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Vince Miglore is a researcher and technical writer with a keen interest in metal detecting. He's written for numerous magazines, including W&E treasures, and is former editor of a hobbyist newsletter.

"I bought a detector back in 1982, and in the first 5 minutes I found an Indian Head penny dated 1881 -right in my own front yard! Since then I've been hooked."

You'll be hooked too, when you see how great this sport is for your physical fitness, your appreciation of natural science, and most of all for the wealth of treasures you can find.

Author of *Metal Detecting for the Beginner* 2nd Edition, 2010 which can be found at www.Amazon.com

Map Site Metal Detecting

The Internet is changing the way hobbyists experience metal detecting. One of the biggest changes is in the way we select places to hunt.

In the old method we'd drag out a battered street map and look for a school or park that we haven't worked lately. The new method involves sitting at the computer and viewing aerial photos, then zooming in to get a close-up look at the potential site. Many of these on line mapping sites allow you to see street level pictures that people have uploaded, so you can view the terrain and the landscape even before you go there. That way you can tell if the layout is rocky, grassy, hilly, or wooded, and you can assess how good it may be for metal detecting. This aerial view technique is handy for detectorists, as it allows you to spot vacant lots, hiking trails, access points, and property lines. In Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com/>), all the parks show up in bright green.

Terraserver (<http://www.terraserver.com/>) and National Geographic (<http://maps.nationalgeographic.com/>) are similar to Google Maps, but they also provide an oblique, or "birds-eye," view that gives you more of a sense of dimension than the standard satellite image.

Another excellent resource is Google Earth. It's a free download program (<http://earth.google.com/>), not a web site, so you have to install it on your computer. Once installed you can fly to anywhere in the world and zoom in on interesting features. This is especially productive in urban areas, since they have added what are called "Street View" images. Google sent vans equipped with 360-degree cameras to major urban areas, taking photos every few yards. You can see these images by selecting the Street View overlay, then clicking on any of the camera icons that appear for available thoroughfares. (See Figure 1.)

Google Earth works with another great site called Panoramio (<http://www.panoramio.com>) which allows you to post your photos of the area. Fortunately, millions of Google Earth surfers have already posted their photos to the site, so when you look at an aerial photo, and you select the Panoramio overlay, you will often have access to hundreds of photos for any particular area. This helps you assess whether or not the location is good for metal detecting. (See Figure 2.)

The advantage of using mapping sites is that it allows you to seek out public areas and land where you wouldn't think to explore using a paper map. The on line maps show hiking trails, bike lanes, beaches, and those tiny micro-sites that are so important in urban hunting.

Surfing the Internet lets you tap into the power of information. This will greatly expand your horizons for metal detecting. Good Luck!



Figure 1. Google Earth screen shot of Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, showing overlay of Street View images (camera icons), and photographs posted by other users from Panoramio.com (blue square icons).



Figure 2. By clicking on one of the blue squares in Google Earth, you can see a user-donated photograph taken at street level. These supplemental photos help you decide if the area is suitable for metal detecting.