

# GPS Pathfinder Express

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

### **What is the GPS Pathfinder Express service?**

The GPS Pathfinder<sup>®</sup> Express service is an easy and economical way to differentially correct your GPS field data via the Internet. You simply submit your Trimble GPS data via the GPS Pathfinder Express web site or by e-mail, and the corrected data is e-mailed to you in the GIS format of your choice. The result is higher accuracy, and better quality data for your GIS.

### **What is differential correction?**

Differential correction removes many of the errors in GPS data to improve the accuracy. It involves using a receiver at a known location (the base station) and collecting GPS positions at unknown locations with another receiver (the rover). The GPS Pathfinder Express service allows you to correct your rover data against publicly available base station data.

### **How much does differential correction improve accuracy?**

Differential correction improves the accuracy of GPS positions from 10 m or more to between 50 cm and 5 m, depending on the environment in which the data was collected and which GPS receiver was used.

### **How is the GPS Pathfinder Express service different from the GPS Pathfinder Office software?**

GPS Pathfinder Express is a pre-pay service that uses the Internet to process data. It works with Trimble's GPS Pathfinder and GeoExplorer<sup>®</sup> 3 systems. The GPS Pathfinder Express service is an alternative to using Trimble's popular GPS Pathfinder Office software. The GPS Pathfinder Office software provides extensive functionality for data display and verification as well as more advanced GPS data processing and GIS output. It is a standard part of GPS Pathfinder Pro XR, Pro XRS, Power, and GeoExplorer 3 systems.

### **I already use GPS Pathfinder Office software, should I purchase the GPS Pathfinder Express service as well?**

Your organisation may benefit from using an Internet data processing service. Using this service field crews with GeoExplorer 3 or TSC1<sup>™</sup> data collectors can download their GPS data to a laptop and then submit their files to the GPS Pathfinder Express service and have the results automatically e-mailed back to their GIS supervisor in the office. This saves the supervisor from having to manually correct and export data from each field crew.

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## *Subscription Information*

### **How do I subscribe to the GPS Pathfinder Express service?**

When you register for the GPS Pathfinder Express service, you receive a free trial subscription for two months, or 5,000 positions, whichever comes first. When your free trial subscription expires you will be notified and you will need to purchase a new subscription to continue using the service. Which GPS receivers can be used?

### **Where can I purchase a GPS Pathfinder Express subscription?**

Once your free trial subscription has expired, you can purchase a new subscription from the Trimble Online Store at [www.trimblestore.com](http://www.trimblestore.com).

### **What types of subscription are available?**

There are 3 subscription types for the GPS Pathfinder Express service:

- 1 month, or 50,000 positions, whichever comes first
- 6 months, or 300,000 positions, whichever comes first
- 12 months, or 600,000 positions, whichever comes first

### **What happens when my subscription expires?**

When your subscription is about to expire, you will receive a notification via e-mail. This e-mail will be sent again when the subscription expires. Once your subscription has expired, you will not be able to submit any more data for processing until you purchase a new subscription.

### **What methods of payment are supported?**

You can purchase subscriptions to the GPS Pathfinder Express service online, by credit card, or by setting up an account. Most major credit cards are accepted. For your security, your credit card details are not retained and secure servers are used for the credit card transaction.

### **What do I do if I have a support question?**

For support on the GPS Pathfinder Express service, click the Support link on any page of the GPS Pathfinder Express web site. This link will take you to the GPS Pathfinder Express support area, where you can browse support information or submit an enquiry.

## *Data Processing Information*

### **Which GPS receivers are supported?**

The following GPS receivers can be used to collect data for processing with the GPS Pathfinder Express service:

- GPS Pathfinder Pocket
- GPS Pathfinder Power
- GPS Pathfinder Pro XR
- GPS Pathfinder Pro XRS
- GeoExplorer 3

### **Which data collection software can be used?**

The data collection software listed below can be used to collect data for processing with the GPS Pathfinder Express service:

- TerraSync™ software
- Asset Surveyor® software
- ASPEN® software
- Applications created using the GPS Pathfinder Tools SDK

### **What type of files can be processed?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express service only processes files in the Trimble SSF file format.

### **How do I send data to the service?**

You can submit files via the GPS Pathfinder Express web site. Or, if you have TerraSync software you can e-mail them directly from the field to [input@gpspathfinderexpress.com](mailto:input@gpspathfinderexpress.com).

### **Can I submit files at any time of the day?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express service is fully automated, and operates 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week.

### **How long does it take to process the data?**

Provided base station data is available, the processing of your data should only take a few minutes. This time can vary depending on how busy the server is.

**Do I have to wait for my data to be returned before submitting more?**

No

**Do I have to wait until the base files are available?**

No, you can submit files at any time, however the GPS Pathfinder Express service will wait and process your file when the base data is available. If this occurs the status of your submitted files will show as waiting for 'rollover'.

**How is the data returned?**

The corrected and exported SSF files, along with a processing summary, will be stored in a zip file and returned to you via e-mail.

**Is there a limit to the number of positions that can be corrected?**

Any number of positions can be differentially corrected, providing your account has sufficient positions available for processing.

**Can I submit carrier phase data?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express service does not perform carrier phase processing as code phase processing is performed. If you need the extra accuracy of carrier phase processing, you will require the GPS Pathfinder Office software.

**Can I use a data dictionary to collect features and attributes?**

A generic data dictionary is provided with the TerraSync software. You can also send a Shape file using ActiveSync and extract a data dictionary from this. Full data dictionary support is provided with the GPS Pathfinder Office software.

**What GIS formats are supported?**

The GIS formats that are supported by the GPS Pathfinder Express service are:

- ArcView Shapefile
- AutoCAD DXF
- dBASE
- MapInfo MIF
- Microsoft Access MDB
- Microstation DGN

**Can I use the service just for exporting data?**

You can submit autonomous (or real-time corrected) positions for export only. As this process is base station independent you can send files collected from anywhere in the world.

**What happens if my data contains real-time corrected positions?**

If your data contains real-time corrected positions, then they will be re-corrected if PPRT data has been logged. If PPRT data has not been logged then they will be exported without being changed.

**Are uncorrected positions exported?**

By default, uncorrected positions will not be exported, because they are less accurate. However, you can choose to include them if you want to, for example if you are just exporting autonomous data.

**What coordinate systems are supported?**

You have the choice of two output coordinate systems: WGS-84 Lat/Long and NAD27 Conus Lat/Long. If you want to use other coordinate systems, you will need to transform the data in the GPS Pathfinder Office software or in your GIS.

**How is data transferred to and from the field data collector?**

The Trimble Data Transfer utility is a standalone utility that lets you transfer data to and from your data collector. This utility is available for free download from the Trimble web site at: [www.trimble.com/support/files/datatransfer.htm](http://www.trimble.com/support/files/datatransfer.htm).

**What happens if my e-mail system is down?**

If the GPS Pathfinder Express service is unable to deliver your results by e-mail, it will continue to send your results for several days.

**Can anyone else access my data?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express is a secure service. Once your data has been sent back to you, the data will be deleted from the GPS Pathfinder Express system. For more information, refer to the Privacy Statement on [www.gpspathfinderexpress.com](http://www.gpspathfinderexpress.com).

**What web browsers are supported?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express service requires either Internet Explorer 4 or later, or Netscape 4 or later.

## *Base Station and Differential Correction Information*

### **Who provides the base station data?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express service uses data from a list of public Internet base stations for processing your data. You can select your preferred base station from this list or let the service select the best one for you. Trimble does not provide the base station data, so the quality of the data cannot be guaranteed.

### **Which parts of the world does the service cover?**

The GPS Pathfinder Express differential correction service covers most of the U.S.A. and some other countries. This coverage will grow as more base stations are added. The current list of base stations is shown alphabetically on the GPS Pathfinder Express web site.

### **Can I specify a particular base station to be used?**

When submitting data for differential correction, you can select a specific base station from the list provided. However, if for some reason the base data is not available, it is your responsibility to submit the data again and try another base station. Alternatively, when you submit your data, you can choose *Automatic Selection* mode and let the service choose the base station for you. It will try the closest base station, and if correction fails it will try the next closest, and so on.

### **How far from a base station can data be collected?**

In *Automatic Selection* mode, the GPS Pathfinder Express service will use base stations within 300 km of your file. If you select a specific base station, you set your own distance limit, however, Trimble recommends that you choose a base station within 500 km as the closer you are to the base station, the greater the accuracy achieved.

### **What happens if my data won't correct?**

Sometimes your data may not correct if the satellites used by the rover receiver are not the same as the base station receiver. If this is the case, try another base provider or choose the *Automatic Selection* mode to let the service automatically select a base provider that can correct 90% or more of your data.



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