

# A guide to GPS devices for people with dementia



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

---

## What is GPS? (Global Positioning System)

GPS is a popular technology solution that an increasing number of families are using to keep their loved ones safe in the community. A GPS device can help you locate someone when they are out. They work by connecting to satellites or the mobile phone network to fix their position. This position can then be found on a map using an app or website.

There are lots of GPS devices on the market. It is important to check that the one you choose has features that are important to you. Alzheimer Scotland has supported people with lived experience of dementia to test a suite of products to help you or your loved one stay safe when out and about.

---

## Why choose GPS for myself or a loved one?

### Mutual reassurance

"I want to know that my loved one is safe when they are out and about."

"I want the people who care for me not to worry when I'm out and about."

### Risk factors

"I am at greater risk of falling when I am out in my community."

"My cared for person lives close to hazards such as a busy road or open water."

### Maintaining independence

"I want to go out by myself and maintain my routines for as long as possible. Having a GPS means I know I will have help if I need it."

### Future-proofing

"Although everything is fine just now, we want to have something in place if needed. If we start using the device now, it will be more familiar if our situation changes."

### A crisis point

"An incident has happened that has caused me concern about the safety of the person I care for."

"I don't feel safe when I am travelling independently."

*"I feel more secure knowing that my wife will be able to track me if need be as this has been a real area of anxiety for me. I feel more reassured knowing it's there."*

– Person living with dementia

*"Since having the GPS my husband has been able to make his own way by bus to his weekly choir - he didn't have the confidence to get there himself before the GPS."*

*- Carer*



---

## Important points to note about GPS before you purchase

### Cost


Prices vary, but the GPS devices that we have tested cost between £80 and £300. You must also factor in a subscription for the SIM/GPS connectivity with monthly costs varying from £8 - £30.

### Responders

A responder is usually a family member who lives with you or nearby. We advise that anyone purchasing a GPS device must have a local responder in the area to react to alerts and emergency situations.

### Monitoring the device

A GPS will not stop someone from going missing in the community. It is important to have other resources in place like the Herbert Protocol with Police Scotland and the free Purple Alert app in case your loved one does go missing.



*"The device is giving us an element of comfort and there is a safety net there. From dad's point of view, he's quite happy with it and happily wears the tag around his neck. It's providing him with a safety net for going about his day."*

- Carer



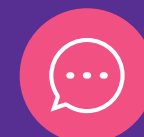
## Top tips for carers



Walk with the person you care for to help them establish safer walking routes.



If the person you care for uses a mobile phone, you could place a prompt by the door so that they remember to take it when going out.



Involve the person you care for as much as possible in the decision making when considering a GPS or monitoring device. The consent of the person wearing the device, or their power of attorney/welfare guardian, must be sought.

# Apps for Smartphones and Smartwatches



## Life 360 app

A free app (subscriptions available for Pro account) for location sharing with family members/friends.

### Features

- Available on both Apple iOS and Android Smartphones.
- Personalised notifications of saved places - i.e. "Home".
- Location history.

**Download on Apple App Store or Play Store.**



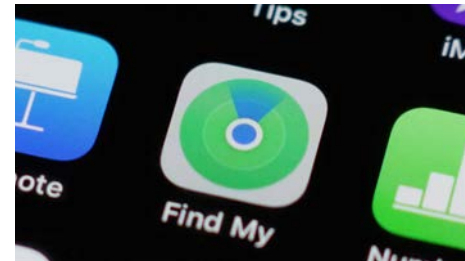
## Google Maps

A free app on Apple iOS and Android devices.

### Features

- Provides routes of destinations.
- If signed in to Google account, Location sharing options available to friends and family (no active notification updates).
- Android only: Use Google Voice Assistant to say "Google, Take me Home" function to use Google maps to create a route home.

**Download on Apple App Store or Android Play Store.**



## Find My by Apple

A free app on Apple iOS devices (smartphones, ipads, apple watch) to allow you to find family or friends who have apple devices.

### Features

- Available on Apple App Store.
- Location sharing and missing item finder.
- Set up alerts to notify friends or family about changes in your location.

**Download on Apple App Store.**



## WhatsApp

A free app on Apple iOS and Android devices.

### Features

- Provides free messaging and video calling.
- Location sharing available if activated by both parties.

**Download on Apple App Store or Android Play Store.**

# Watches

## Buddi Connect & Buddi Clip

Buddi keeps you connected to your chosen contacts if you have had a fall or need assistance when out and about.

### Features

- Automatic falls notification sent to chosen contacts.
- GPS location finder.
- Buddi 24/7 support available at extra cost.
- Buddi Connect works if you already have a smartphone.
- Buddi Clip is there for people who do not currently use a smartphone.

[www.buddi.co.uk](http://www.buddi.co.uk)



Buddi Clip



Buddi Connect



## Mindme Wrist Locate

Mindme Wrist Locate is a personal alarm with GPS location to connect you to your chosen contact by pressing the button. The device has a roaming SIM included which means there will be a monthly subscription charge.



### Features

- GPS location finder.
- Geo-Safety Zones set up.
- Battery life 24 hours.
- Family can request location via call centre.
- Best for people who do not have a smartphone device.

[www.mindme.care](http://www.mindme.care)

## CPR Guardian

CPR Guardian is a mobile phone watch that can detect falls and contact your chosen contacts when out and about.

### Features

- Automatic falls notification sent to chosen contacts.
- GPS location finder.
- Geo-Safety Zones set up.
- Two way talk features.
- Waterproof.
- Battery life 48 hours.

[www.cprguardian.com](http://www.cprguardian.com)



# Pendants

## Otiom

Otiom is a monitoring device that is different from usual GPS devices as it does not have roaming SIM within the pendant. Otiom does not monitor constantly and will only track when the device leaves a predefined area.

### Features

- Connects to a companion app that will receive notifications when an alert is triggered.
- Battery life approx. two weeks.
- Levels of alert can be changed.
- Works indoors (i.e. shopping centres).
- Waterproof and can withstand a machine wash if accidentally left in a pocket.

[www.pentlandmedical.co.uk](http://www.pentlandmedical.co.uk)



## Tech Silver GPS

Tech Silver GPS connects to a companion app that will track the device. This device has a roaming SIM included which means there will be a monthly subscription charge.

### Features

- Connects to a companion app that will receive notifications.
- Battery life is around 3 days depending on usage.
- Two way talk feature.
- Single button on the device can be used as an SOS to notify others that help is required.
- Geo-Safety Zones can be set up.
- GPS location finder.

[www.techsilver.co.uk](http://www.techsilver.co.uk)



## Mindme Locate

Mindme Locate is a pendant style GPS device that will determine the device's location. The device has a roaming SIM included which means there will be a monthly subscription charge.

### Features

- GPS location finder.
- Geo-Safety Zones can be set up.
- Response centre support available at additional cost (England based).
- Battery lasts 24 hours - 48 hours depending on usage.
- Family can request location via call centre.
- Best for people who do not have a smartphone device.

[www.mindme.care](http://www.mindme.care)





## Locaite

Locaite is a GPS device and falls detector. This device has a roaming SIM included which means there will be a monthly subscription charge.

### Features

- Automatic falls notification sent to chosen contacts.
- GPS location finder.
- Geo-Safety Zones can be set up.
- Two way talk features.
- SOS button on device.
- 48 hour battery.
- Connects to a companion app that will receive notifications.

[www.locaiteme.com](http://www.locaiteme.com)



## Pro Pod 6

Pro Pod 6 is a GPS small unit with an emergency button that will send a text to your chosen contact. This device has a roaming SIM included which means there will be a monthly subscription charge.

### Features

- GPS location finder.
- Geo-Safety Zones can be set up.
- No set up required - arrives ready to use.
- Battery lasts up to two weeks.
- Location of the device is viewed via companion app or can be accessed online via the website if no smartphone is available.

[www.trackershop-uk.com](http://www.trackershop-uk.com)



All products listed within this guide have been tried and tested by people with lived experience of dementia through our Dementia Circle project. All products tested are listed within our online platform About Digital and Me (ADAM).

ADAM is there to help you find the best technology for you to live well at home. ADAM is not affiliated with any of the products included within the catalogue and acts as a trusted resource of information for people who are curious about technology. If you are interested in becoming part of the dementia circle community, please get in contact with our Innovations and Development team at [digital@alzscot.org](mailto:digital@alzscot.org)

**ADAM**   
About Digital And Me

Finds what you need

[www.meetadam.co.uk](http://www.meetadam.co.uk)

# Quick reference guide

Product	GPS Location	Live Location	Alert Notifications	Geo Safety Zones	Two-Way Talk	Smartphone Required	Falls Dectector	24/7 Call Centre Support	SOS Button	Location Sharing	Subscription Required
Buddi Clip	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
Buddi Connect	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
CPR Guardian 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Find My App		✓				✓					
Google Maps	✓	✓				✓				✓	
Life 360	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	
Locaite	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Mindme Locate	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓
Mindme Wrist Locate	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓
Otiom		✓	✓	✓		✓					
Pro Pod 6	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓		✓
Tech Silver GPS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
WhatsApp		✓				✓				✓	

# Glossary

<b>Bluetooth</b>	A wireless technology that uses radio frequencies to connect to other devices
<b>Companion App</b>	An app that you download as a carer or designated responder that connects to the monitoring device
<b>Data</b>	Internet connectivity that is delivered to your device without any wires. Most GPS devices will need data to function which is why a monthly subscription is needed.
<b>Geo-Safety Zone</b>	A perimeter you can set up that will trigger an alarm if the device moves out of the zone.
<b>GPS</b>	Global Positioning System (GPS) is a surveying and navigational system that uses signals from orbiting satellites in order to find a location.
<b>Live Location</b>	Location of the device is shown in real time.
<b>Location Sharing</b>	A way of letting people know where you are by using an app or mobile phone.

<b>Responder</b>	A designated person who will act on any safety alerts from the device. Needs to be someone local to the person using the device. We advise that a responder is absolutely necessary when considering monitoring devices.
<b>Response Centre</b>	Usually a 24/7 centre that can support during alerts. The devices within this guide with a response centre listed will be UK based. They will usually not send any staff to a location but will support the family to navigate through alerts.
<b>Roaming SIM</b>	A mobile phone SIM card that connects to more than one phone network.
<b>SmartDevice</b>	An electronic device that can be wirelessly connected to other devices. A SmartPhone and SmartTable have the ability to download Apps that some GPS devices require.
<b>SOS Feature</b>	Usually a button that the user can press to alert family members that they need support.
<b>Two-Way Talk</b>	A feature that means you can call the device and talk to the user.

# Get in touch

We'd love to hear from you, you can contact us here:

**Email:** [digital@alzscot.org](mailto:digital@alzscot.org)

**Follow us:** @AlzScotDigital

[www.alzscot.org](http://www.alzscot.org)

**24 HOUR**  
Dementia



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

# Helpline

Freephone 0808 808 3000  
Email [helpline@alzscot.org](mailto:helpline@alzscot.org)

