

Getting started with Online Cycling Apps.

There are now many apps which allow you to view online maps from your phone. I'm going to explain just one of them, which I use regularly. It is entirely free – although every time you open the app they encourage you to buy premium services, which you can simply skip.

Viewranger

To get started you will need to download the App either from the iPhone App Store or on Android from Google Play Store. Search for 'ViewRanger' and you should find the App:

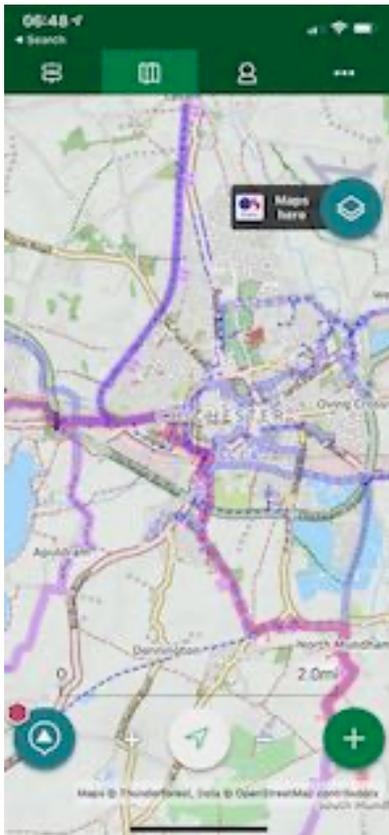


ViewRanger - Hiking Trails & Bike Rides

Once you have installed and opened the App, the first step is to create an account. You can do this via Google or Facebook (both of which I avoid since they already have too much information about me), or sign up by entering your email address and creating a password. Go ahead and create your account – this will also be important later when you view your tracks and routes via a web browser.

Next it will ask you to confirm that the App can use your 'Location' – you will need to agree to this.

They are very keen to sell you a map subscription – usually OS Maps. You do not need this, and in fact I find the free one better for cycling! So just tap the X to decline their generous offer, and you will be in the main screen:



Across the top are four icons.



You will generally be using the two in the middle - left of centre takes you to the map and right of centre takes you to your Routes and Tracks (empty when you start).

So next you need to choose a map, so Tap the three dots (...) i.e. top right icon and then select Maps from the menu. Under the 'Online Maps' section the two free ones are OpenStreetMap and OpenCycleMaps. Since we are cycling choose the latter - Tap on 'OpenCycleMap' and then 'Open Map'. [There is now an option to download maps for offline use for a small area (but sufficient for local cycling) without needing to upgrade to the Premium version: I'll leave you to explore that later].

Now you're good to go! You have an online map whenever you need it with the Cycle Routes and Bridlepaths (and Footpaths :-)) marked.

Recording your Cycle Ride

Recording your ride is simple: On the Map screen tap the + symbol at the

bottom right of the screen, select 'Record a Track' and then 'Road Cycling' or 'Mountain Biking'. And you're all done until you have finished your ride.

When you're finished tap 'Pause', then 'Pause Track', and then 'Finish' ... and finally 'Save Track'..

Viewing your Tracks (and Routes)

Your track will remain on the map after saving it. If you want to hide it, tap somewhere on the route - it will either change colour or numbers may appear along the track. Also the top menu will change - you should then select 'Edit' and then 'Hide'.

To view your ride, select the third icon along the top (the person), and then 'Tracks', where you will find all the Tracks you have recorded.

You can also view them from a computer: From a web browser: go to <https://my.viewranger.com/?locale=en> click on 'Login' and then from the top menu 'Routes and Tracks' select 'My Tracks'. You should see your tracks. If not, return to your phone and tap '...' and then 'Sync Content' to upload your tracks to the server.

Exporting the GPX file

The GPX of a Track gives details of your ride including the time you were at every location, while if you convert the Track to Route then the only information in the GPX file is the location of each point on the route.

There are two ways to export the GPX file of your ride: from your phone, or on your computer using a web browser. It is a little tricky to export a Track from the App so I will skip that, but it's easy to do from a web browser

1. From the App main screen, tap the third icon (the person), then Routes, then the Route you want to export. You should now see the details of the Route. Tap the three dots (...) at top right of the screen, and then select 'Share GPX'. Then choose how you want to share it.
2. From a web browser, open [ViewRanger](#) and login. Then find the Track/Route you want to export as described above. With the single Track/Route selected, click on 'Menu' and then 'Export to GPX' and the file will be downloaded.

Let me know if you have any problems and whether this works correctly on Android.