

## How to use the Siskiyou Trail Finder to plan and navigate trips

### On your smartphone: GAIA GPS

There are a handful of map instruments that have hit the smartphone market in recent years, and we suggest using the Gaia GPS app. It's user-friendly, free to download, and useable without cell service. GAIA is a powerful navigation tool and an easy way to plan routes before heading to the trailhead. That being said, we still recommend bringing a paper map on all of your outdoor adventures. Phones can break, lose battery, or malfunction. Paper maps are generally more reliable and provide context to help inspire you to explore.

Keeping that in mind, here are a few tips for using Gaia in the field:

Gaia can be used offline as long as maps are downloaded before losing cell service. This is key in the Siskiyou Backcountry as cell reception is generally not available. There are two types of information that will need to be downloaded before starting a trip: the background map, and the GPX files.

### Instructions

1. Go to your phone's app store and download the GAIA app. There is a free version that pairs well with the Siskiyou Trailfinder.
2. Download the GPX files on your desktop computer through the Siskiyou Trailfinder ([www.siskiyoumountainclub.org/trailfinder/](http://www.siskiyoumountainclub.org/trailfinder/)). Transfer those GPS files to your smartphone.
3. Download maps for offline use onto your GAIA app. Hit the + button near the top right of your screen in GAIA and a menu will appear. After selecting the "download maps" function, drag corners of the red interface to cover the entire area you plan on hiking or running. Then save the map and you're ready to go.

### How to use GAIA/Strava for trail reporting purposes

Using the GAIA or STRAVA apps is an efficient and powerful way to relay detailed trail condition data with exact locations. Before using these apps for field use, please review this document that describes what information is most useful for reporting conditions. Then follow these directions:

1. Download GPX from the Siskiyou Trail Finder and they will appear as different colors on your GAIA map. As you hike or run, take notes based on different trail names/numbers

that are shown on your GAIA map. Mark waypoints when encountering

2. Track your hike and mark way points and take pictures on the trail of major trail problems like major wash-outs, large areas of blow down, heavy brush, or downed logs over 48" in diameter.
3. Save your route and send to [info@siskiyoumountainclub.org](mailto:info@siskiyoumountainclub.org).
4. Use the Strava lap function (optional) to define exact trail sections in reference to their condition. Use the lap function throughout your entire hike or run.