

GoogleLitTrips.org

# Using the Path Tool to Create a Lit Trip Route

An Authorized Step-Guide for Use on Full-Featured Laptops and Computers

This step-guide focuses upon the basic steps for creating path lines that mark the route taken between locations in a story.

## Introduction



The ADD PATH tool is at the heart of the Google Lit Trip concept. It is the path marking the itinerary that gives a Google Lit Trip a beginning, middle and end. It indicates the chronology of the travel and visually indicates where the characters are at a given point in the story as well as a clear indication of where they have been and where they are going next.

A collection of place marks without a path looks sort of like a dart board where there are no visual indicators clarifying which of the many other place markers is the “next stop” in the characters’ the journey.

## The Basics of the Add Path Tool

Clicking on the ADD PATH tool brings up a "description window." The description window allows multiple adjustments to a path line while using the tool.

It is a good idea to provide a NAME for the path. A Lit Trip may consist of many route segments and being able to distinguish these segments from each other is helpful should adjustments be needed. I tend to use names such as: “San Francisco > Berkeley” or “Chapt 1 > Chapt 2”

## Creating a Path

Unlike line drawing tools in other applications, the ADD PATH tool does NOT work by clicking on a starting point and then dragging to the end point. Doing so will create a mess that will have you screaming at your computer!

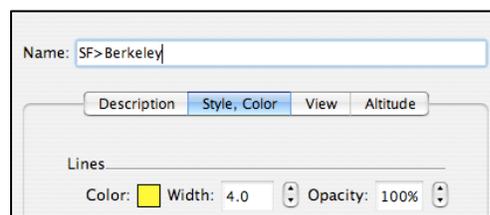
Simply click at a starting point (San Francisco) and then click at a different point (North Oakland) and a path will appear between the two clicks. If you then click on a third point further along the route, the route will extend to the location of the third click.



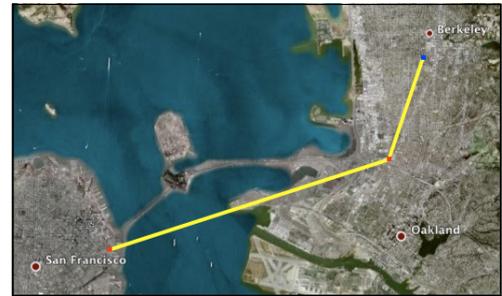
**Great Tip:** This extending the route through a succession of spaced clicks is the essence of creating a "bent" line for the route.

## Changing the Color and Thickness of the Path

Click the STYLE, COLOR tab in the description window to change the color and thickness of the route line.



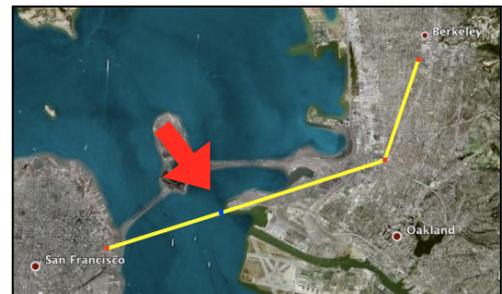
Because the color of the earth consists mostly of shades of green, blue, and beige, be sure to pick a color that has sufficient contrast to show clearly against the colors of the globe and select a thickness that will show from any altitude that you want it visible from.



## Refining the Path

If you want to refine part of an existing path, it is critical to know this tip!

Let's bend the route between San Francisco and North Oakland to more accurately follow the route established by the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Because Google Earth assumes that any new click should extend the path from the location of the last click on the route, if we want a new click between San Francisco and North Oakland we must **first click the San Francisco click point** indicating that we want our new click to be after the San Francisco click point. Then we can create a new click point where we want to "refine" the route. If we had not first clicked on the San Francisco click point, Google Earth would have assumed that we wanted to "extend" the path from North Berkeley back to the point between San Francisco and North Oakland.



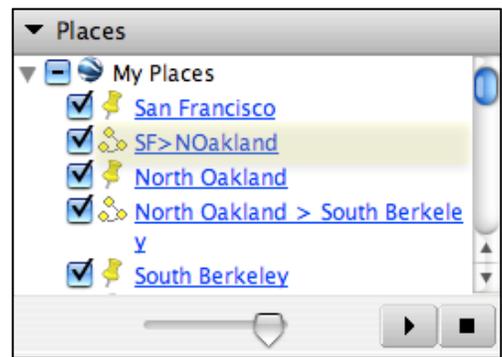
Now, place the mouse directly over the new click point between San Francisco and North Oakland and drag it to a point on the bridge that refines the route to more accurately represent the "actual" route one would take if driving from San Francisco to North Oakland.



## Adjusting a Path Once You've Closed the Description Window

Once the description window for a route segment is closed, the route is "locked." If you find that you need to adjust a route segment after having closed the description window, you will need to first re-open the description window.

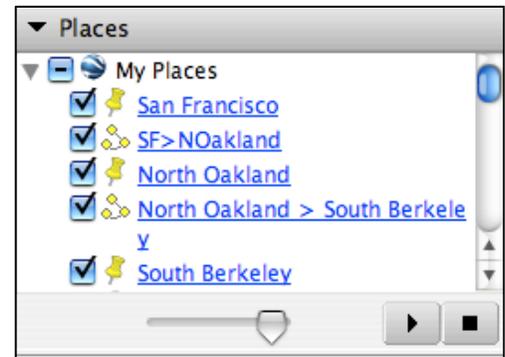
First click once on the route segment in the side bar to select the route segment that you wish to adjust. Then under the Google Earth EDIT menu, select "Get Info." This re-opens the description window and you can make any adjustments you wish to the route.



## Final Basic Add Path Tool Tip

When building a Lit Trip, it is often easier to build the route in small segments as characters make their journey. The downside of using small segments is that each segment becomes an item in the list of items in the side bar.

This means that for long journeys, your item list may include dozens of route segments and that Google Earth will stop at each place mark and then again at each route segment before going to the next place marker. This creates an appearance of "redundancy" as viewers stop at a place marker and then stop at the route segment before going on to the next placemark.



This becomes quite burdensome for long journeys that in like John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

**(Drum Roll Please)** Therefore, we tend to create small segments when building a Lit Trip because they are easier to manage for long trips, but we now tend to create a single folder to hold all path segments then drag that single folder to the very end of the list of placemark list so that viewers need not "stop" to look at the path every time they travel between one place mark and the next place mark.