

308 Pine St  
Titusville FL 32796  
Mon—Sat 10 am to 4 pm



The United States' Global Positioning System (GPS) reached Fully Operational Capability on July 17, 1995, completing its original design goals. However, additional advances in technology and new demands on the existing system led to the effort to modernize the GPS system. In 2000, the U.S. Congress authorized the effort, referred to as GPS III. As the third Space Vehicle in the GPS 3 program, this payload is designated GPS III SV03, and will be tracked by ground crews as the satellite named "Columbus".

The GPS 3 project involves new ground stations and new satellites, with additional navigation signals for both civilian and military users, and aims to improve the accuracy and availability for all users.

GPS Satellites do NOT know where you are. They only know two things: 1) Their own orbits (the mathematical variables for determining the orbits are sent to them from the ground), and 2) they know what time it is VERY accurately. Every GPS satellite has its own Atomic Clock. Each satellite sends this information towards the ground from its orbit at about 12,550 miles (20,200 km) above the earth. This is half the altitude of Geostationary satellites, so each satellite circles the earth every 12 hours.

Once your GPS receiving device collects this information from 4 satellites, the device can determine and display your Latitude, Longitude, and Altitude, and show you your location on a map. What your device (and app) does with the information from there is something you should look into on your own.



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**GPS III SV03**  
Launching on a Falcon 9 Rocket for the  
US Space Force  
2020-06-30 3:55 amEDT

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