



F.A.Q. for Garmin Oregon 550 and 550t Units

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1 - General

Q1.1: What is the difference between the 550 and the 550t?

A1.1: The 550 has a grey case and the 550t has red trim on the case. Also the 550t is preloaded with the US Topo 100k data from Garmin whereas the 550 requires a microSD card with the same data. The 550t has greater memory, but it is used by the pre-loaded data resulting in both units having approximately the same storage space for users.

Q1.2: I've collected data and downloaded points to DNR Garmin and ArcMap but my points are not showing up in the right place.

A1.2: Make sure the unit itself was set to WGS84 or NAD83 for *Map Datum* settings. If not, then you'll need to change your setting to WGS84 or NAD83 and you may have to collect your points again. If the GPS unit had the correct *Map Datum* settings, check that DNR Garmin has a correct projection set under *File > Set Projection*. The proper setting for Indiana would be *NAD 1983 UTM Zone 16 North* to match the current default setting for Toolkit, and most other ArcMap projects in Indiana. Also make sure that the *Load PRJ* setting in DNR Garmin's *Set Projection* window has that same projection selected. These settings will get your saved files to work even if your ArcMap project is in Indiana State Plane coordinates because ArcMap can project data on the fly so long as the data's projection is readable by ArcMap. This is achieved in DNR Garmin by making the above settings.

2 - Settings

Q2.1: What GPS, Position, and Datum settings should be in place when collecting data?

A2.1: *GPS*: WAAS/EGNOS
Position Format: UTM UPS or hddd°mm'ss.s"
Map Datum: WGS84 (Note: NAD83 is also acceptable)

Q2.2: Does the *Position Format* setting affect the data that I transfer off of the GPS?

A2.2: Generally speaking, no. The *Position Format* setting controls the coordinates displayed onscreen while using the GPS unit. You should use a setting appropriate for the type of work you are doing and the part of the world where you are working. In this case either the UTM coordinates or lat/long value readouts are valid. The unit will always transfer out lat/long values to external software, regardless of this setting. The external software then controls the projection/datum formats of the final file created.



3 - Display

Q3.1: There are no Brightness settings in the *Display* menu. How do I adjust the brightness of the screen?

A3.1: While the unit is powered on, tap the Power button on the side of the unit. A screen will appear with a light bulb graphic and +/- buttons. Tap the plus or minus buttons to adjust the screen brightness. Press the "x" button to exit the brightness screen and return to the previous screen. Note: The brightness screen also displays the current time.



4 - Map Data

Q4.1: I don't see a detailed base map on the map screen when using my unit.

A4.1: If using either the 550 or 550t unit, make sure that Topo 100k is set to Enabled under [Setup > Map > Map Information](#). If using the 550 model and Topo 100k is not available under the [Map Information](#) screen, make sure the microSD card with the Topo 100k data is properly inserted into the unit inside the battery case.

5 - Accuracy

Q5.1: What is the accuracy of the Oregon 550 unit?

A5.1: Absolute Accuracy, Horizontal: 3 to 5 meters using the WAAS setting

Q5.2: How do I get the best accuracy results when using the unit?

A5.2: Stay away from tall vegetation, structures, vehicles, and low lying areas surrounded by steep terrain to get the best satellite fix. All handheld GPS units in this area of the world perform best when the user faces south. This unit performs about the same when held upright or flat.

6 - Camera

Q6.1: When viewing the pictures I've taken with the 550 or 550t, the orientation is rotated improperly. When I rotate the unit to view the picture right-side up, the picture turns and remains incorrectly oriented.

A6.1: Calibrate the compass ([Setup > Heading > Calibrate Compass](#)) on the unit to correct this behavior for future pictures. For pictures already taken and moved to the computer, open the picture on the computer in Windows Picture Viewer, rotate the picture until it is correctly oriented, and then click Save in Windows Picture Viewer. Do not modify picture files on the unit directly.



7 – Downloading Data

- Q7.1: With the Oregon unit connected to a computer and using DNR Garmin I try to click *Waypoints > Download* to get my data, but nothing happens, DNR Garmin becomes mostly unresponsive, and my mouse cursor has an hour glass.
- A7.1: DNR Garmin 5.4.1 does not support download of waypoint data from Oregon GPS units with the Download function. The download function only works for Tracks instead of waypoints, and even then, only the current Track. Typically, to get most data from an Oregon unit directly into DNR Garmin, you should use the Load from File process under DNR Garmin's file menu. From there, you can navigate to the GPS unit, then the Garmin folder, and then the GPX folder to find waypoint and track files to load from the unit to DNR Garmin. Remember to change the file type from Text to GPX when doing this. See the *Downloading Data from an Oregon 550 to DNR Garmin* guide for details on this process.
- Q7.2: When I load data from Oregon GPX files to DNR Garmin, I can only load data from a single day (or a single Track). How do I get multiple waypoint or track files out of the Oregon 550 unit into a single DNR Garmin session?
- A7.2: The *Base Camp* program from Garmin will allow a user to see and manage all data on the Oregon GPS unit. When you connect the Oregon 550 unit to the computer, Base Camp should display it under devices and you can **click** the **All Data** folder to see all data on the unit, regardless of data type or date of collection.
- While in *Base Camp*, **right-click** the **My Collection** folder under the **Library** heading and choose *Add New Library to List*.
 - An entry will be created with your cursor placed and ready to name your new *List*. **Type** a name for the new *List* such as your project name or a descriptive name for your points.
 - Next, **click** the **All Data** folder listed under your Oregon device and from it **select** all the waypoints or tracks of interest. You can select multiple points or tracks by using *Shift + Click* or *Ctrl + Click*, as needed. To reiterate, you can select multiple waypoints or multiple tracks, but it is not recommended to combine waypoint and track data in a single selection.
 - With all your points or tracks of interest selected, you can then **right-click** any of the selected items, **highlight Send To**, and then **click** the name of the *List* you created in the Base Camp *Library/My Collection*. The points will be moved to the chosen *List*.
 - Next, **click** the name of the *List* you created earlier and you will see the points you sent to that *List*. You can now save this *List* as a standalone GPX file.
 - With your *List* highlighted, **click** *File > Export > Export [List Name]*.
 - Make sure the file type is GPS eXchange Format (*.gpx), and then **navigate** to a directory where you'd like to save your data. **Type** a name for the file to be saved and **click Save**.
 - You can now start DNR Garmin and load the GPX file you just saved using the *File > Load From File...* procedure. Once the file is in DNR Garmin, you can work with it normally.

See the related *Base Camp* guides for screenshots and additional details.