

# Satellite Navigation

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What is the difference between satellite navigation and GPS? Well, both use satellites as reference; however on a different basis. GPS uses one-way satellites that emit a string of impulses so that the GPS can calculate current time and position. GPS is available at no costs and can be used by everyone who has a respective receiver. Satellite navigation is basically not much different. It uses communication satellites instead of GPS satellites and are not freely available. In general, they can also be spotted where GPS is absent (depending on the provider). With my Inmarsat terminal, it's basically a built-in feature, although on a very basic level. Details under <http://inmarsat.com/>.



As a simple positioning system, I only need this service where no GPS signals are available. Nevertheless, the data is still important as for my communication, data logs of available satellites and logins are necessary. But with this, I also have a very reliable backup system, should my normal GPS devices fail. Inmarsat is available around the globe. That means almost (until 30 degrees North and 30 degrees South). I don't know with GPS but I am sure to find out on one of my next trips.



The cost of 6'000 to 10'000 CHF for such a satellite based system is not worth it if it is only used for the determination of the position. As said before, it's only a goody that comes with the device. I need the system mostly to communicate with home. Today, there are better systems on the market that also can handle audio and Internet (eg Explorer). However monitor costs closely. In Switzerland, FS Communication GmbH (<http://fscomm.ch/>) sells these products. You might pay somewhat more for the system there initially. But it is worthwhile as the after sale service is excellent and you will certainly need that (for assistance in configuration, changes to the system over its lifetime etc).