

Golf GPS Review

Over the last few weeks we have been fortunate enough to test three of the best GPS products currently available on the market. These include the Garmin G5, the Sky Caddie SGX and the Snooper Shot Saver S320. During my first round out with the Sky Caddie SGX I was asked immediately by one of my playing partners. Are those things legal? The answer of course to that is yes. The R & A have decided that the use of GPS for measuring distance is allowed. So what will it do for you then? Golf GPS is in effect SAT—NAV for the golf course. The three device's main feature will be to tell you distance, depending on which model you get and how much you are willing to invest will depend on what other features you get. As you stand on the tee it will give you the distance to the hole and to any hazards such as bunkers, ditches etc. Once you have played your shot and reach the ball in the fairway you will then get a reading to the front middle and back of the green and again to any hazards you may face. I have never in the past used anything like this to aid me on the golf course, I have always used the traditional marker posts or discs in the fairways or just stood and looked at my target and tried to get a feel for distance. I was amazed to be honest at how many times these things made me change club and as a result gave me a better result. I no some people will say it is not the purists way and that golf should be about a players skill and understanding of the course in front of him, and I can understand that argument. For me I think it is a little bit like having a caddy with you, someone who as walked the course and mapped the holes, it gives you that little bit more confidence when you stand over your shot knowing that with a good swing and contact your distance should be right. I think Golf GPS is good for the game especially for the amateur golfer, it helps you plan your way round the course and gives you confidence over your club selection. Lets be honest how many of us used to have an A—Z tucked away in the glove box when we were driving or used to rely on our passenger to give us the wrong directions when going on holiday. How many times have you stood over that shot not knowing if it is a six or a seven, if you hit seven you might be short and in the sand and if you hit six you might be long and out the back. Well now you can take that indecision away and concentrate on the key thing of hitting a good golf shot.



The Garmin G5 is a touch screen device, and of the three is the simplest to use. The feature I liked best on this was the ability to drag the cursor around the screen, allowing you to pick a point to lay up to or drag the cursor to the area of the green where the pin was situated. It comes with a tough outer casing so it will take a few knocks. The device can be clipped to your bag, mounted on your trolley or if like me you carry you can slot it in your pocket. The Garmin comes with 10,000 courses pre loaded in the database and free updates too so once you have paid for the device you will pay no more.

Garmin G5 retails generally at around £299.99

Score 9/10



The Snooper Shotsaver S320 comes with a free trolley mounting kit and free hard wire kit for electric trolleys. You can store up to 400 courses at any one time and with the downloads being free you can change these at anytime. The device will give you measurement to the front, middle and back of the green and also to any hazards you face on the hole. The unit is touch screen and comes with a full colour 2.8" LCD display. This device is probably the most basic of the three if any of them can be called basic. But it also offers the lowest price tag of the three.

Snooper Shotsaver S320 generally retails at around £199.99

Score 9/10

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