

# Mapping the World

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OpenStreetMap is an international project, and the community spans the globe. But there are local differences in the way the community is organized, where its mapping emphasis is, or what kind of data has been imported. Even though the same data model and the same tagging system is used all over the world, there are many national or regional differences. This appendix gives some information specific to particular regions. Because of the limited space available in this book, we have had to choose only a few countries for this section. This doesn't mean that nothing is happening in other countries. Please see the wiki for those places and contact the local community to find out more. If there is no OpenStreetMap community in your part of the world, maybe you should get something started!

For each region we have listed the primary wiki entry point, the local web page (if available), the mailing list<sup>1</sup>, and the IRC channel.

Please note that there are countries where using a GPS is illegal or where you need a permit to create a map. We don't necessarily know where such problems could occur, so we can't go into them here. Make sure you know what applies in your country.

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*Based on the book, "OpenStreetMap. Using and Enhancing the Free Map of the World", by Ramm, Topf, and Chilton.*

The appendix is available for download at [www.openstreetmap.info](http://www.openstreetmap.info) and, in a possibly edited and updated form, from `/misc/documents/osmbook` in the OpenStreetMap Subversion repository.

Dashed underlined text refers to OSM wiki pages.

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<sup>1</sup> Go to `lists.openstreetmap.org` to find the mailing lists.

The following people contributed further local knowledge to this appendix: Shoaib Burq, Nicolas Chavent, Steve Chilton, Elizabeth Dodd, Mikel Maron, Ivan Sanchez Ortega, Pieren, Richard Weait, and Harry Wood.

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## Australia

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**Wiki** [WikiProject\\_Australia](#)

**Website** [openstreetmap.org.au](http://openstreetmap.org.au)

**Mailing list** [talk-au](#)

**IRC** [#osm-au](#)

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Work has started to establish a non-profit organization as the local OSMF chapter, see [Foundation/Local\\_Chapters/Australia](#). There are regular mapping parties in Canberra and Brisbane.

### Tagging

Some Australian states use an alphanumeric system for labeling roads; in others the official road classification can be deduced from the type of signs used.

Australian road tagging reflects the importance of the road, and not the physical form of the road itself. There are many unpaved roads that are nonetheless important; tag these roads according to the usual scheme and add `surface=unpaved`. Don't be tempted to tag them as `highway=track` just because they are unpaved; this tag should be used for gravel fire trails, forest drives, 4WD tracks, and similar roads only.

Remember that Australia has left-hand drive traffic.

Much more information can be found on [Australian\\_Tagging\\_Guidelines](#).

### Government Data Imports

The Australian government has released many datasets including geodata under a Creative Commons license. Data is available for download at [data.australia.gov.au](http://data.australia.gov.au). See the wiki category [Category:Data.australia.gov.au\\_projects](#) for some projects to import this data. Major imports have covered the coastline, as well as suburb boundaries and postal code areas.

### NearMap Aerial Imagery

The Australian company NearMap has released some of their high resolution aerial images for OSM use, mostly of urban areas and surroundings. Information about coverage and use of the images is on [NearMap\\_PhotoMaps](#).

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## Canada

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Wiki [WikiProject\\_Canada](#)

Website [www.openstreetmap.ca](http://www.openstreetmap.ca)

Mailing list [talk-ca](#)

IRC [#osm-ca](#)

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### Government Support

Canadian government agencies Natural Resources Canada ([www.nrcan.gc.ca](http://www.nrcan.gc.ca)) and the Centre for Topographic Information – Sherbrooke (CTI-S, [www.cits.nrcan.gc.ca](http://www.cits.nrcan.gc.ca)) participate in the Canadian OpenStreetMap community. CTI-S publishes several sets of Canadian geodata including the CanVec dataset, which they publish in OSM format (see [CanVec](#)).

### Imports

The CanVec, GeoBase, and other Canadian public geodata sets are being converted and imported by the OSM community. They include boundaries, First Nations' lands, national protected areas, and the national road network. Refer to the [GeoBase\\_Import](#), [CanVec](#) and [Canada\\_Import\\_Status](#) wiki pages for details.

### Tagging

Some guidelines for tagging Canadian roads and other features are documented on the wiki under [Canadian\\_tagging\\_guidelines](#).

### Local Groups

Local groups in Canada are still relatively thin on the ground:

- Toronto ON – <http://www.meetup.com/OpenStreetMap-Toronto/>
- Waterloo Region ON – <http://www.meetup.com/Waterloo-OSM/>

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## France

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Wiki [WikiProject\\_France](#)

Website [www.openstreetmap.fr](http://www.openstreetmap.fr)

Mailing list [talk-fr](#)

IRC [#osm-fr](#)

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### Cadastre

The OSM community is permitted to use the official French cadastre (land register) for deriving data. This allows mapping to a great level of detail. [WikiProject\\_France/Cadastre](#)

has more information. A special JOSM plugin is available to work with cadastre data, and JOSM has been enhanced to support a number of special French map projections.

## Tagging

See [FR:France roads tagging](#) for information about tagging roads in France.

The French community is running the Osmose data quality checking tool (see [Osmose](#) on the wiki) at [osmose.openstreetmap.fr](http://osmose.openstreetmap.fr).

## Corine Land Cover

The Corine Land Cover project of the European Union collects land cover data for its member states. The data for France has been released under an OSM-compatible license and it was mostly imported into OSM in 2009. See [WikiProject\\_Corine\\_Land\\_Cover](#) and [WikiProject\\_France/Corine\\_Land\\_Cover](#).

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## Germany

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Wiki [WikiProject\\_Germany](#)

Website [www.openstreetmap.de](http://www.openstreetmap.de)

Mailing list [talk-de](#)

IRC [#osm-de](#)

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Germany has a vibrant OSM community and is among the best-mapped countries in OpenStreetMap. There are many regular regional meetings (see [www.openstreetmap.de](http://www.openstreetmap.de)). The German community has chosen not to found a national OpenStreetMap Foundation chapter, but rather to let OpenStreetMap affairs be handled by an existing organization, FOSSGIS e.V. ([www.fossgis.de](http://www.fossgis.de))

FOSSGIS e.V. is also the German chapter of OSGeo and is expected to become the German chapter of OSMF. Initially dealing mainly with Free and Open Source software in the GIS field, FOSSGIS e.V. now also concerns itself with Open Data.

## FOSSGIS Conference and LinuxTag

There is an annual conference also called FOSSGIS. In 2010 this conference featured an OpenStreetMap track for the first time. It is expected to continue being the main German-language OpenStreetMap event.

OpenStreetMap traditionally also has a strong presence at LinuxTag, Europe's largest Open Source event held in Germany every year.

## Imports and Aerial Imagery

The German community hasn't benefited from any large-scale imports, but smaller donations of various kinds have been processed, for example building data for Rostock, or sets of administrative boundaries.

There have also been many small-to-medium-scale donations of aerial imagery, most notably a “trial” project agreed with the government of the German state of Bavaria in 2008. The community was given permission to use official aerial imagery for a period of three months (see [DE:Luftbilder\\_aus\\_Bayern](#) on the wiki). AeroWest GmbH, a commercial provider of aerial imagery, made their imagery for the city of Dortmund available in 2010, which has led to Dortmund being mapped very well ([DE:Luftbilder\\_aus\\_Dortmund](#)).

Yahoo aerial imagery with good resolution is available in some German conurbations but doesn't comprehensively cover rural areas.

## Other Donations and Sponsorship

FOSSGIS operates a number of servers that have been sponsored by German hosting provider STRATO AG. They are available for all project members (see [FOSSGIS/Servers](#) on the wiki).

The German community has also been given a number of GPS devices that are available for mapping parties and related projects.

## Tagging

Germany is a hotbed of experimental features in OpenStreetMap. Some ideas that were started in Germany are now used worldwide (e. g. the “Karlsruhe Schema” for addressing), but many more are still considered exotic by others. With basic road tags, land use, and POI information already captured in many areas, mappers in Germany turn their attention to details, adding extra information such as track types, surface quality, and access restrictions. Germans are also diligent when mapping public transport routes, stops, and stations – all using relations, of course.

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## Haiti

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[Wiki](#) [WikiProject\\_Haiti](#)

[Mailing list](#) [talk-ht](#)

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In January 2010 a 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, devastating the capital, its metropolitan region, some of the major Haitian urban centers, and several rural areas. In the aftermath hundreds of OSMers worked on the Haiti map using aerial imagery supplied by several companies and importing public domain baseline and humanitarian specific datasets. As a result, within a few days of the earthquake, the OSM map of Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince and its surroundings quickly became the most detailed one available. OSM maps were

used on mobile devices by search and rescue teams in the days immediately following the earthquake.

The remote mapping is being complemented by advisory field missions of OSMers working with the World Bank and by capacity-building field missions of the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT). The first HOT mission resulted in plugging OSM into the geodata management solutions in place in Haiti among humanitarian international responders, ongoing development projects, and Haitian national and local authorities, primarily the *Centre National d'Information Geomatique et Spatial (CNIGS)*, the Haitian national mapping agency.

There is plenty of information about how you can get involved on the wiki (see [WikiProject\\_Haiti](#) and [HOT](#)). There is still lots to do as Haiti is trying to get back on its feet again.

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## India

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Wiki [WikiProject\\_India](#)

Mailing list [talk-in](#)

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The OSM coverage of Chennai on the East coast of India has long been an example of wonderful mapping dedication, but we are now starting to see India's OSM community taking off elsewhere as well. There remains plenty of mapping to do, which as yet untraced Yahoo aerial imagery available for several large cities.

### Tagging

For rules on tagging roads in India see [Tagging\\_Roads\\_in\\_India](#).

Remember that India has left-hand drive traffic.

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## Italy

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Wiki [WikiProject\\_Italy](#)

Website [www.openstreetmap.it](http://www.openstreetmap.it)

Mailing list [talk-it](#)

IRC [#osm-it](#)

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At [blog.openstreetmap.it](http://blog.openstreetmap.it) there is an Italian language OSM community blog.

### OSMit Conference

A national OSM conference is planned, see <http://www.dicat.unige.it/osmit2010/>.

## Imports

Some data has been imported, for instance buildings in the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia.

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### Japan

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**Wiki** [WikiProject\\_Japan](#)

**Website** [www.openstreetmap.jp](http://www.openstreetmap.jp)

**Mailing list** [talk-ja](#)

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## Tagging

There is lots of information on local tagging rules on [Japan\\_tagging](#).

Remember that Japan has left-hand drive traffic.

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### The Netherlands

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**Wiki** [WikiProject\\_Netherlands](#)

**Website** [www.openstreetmap.nl](http://www.openstreetmap.nl)

**Mailing list** [talk-nl](#)

**IRC** [#osm-nl](#)

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Host to the State of the Map conference in 2009, the Netherlands has always had an active OpenStreetMap community, though the AND import (see below) has left them with less mapping to do. Mapping footpaths and POIs is now the priority.

There is a blog about Dutch OSM activities at [blog.openstreetmap.nl](http://blog.openstreetmap.nl).

## AND Import

In 2007 the AND company donated data for the road network of the Netherlands as well as some other data to OSM. It was subsequently imported into OSM. See [AND\\_Data](#) for more information.

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### Spain

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**Wiki** [WikiProject\\_Spain](#)

**Website** [www.openstreetmap.es](http://www.openstreetmap.es)

**Mailing list** [talk-es](#)

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The “Asociación OpenStreetMap España” was founded in Spain early in 2009. It is planned to make this into a chapter of the OSMF.

## Tagging

The Spanish community is still deciding about some `highway` tags. Politically speaking, Spain is divided into 17 regions, and most of them classify their roads in a different way. You can find the latest information on the Spanish way of tagging roads at [Normalización](#). Most Spanish maps depict national roads in red. These are tagged as `highway=trunk`.

## Data Imports

Spain has more than 20 regional and national mapping agencies, with several of them interested in sharing their data.

At the time of writing, several mapping agencies already allowed their data to be imported or used in OSM:

*Instituto Geográfico Nacional*: Geodetic network and political boundaries.

*Instituto de Tecnologías Agrarias de Castilla-León*: 95000 km<sup>2</sup> of 25cm/px orthophotos.

*Conselleria d'Infrastructures i Transport de la Comunitat Valenciana*: Valencia roads.

*Instituto Cartográfico de Andalucía*: Half a gigabyte worth of street and road network.

*Eusko Jauriaritza – Gobierno Vasco*: Orthophotos, topographic maps, land use.

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## United Kingdom

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[Wiki United\\_Kingdom](#)

[Mailing list](#) [talk-gb](#)

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The UK community is active at several levels. There are frequent local mapping parties to try to fill in details in less well mapped areas (noted on the project's event calendar). Several regions have separate mailing lists (e. g. West Midlands) and an active social calendar (e. g. London). Work has just started to incorporate a local OSMF chapter for the UK.

## Ordnance Survey

The restrictive licensing policy from the UK national mapping agency (Ordnance Survey) was one of the driving forces in starting the OpenStreetMap project. Due to a major change in government policy, the Ordnance Survey released some geodata under a liberal license in April 2010. Members of the community have looked at the various datasets (such as Meridian, StreetView, and VectorMap District) to see if they provide significant and usable data for adding detail to OSM. See the wiki page at [Ordnance\\_Survey\\_Opendata](#) for the current status.



## Imports

The UK community has tended not to consider data imports, mostly because UK datasets are often derived from Ordnance Survey data. The one major exception to this has been that of importing data from NaPTAN. This is the UK official dataset for bus stops, which the UK Department for Transport and Traveline have jointly offered to make available to the OpenStreetMap project. There is a wiki page for this at [NaPTAN](#).

## Tagging

Because of the project's origins in the UK, much of the tagging schema has a distinctly UK bias. For instance, the highway tagging schema is explicitly based on the highway classification from the UK (motorway, trunk, primary, secondary, tertiary, etc).

Remember that the UK has left-hand drive traffic.

## Aerial Imagery

There is good aerial imagery available from Yahoo for some urban areas in the UK, with the subsequent right to derive data from it. There is a UK Yahoo coverage map at: <http://steve8.dev.openstreetmap.org/yahoo.html>. Recently high resolution aerial imagery of the whole of the county of Surrey was released to the project, see [Surrey\\_Air\\_Survey](#).

## Out-of-copyright Maps

Copyright expires for maps in the UK after 50 years from publication. Various editions of Ordnance Survey maps come into this category. Nearly all *1" New Popular Edition* maps are available, as are many *2.5" Provisional Edition* maps, and many of the *1" 7th Series* maps. Where they are out-of-copyright they have been scanned, rectified, and tiled before being made available as a layer to work from in the main OSM editors. See [Out-Of-Copyright](#).

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## United States of America

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Wiki [WikiProject\\_United\\_States](#)

Mailing list [talk-us](#)

IRC [#osm-us](#)

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American OSMers have founded OpenStreetMap U.S. Inc., a non-profit organization to support OSM, which is going to be an OSMF local chapter (see [Foundation/Local\\_Chapters/United\\_States](#)). The community is also planning to hold a State of the Map US Conference (see [www.stateofthemap.us](http://www.stateofthemap.us) and [WikiProject\\_United\\_States/US\\_SOTM](#)).

## Local Groups

Some local groups have formed in the US:

- Albany, NY: <http://www.meetup.com/CapitalDistrict-OpenStreetMap/>
- Atlanta, GA: <http://www.meetup.com/Atlanta-OpenStreetMap/>
- Columbus, OH: <http://www.meetup.com/OpenStreetMap-Columbus/>
- San Francisco, CA: <http://www.meetup.com/Bay-Area-OpenStreetMappers/>
- Washington, DC: [mappingdc.org](http://mappingdc.org)

## TIGER Import and Fixup

The US Census Bureau publishes geodata for the US under the name TIGER (Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing) including a complete road network. The data is in the public domain, so there are no legal problems with using it for OSM. The data is often old and incorrect, but still useful. Between October 2007 and January 2008 the data was converted and imported into the OSM database. More information about the import is available on the [TIGER](#) wiki page.

Although this gives us a complete road network, there is much work to be done to fix this data in OSM. The data is wildly inaccurate in places. See the wiki page [TIGER\\_fixup](#) for information on how you can help.

## Other Imports

More detailed data for Massachusetts from the Commonwealth's Office of Geographic and Environmental Information was imported, too. See [MassGIS](#) for details.

Land cover data has been imported for the whole state of Georgia, and there are several other imports.

## Units

OSM is an international project and generally uses the metric system for measurements in tags like `maxspeed` or `maxheight`. Americans can use the numbers they are used to if they add the unit: `maxspeed=55 mph`.

## Availability of Aerial Imagery

There are good aerial images available from Yahoo covering the whole of the US.

## Tagging

There is exhaustive information on tagging United States highways on the wiki under [United\\_States\\_roads\\_tagging](#). Note that many highways weren't classified correctly when the TIGER import was being done.