

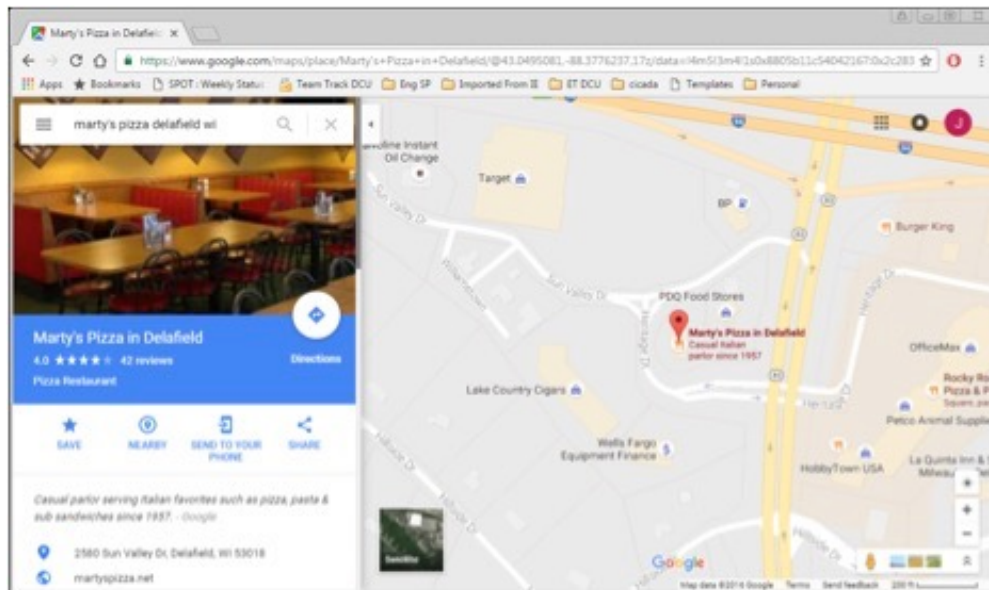
# Using Google Maps by Jay Nemeth-Johannes

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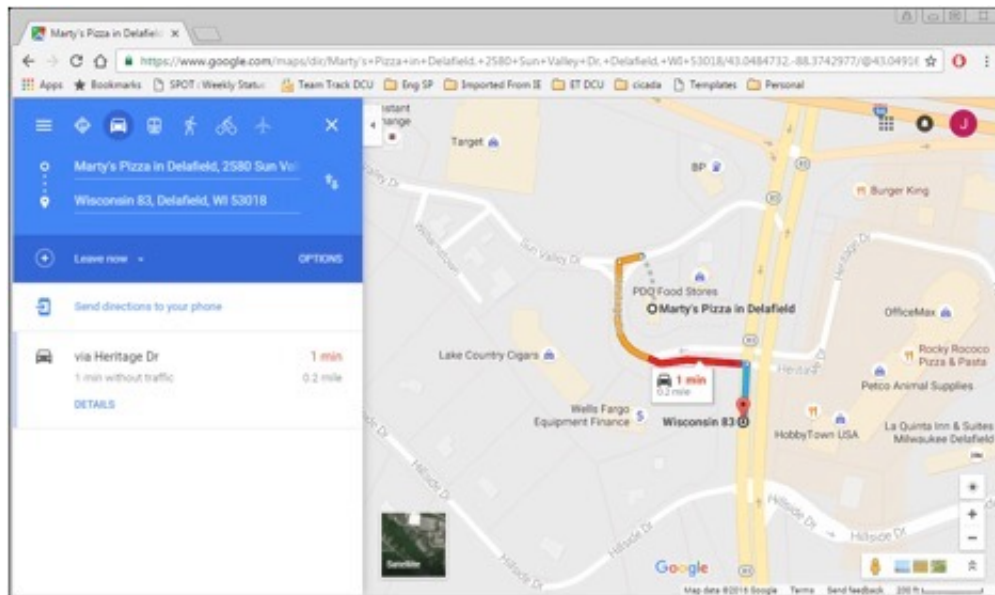
Google maps is a powerful tool for the Rallymaster, that allows you to layout a tentative route without leaving your house. It helps if you are generally familiar with the roads in the area, but it is not absolutely necessary.

Assume you already know your start and finish locations. Launch google maps (maps.google.com) on your browser and find the start location.

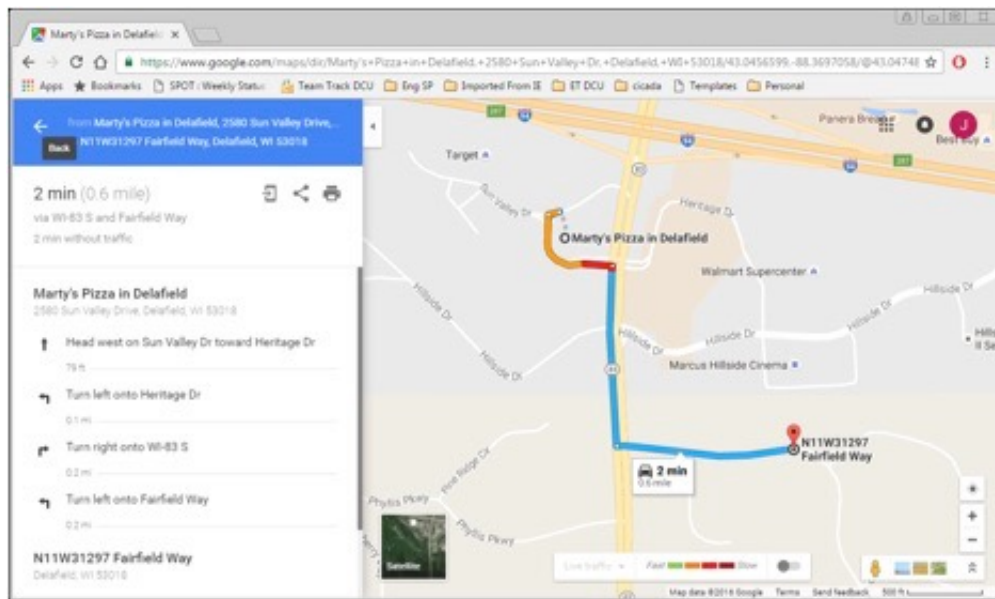
For example, I typed in “Marty’s Pizza Delafield WI” which gives me this map: (hint: click on any map to see the google maps for that picture)



Next place your cursor over a spot along your planned route and right click the mouse. Select “Directions to here”. The map should now look like this:

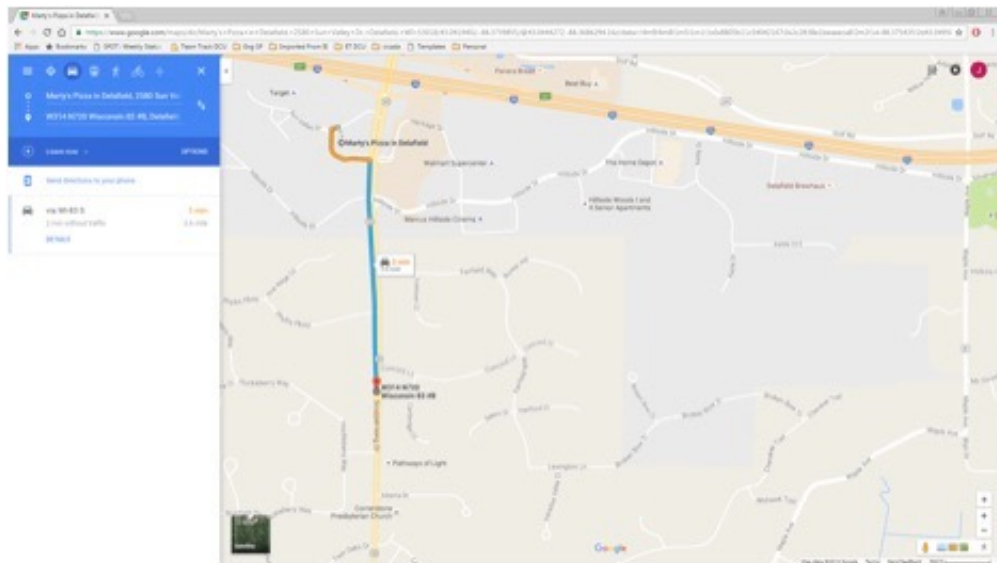


Grab the red marker and continue to drag it along the route:

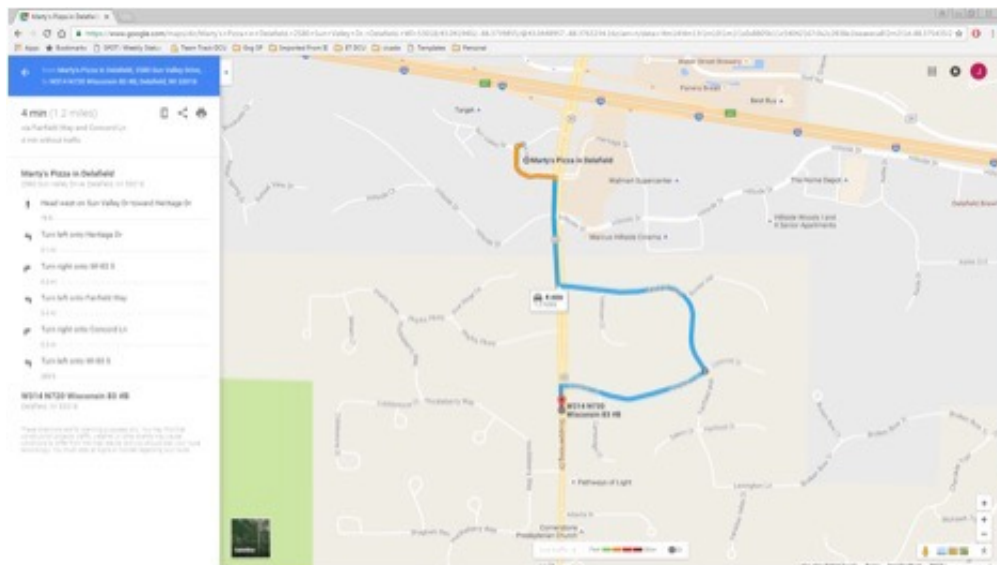


Note that the maps program is generating a set of route instructions and a guess at the timing of the route. Both of these can be used to give you driving directions to plan your layout. However, don't rely on them to give you the final answer. The calculations are very approximate and are based on speed limits and traffic conditions. The directions will usually contain some strange extra turns for roads that aren't really there.

Next, let's extend the route south on Fairfield and west on Concord until we are again going south on Hwy 83:



Wow, all that work we did to get that loop has disappeared. Google maps will choose the shortest route unless you add a waypoint. You do that by grabbing the blue route line and dragging it over to the intersection of Fairfield and concord



Note that a white dot appears that indicates that the route must pass through that intersection. Continue extending the finish location and adding waypoints to develop your temporary course. At some point, google maps will announce that it can't make any more changes. At that point, you must save the map and start a new one. However, I try to not let it get that far. I will usually save the map at each proposed checkpoint or possibly break

location and start a new one. Leaving some room allows me to make some editing changes on the map as I drive the course and find something doesn't work out.

You can save the map any time. The route is stored in the web address, so simply select the url bar, right click and select copy. You can then paste this into a working document to retrieve the map. Here is what we have:

<https://www.google.com/maps/dir/Marty's+Pizza+in+Delafield,+2580+Sun+Valley+Dr,+Delafield,+WI+53018/43.0419402,-88.3739855/@43.0448957,-88.3763234,16z/am=t/data=!4m14!4m13!1m10!1m1!1s0x8805b11c54042167:0x2c2838e1beaeeca8!2m2!1d-88.375435!2d43.0495081!3m4!1m2!1d-88.3680189!2d43.043132!3s0x8805b0fc331999b9:0x5c1c9a134eacf8a1!1m0!3e0>

If you click on that, you should see the map above.

Next, you might want to examine a piece of the proposed route. Google maps has a feature called streetview. You can drag the little yellow guy in the lower right corner of the map to any location:

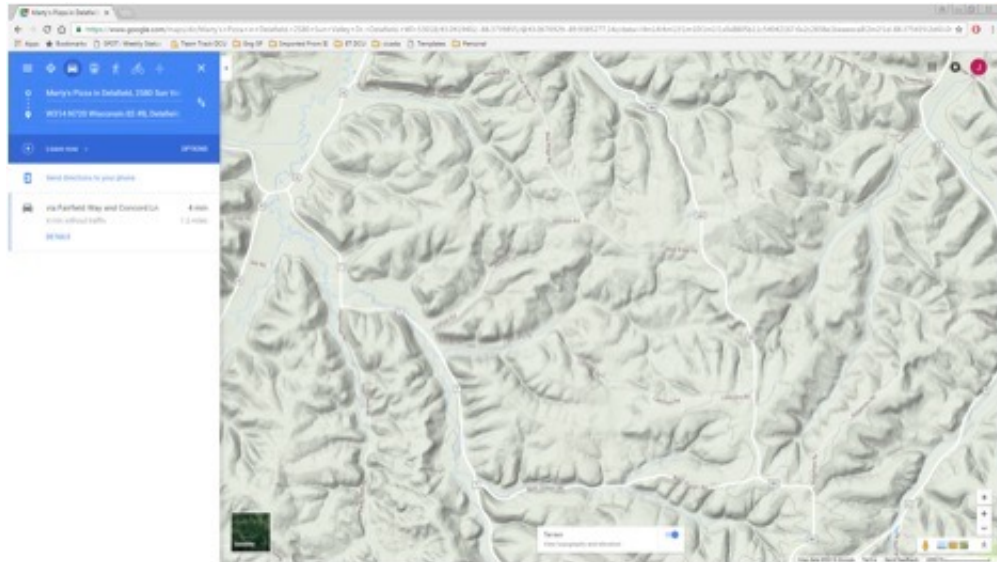


This allows you to see things like whether the road is paved, stop signs, speed limits, houses and businesses, etc. You can click and drag to rotate the view. If you place the mouse on the road, a chevron will appear and if you click on that, the view will move along the road. The way to get out of streetview and back to the map seems to vary with the browser. In this example, clicking on the left arrow in the upper left corner will get you back to the map. Unfortunately, not all roads have streetview available. You can tell when you grab the little guy because all the available roads will be marked in blue.

If it turns out a portion of the route simply isn't working out, you can remove the waypoint by right clicking, or by dragging it back to the main route. This can be a bit tricky, so play with it until you get what you want.

You can also select satellite view which can give an idea of houses in an area. It also can be used to give hints in areas that don't have streetview whether the road is paved and if it is actually there.

A final nice feature is the terrain overlay. You select this from the menu in the upper left corner and it will show contours and topo lines. This is nice when you are creating a tour and want 'interesting' roads.



I've only brushed on the surface here, but as you learn to use maps, you will find it is a valuable tool. Again, the key is to use it as a tool. It will not eliminate running the course or writing detailed route instructions, but it will give a good start and prevent spending a lot of driving time examining roads that go nowhere, or even possibly painting yourself into a corner.