

Move over MapQuest, Google Maps is Here!

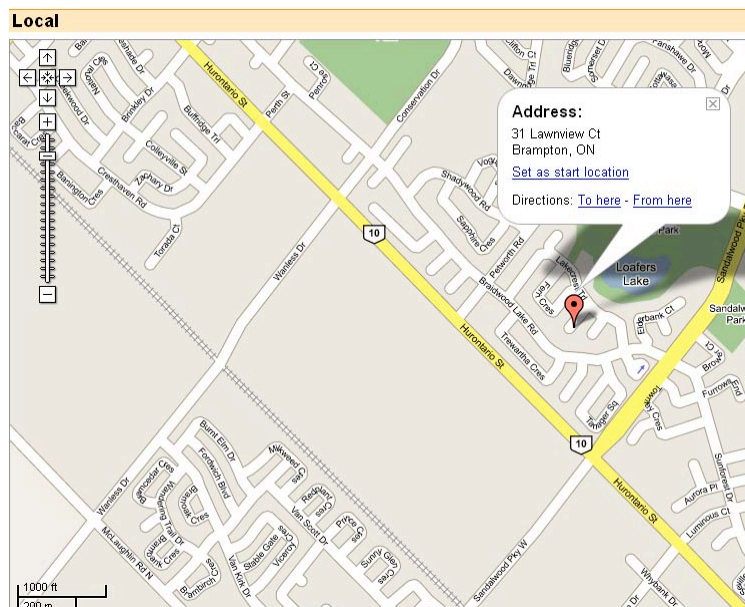
How to Find Your Destination Quickly

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A new mapping and service from Google may divert many Canadians from their habitual use of MapQuest. After nine months of beta testing, Google has launched Google maps – available for users in Canada and the U.S. – which applies amazing technology that could supplant MapQuest as the site of choice for this direction mapping.

MapQuest, although great for American locations, frustrates Canadians since it defaults to search American addresses and then requires you to complete formatted fields to find your address. Often, despite your best efforts, MapQuest fails to deliver results.

If you are familiar with this frustration it is time to try Google's Maps. Point your browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox - even your colour BlackBerry's browser) to <http://maps.google.ca> and you will be presented with a map of the west side of Montréal (or some other location in Canada). Let's say you want to find the directions to **31 Lawnview Court, Brampton, ON**. It is as simple as typing the address (as shown) into the search bar at the top of the screen. When you press enter, a map would be displayed showing the location of this address in context with the surroundings! What could be simpler?



A balloon appears, as illustrated above, pinpointing the exact location.

Navigating the Map

Once the map is displayed, you might want to see what lies in a direction close to the destination address. With MapQuest, you would select arrows at the edge of the map that would move the map partially to the North, South, East or West. Not with Google Maps!

To move to another part of the map, just click and drag in the direction that you want and the map fills in to show you more information. To return to the original location after dragging, just click Search once again.

You can also zoom in and out from your location by moving the sliding bar. To move more discreetly, click the indicator at the top or bottom of the zoom bar. If you prefer to use the keyboard, use the +/- keys to zoom in and out respectively.

To move up and down with the keyboard, you can use the up and down cursor keys or the Page Up and Page Down keys. To move left and right, use the appropriate arrows, or Home and End to move a page at a time.

To center the map on any point, double click on that point. This is a useful move to make prior to zooming in to a specific location.

These techniques can be used on any maps presented in the Google Maps interface.

From Here to There in One Easy Step

Need directions from one part of the city to another? Let's say from a downtown office address to the address above. Let's use the downtown address **99 Wellington Street West, Toronto, ON**. Locate the red 'pushpin' (click Search) on the map and click on it. The balloon will appear once more. You will see Directions [To here](#) - [From here](#).

[To here](#) - Select this option to identify this location as the destination address.

[From here](#) - Select this option to identify this location as a starting address.

Since we are going to this address, select [To here](#). You will be prompted for the starting address. Enter **99 Wellington Street West, Toronto, ON** in the space provided and hit the **Directions** button. Many things happen next:

1. The map is rescaled to show the entire journey.
2. A green 'pushpin' identifies the start of the journey.
3. A red 'pushpin' identifies the end of the journey.
4. A blue line shows the optimal route.

5. Directions appear on the left along with the total distance and estimated travel time.

Local Print Email Link to this page

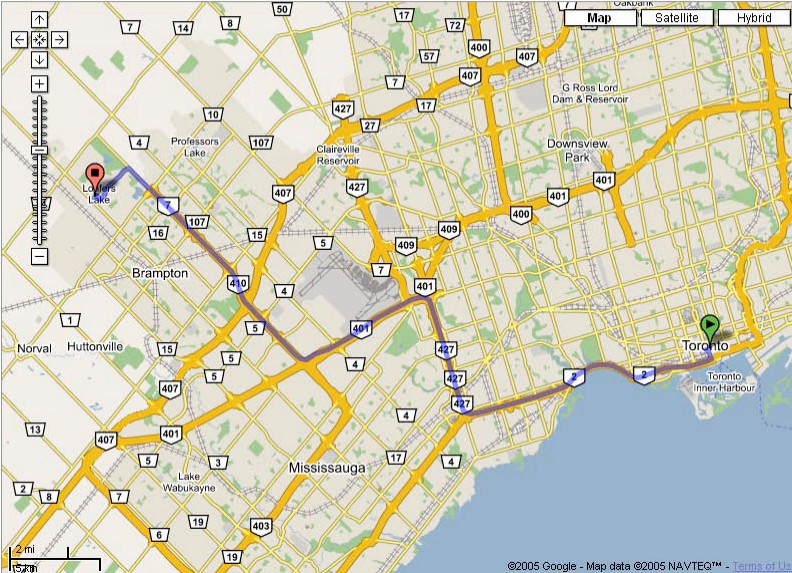
Start address: 99 Wellington St W
Toronto, ON

End address: 31 Lawmview Ct
Brampton, ON

Distance: 46.7 km (about 42 mins)

[Reverse directions](#)

1. [Head west from Wellington St W - go 0.1 km](#)
2. [Turn left at University Ave - go 0.1 km](#)
3. [Continue on York St - go 0.5 km](#)
4. [Turn right into the Gardiner Expwy West entry ramp to QEW - go 0.3 km](#)
5. [Merge into HWY-2 W - go 8.0 km](#)
6. [Continue on Gardiner Expy W - go 5.2 km](#)
7. [Take the HWY-427 exit 139 to \(HWY-401\) - go 1.5 km](#)
8. [Merge into HWY-427 N - go 6.6 km](#)
9. [Take the HWY-401 W/RTE-401 ramp - go 1.0 km](#)
10. [Merge into HWY-401 Collectors W - go 4.8 km](#)
11. [Take the HWY-410 ramp to O.E.W./Hamilton \(HWY-403\)/Brampton - go 2.0 km](#)
12. [Merge into HWY-410 N - go 12 km](#)
13. [Continue on Heart Lake Rd - go 1.7 km](#)
14. [Turn left at Sandalwood Pky E - go 2.4 km](#)



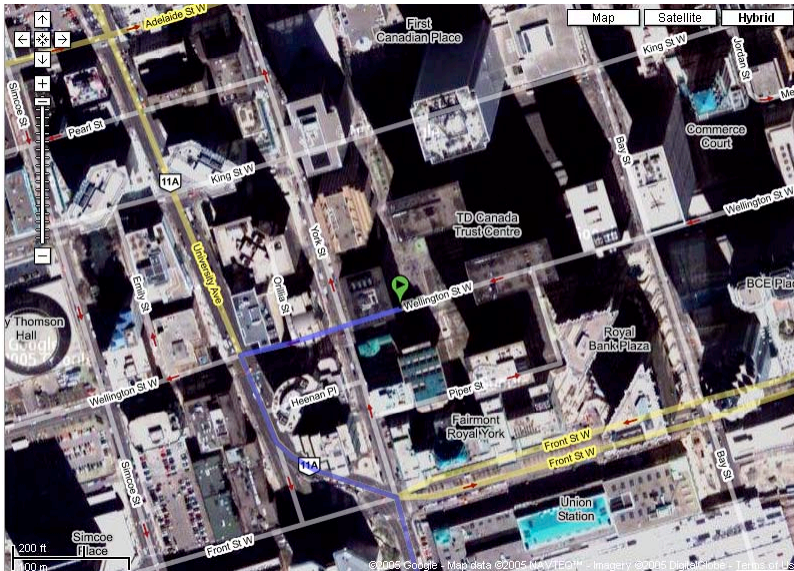
Notice that each direction is numbered and hyperlinked? Click on the hyperlink to see a detailed view of the turn or direction of travel in question. The diagram below shows direction 1.



You may use the Print option located at the top right of the map to print the current map and directions. We recommend zooming to the street level at the destination after printing the main map so that you have the details needed to navigate to the final destination.

An Aerial View for You

If you would like to superimpose a satellite map of a location on the map with the roads click the button **Hybrid**. All mapping features now show the surrounding environment. The map below shows a zoomed in version of the Wellington Street area.



Sharing Your Map with a Friend

You cannot copy and paste Google Maps in the way that you can other mapping systems, but you can obtain a link that can be sent to others that will present the same page to them. Just select the **Link to this page** hotlink at the top right area of the window and the address bar will change to a link to your specific map. You can then copy and paste that information into an email message which, when accessed, will produce the same results as the original search.

Need a Service? Try the Local Search

Let's say you were looking for a CD duplicating service in Toronto, but you didn't know who to use. This is akin to looking up something in the yellow pages. Click the hyperlink **Find businesses** at the top of the screen to the right of the Search button.

Enter the service that you are looking for in the *What* box, for example, **CD duplication**. In the *Where* box, enter the location, for example **Toronto, ON**. Google Maps will present a map with a number of 'pushpins' on it and a corresponding list of locations that provide this service. You will then have the phone numbers needed to narrow down the company that you will select to provide this service. You can use all the features described previously to drive to the location.

Conclusion

Google Maps is a powerful mapping tool that is extremely easy to use. It not only provides maps for Canada and the U.S., but also at a less granular level, for many other countries around the world. It can also help you locate a service or a specific store that's close to you. Above all else, it eradicates the

frustration of contending with U.S. locations when searching for a Canadian address.

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