

Google Maps

It Works More than It Doesn't

Mathieu Beaugelus

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. Do you *know your way around* your city? How did you learn? Do you *know your way around* other places, like your local grocery store, your child's school, or a nearby park? Say and write some sentences that start with *I know my way around...* Or *I don't know my way around...*
2. What is your experience using Google Maps or other apps for public transportation?

Apps Help Me Find My Way

When I first came to Chicago, I did not *know my way around*. It was very difficult for me. But it could have been worse for me if I did not know how to use Google maps on my phone.

With Google maps, I could find my primary care provider. It was easy. Her office was not far away from my house. The challenges started when my doctor gave me a referral to another hospital. Then, I had to take a different train and bus. Fortunately, I could use two apps—Google maps and Transit—to find my way on public transportation.

But They Are Not Perfect

Digital tools are not perfect. They come with challenges. For example, sometimes Google maps cannot find the building I am looking for. One time, I was looking for a hospital near where I go to school. Google could not find it. Google maps was not up to date.

I found the hospital by asking someone. I used a non-digital solution! Six months later, the hospital was finally on the map.

However, Google Maps works more than it does not work. These digital tools are game changers.



AFTER YOU READ:

1. Open Google maps and map a route from your home to your doctor's office or clinic or the nearest hospital. Try toggling between driving, walking, biking, or taking public transportation. What can you learn about the route by looking at it on Google maps?
2. What other map apps are available? Discuss which maps you use and what features they have.
3. Has a map app ever sent you in the wrong direction or on a weird route? Tell the story.

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