

## Re: GPS watch (like Garmin ForeRunner) and tree cover

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.geo.satellite-nav/2004-11/1044.html>

---

*From:* SR ([sallyjr\\_at\\_juno.com](mailto:sallyjr_at_juno.com))

*Date:* 11/17/04

Date: Wed, 17 Nov 2004 14:58:04 GMT

I have a Garmin Etrex Vista. This is a hand-held GPS, not one of the new wristband ones. I tried to use this to measure my distance while biking. It works fine on open roads, but not under long stretches of tree cover. I have similar difficulties while hiking in the woods – generally, whenever I am in the shadow of a tree, the GPS receiver cannot get a reading from the satellites. Once I move out from the shadows, it takes from one to several seconds for it to locate the satellites and get a reading.

I have carried the Vista in my hand while jogging in wooded areas, and it has worked just fine. The paths I jog on, however, are wide enough that they are generally not shadowed.

You may not have a problem if you are running straight paths with occasional trees – the unit will take a reading every x seconds (with the Vista, you can set the time interval for readings), and will interpolate the distance traveled from those data points.

One problem I've had: I run in the very early morning, and find it difficult to read the screen while running in semidarkness, even with the backlight. I believe the numbers displayed on the wrist-style receivers are much larger, probably for just this reason.

Another problem: The point on the receiver which communicates with satellites needs a clear view of the sky. I've found that even my clothing can interfere with the signal, e.g., if I try to clip it to my belt or hang it around my neck, my shirt or jacket can cover it up enough to be a problem. I don't know if you would need to pay more attention to your forearm position while running in order to maintain the signal.

A suggestion: find out the store's return policy, in case it doesn't do what you want. I got mine from REI, which does not have a time limit on returns.

If you get one, I hope you will post here to say whether you are

sci.geo.satellite-nav: Re: GPS watch (like Garmin ForeRunner) and tree cover

satisfied – I've been thinking I'd like to get one of the wristband models myself!

On 17 Nov 2004 13:56:29 GMT, Ignoramus24825  
<ignoramus24825@NOSPAM.24825.invalid> wrote:

>I run to improve my long distance running performance. I am thinking  
>about buying a GPS watch like device, such as Garmin ForeRunner. I  
>would like to know the exact distance of my run, to figure out my  
>training progress or lack thereof. I googled this group and checked  
>epinions.com, it looks like forerunner s a reasonable device, but does  
>not work well with tree cover.

>

>I usually run on sidewalks in suburban areas. Most of my runs involve  
>long stretches of relatively straight roads. No tall buildings, but  
>some areas have quite a few overhanging trees. I am concerned that GPS  
>reception would not be great in those places and that would mess up  
>all the distance and mpm measurement.

>

>Any thoughts on whether it would be a waste of money to buy such a  
>device. If you like any particular model, let me know also.

>

>thanks

>--

>Running Log: <http://igor.chudov.com/weightloss/exercise.txt>