

Pre-Search GPS Checklist

In SCSAR we use Garmin GPSMAP 76 or 60 units. This article should guide you with any GPS as the basic approach is the same: clear the unit's memory and make sure the GPS is functional. When you finish these steps your GPS, compass and map should be a unified navigation system.

Before you start a new search track follow the directions on the card (they are in the GPS case):

Clear:	Map 76	Map 60CSx
Trip computer	(Main menu-Trip Computer x3)	(Menu-Reset-Check-Apply)
Track log	(Main menu-Tracks)	(In Trip computer, above)
Waypoints	(Main menu-Points)	(Find-Waypoints-Menu)
Check:		
Battery power	(Main menu-bottom right)	(On any page)
Location format (UTM)	(Main menu-Setup-Location)	(Main menu-Setup-Units)
Map Datum setting	(Main menu-Setup-Location)	(Main menu-Setup-Units)
North reference (True)	(Main menu-Setup-Location)	(Main menu-Setup-Heading)
Correct maps are loaded.	(Map page-Zoom out)	(Map page-Zoom out)
Mark your starting point and label it.		
Calibrate your compass and carry a map of the search area.		

This is why you follow the above card:

Clear:

- Trip computer This enables your gps to record/display current information for this search.
- Track log Clears the track log. Old searches should have been downloaded earlier.
- Waypoints Clears out old waypoints so your favourite identifiers (car, lake, trail, road, camp, pic, clue) can be used again.

Check:

- Battery power Check the batteries now rather than run out of power later. Carry extra ones.
- Location format SCSAR, like most SAR groups, uses UTM. Pilots use Latitude/Longitude.
- Map datum This setting must be the same as your map's datum (e.g. NAD 27, NAD 83)
- North reference This is related to your compass. Choose **True** when you adjust the declination on your compass.

Correct maps are loaded. For a GPSMAP 76 this is done with a computer. For the 60CSx it is done with a computer or microSD Card substitution. Zoom out until the map sheet boundaries show.

Mark your starting point and label it. This identifies the location you will want to return to.

Calibrate your compass (set the declination) and carry a UTM map of the search area in case your GPS fails.