 4"Â diagonal.Â Â When it all comes down to it: Magellan does not have the capability to load 3rd party mapsÂ and their software sucks compared to 3rd party and Garmin's Mapsource and Basecamp.Â I don't recommendÂ Magellan units because they just don't allow dirt bikers the ability to explore Baja,Â Mainland Mex, and Copper Canyon like Garmins do!Â Magellan is cheaper for a reason.Â I'd like to see them step up to the plate and compete with Garmin; I'm watching and will report when they are worthy of Off-road.

Older Models:Â The Garmin 76Csx has to be the best GPS ever built in the past.Â I still like many of its features and continue to use it as backup.Â If the newer models didn't offer the ability to hold so much more info (route, tracklog, and waypoint storage), plus the map capabilities and upload options (internal map of the US PLUS a detailed map of Baja all at the same time..... sold on the newer units!Â My favorites are the Montana 650 series, 78S, and the Rino 650 Series GPS's.Â

Browse theÂ GPS units weÂ offer on our site at discount.Â We only sell what we'd use and we aim to please on price.

After Purchasing a GPS: Don't forget toÂ UPDATE your GPS at least each 6 months.

Instructions on how to Update your GPS