

Using POIs with IGO8 Navigation Devices

Overview

Having purchased a navigation head-unit that uses IGO8, though I could find various fragmented bits of advice on how best to use POIs, I couldn't find a single reference point that provided a workable approach to getting everything functioning correctly.

There appeared to be various hints and workarounds for issues, and in getting the best from my unit, I have used various sources, and so decided to pull them together here.

There is a relatively simple way to get basic POIs working on the IGO8 device; this is described in the early part of the text. A little more work (but somewhat more technical) can add a much better experience, but it requires a little reading and care in implementation.

Notes before using

1. AFAIK "IGO Primo" handles POIs differently to IGO8, and these instructions are thus not relevant for IGO Primo.
2. Be aware that this is not necessarily the definitive method to handle POIs in IGO8, but is a method that has worked for me, and combines numerous separate sources that I referenced to enable certain functions, and/or overcome specific problems.
3. Follow the instructions at your own risk, and **Backup your device before attempting to make changes** – this should make it possible to recover from any mistakes.

Basic POI Use

POI Format Used

IGO8 works with POIs in .kml format, which is the same format as used by Google Earth.

An increasing number of download sites offer POIs in this format, but where they are not available, the web offers various routes to conversion from the other common formats to .kml, (e.g. TomTom OV2, .csv, etc) both via online methods and by downloading conversion tools.

You should download either a native .kml file, or one of the other formats, and use a conversion tool/site to produce a .kml file.

Some sites which I have used for conversion are:

<http://poiconvert.free.fr/>

http://www.poieditor.com/poi_convert/ov2-to-kml/

The method should be obvious, and unless the original file is “suspect”, files converted to .kml format by any of the main conversion routes should be immediately usable by IGO8.

(Note: Some conversion processes add a large amount of extraneous, repeat information to each piece of "point" data. This is irrelevant in day-to-day use, and it is possible to remove it with “global” editing of the file if you are worried about file size – it does not have any negative effect on function, however).

As a tip, before loading any .kml POI files to your navigation device, it is worthwhile testing them (and the file consistency) by loading them in Google Earth. If you have downloaded Google Earth, then it is very likely that the .kml file association has been made as part of the installation, and double-clicking on the file will invoke Google Earth with the POI set. Any errors are likely to show up at this point as a Google Earth error-message. (Having a copy on your PC and using it in this way is good for pre-planning as well!).

POI location on device

Once you have a POI file in .kml format, in order to use the POIs, the file should be copied to the following (already existing) location on your device/card.

[Driveid]\“MobileNavigator”\content\userdata\POI

Note that the Driveid will depend on your computer configuration and how you connect your device to it. "MobileNavigator" is the top-level folder name on my device - it may differ on other devices (I believe IGO8 is a common top-level folder name on more generic devices), but whatever, it should have below it various other folders, including "content". (and then userdata, and then POI).

In order to add data to this folder, you should first exit or close navigation on your device, and either connect the device to the computer as per your device instructions, or (if it is card-based) extract and place the card in a card reader in the computer, and then copy the required POI file(s) into the specified folder.

Once the copy is complete, on (reinserting the card and) restarting the device, there will be a delay whilst the new internal POI structures are built. (This only occurs once after any change, subsequent restarts without change will be quicker). The POIs you’ve added should then appear in the appropriate position in your Navigation Device's POI menu (where the various available POI options may be selected).

And that (at the simple end of things) is that.

Drawbacks with stopping at this point - and further potential

1. It is likely (if, in the menu, you enable Icon display for the POIs added) that the same, standard Google Earth globe Icon it will be displayed for each type of user POI added (i.e. there is no differentiation on the mapdisplay of POI type).
2. There are additional features of the software that can make POI use more versatile, which are (relatively) simple to invoke, but need some manipulation of the POI file.

So:

Enabling Custom Icons

As for TomTom, etc, it is entirely possible to display a custom Icon for each particular set of POIs you load to your device.

Getting Custom Icons to work requires some simple (but careful) editing of the .kml POI file **before** you load it to your device.

The following assumes that you have both a POI file in .kml format, and an Icon (as a .bmp file) that you wish to use as the displayed Icon for points in your POI file.

The Icons are usually available on the download sites, or if you've created your .kml file by a conversion from, say TomTom format, or .csv, you can use the .bmp file generally made available with the original files.

(Note that as different IGO8 devices have varying resolutions, some Icons may display slightly distorted – though the standard .bmp files such as used for TomTom generally available work pretty well for me).

I use Notepad to do the require editing; it can be clunky/laggy, particularly with large files, but if you are patient it works.

If you open your .kml file in Notepad, you will find the first few lines will look (depending on the POI set and how it was generated) a bit like this:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="ISO-8859-1"?>
<kml xmlns="http://earth.google.com/kml/2.0">
<Folder>
<Placemark><name>Strandcamping Turnersee Breznik - St. Primus-Turnersee
(01/04-01/10) &gt;+4342392350 -CCpg505</name>
.....
.....
```

(Note that the detail content varies somewhat depending on the way the POI set was created, but for the custom Icon function, there is only one key item to edit)

Where there is a <Folder> text, (in the first few lines of the file) this should be edited to read:

```
<Folder><name>archies_europe</name><metadata><igoicon><filename>content\userdata\poi\archies_europe.bmp</filename></igoicon></metadata>
```

(Note: The text is only split over two lines here because of the page formatting, this is a continuously flowing line typed into Notepad as part of the editing.)

The non-bold text should be used exactly as is.

The bold text is related to your POI set and Icon .bmp file, and should have appropriate (unique) values inserted. (use the text you wish to appear in the POI menu)

(Note: instead of <Folder> you may see <Document> instead - carry out similar editing to the above, but retain <Document> rather than using <Folder>).

The above (metadata) text tells IGO8 to use the specified name (in this case **archies_europe**) for menu references to the POIs, and the specified .bmp file (in this case **archies_europe.bmp**) for all POIs in this "Folder" (or "Document").

If any errors are made in editing, it is likely this will not work, so it is worthwhile carefully proof-reading the changes, checking the .bmp file is correctly named, and then testing with Google Earth, before loading the POI file as set out in previous text.

It is now imperative that the specified .bmp file is loaded at the same time as the POI data to the same location (.....content\userdata\poi). (so there will be two files to copy, .kml, and .bmp).

Important Note:

It would appear that there is a known bug in a number of versions of IGO8 (including mine) whereby, even with the above custom Icon specification correctly defined, the default Google Earth Icon will continue to be displayed for every user-specified POI.

As a result, the above (alone) may well not work.

This can be overcome as follows:

On the card/device.

1. in the top-level folder make a (renamed) copy of the data.zip file (for backup purposes)

2. open the original data.zip and go to the folder ui_igo8\icons\poi\
3. search for kmlpoi.icon and delete (or rename) it

This appears to make the editing set out above work correctly. (And I haven't found any critical downside to this removal of the "default" Icon)

I have added custom Icons for all my .kml POI files, and they all work fine, differentiating between the different POI types on the map display.

Nesting POI categories

As may be obvious if you have any pre-supplied POIs, it is possible for IGO8 to cope with a nested set of POI definitions.

This can be very useful when searching for a POI (particularly near to current position or a given point). For example, the pre-supplied data on mine allows a search for (all) petrol stations, or by drilling down, for petrol stations by brand.

Using the same method, I have a nested set of campsites for the UK. It works for the whole of the UK, subdivided below that into the two club's sites, CL/CSs, Forest Holidays, etc.

I can thus search simply by a single search for any nearby site in all of the categories, or drill-down and look for (say) CC CLs only, or C&CC club sites only).

On the continent, I can similarly search for all nearby camping locations, or specifically Aires, Campsites, or Stellplatze etc. by varying the drill down.

Each category is identifiable on the map display by its own, custom, POI.

The concept is very simple; the editing is, however, slightly more involved than that already described.

One simply creates a POI file which is a "document", and then places "folders" within it in the nested structure you desire.

As outlined above, you will find most .kml files will already be supplied as a "folder" (the header for which, as we've already seen, must be edited if you want custom POIs), so it is really only a cut and paste job from individual .kml POI files to get the desired, nested, structure.

The concept is best understood by reference to an example. A "skeleton" example of my "UK Camping" file structure is below:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="ISO-8859-1" ?>  
<kml xmlns="http://earth.google.com/kml/2.1">
```

<Document><name>Camping-UK</name> <metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\Camping-UK.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Folder><name>CC_Club_Site</name><metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\CC_Club_Site.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Placemark>.....poi position data..... (repeated)

</Folder>

<Folder><name>CC_CL</name><metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\CC_CL.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Placemark>.....poi position data..... (repeated)

</Folder>

<Folder><name>CCC_Club_Site</name><metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\CCC_Club_Site.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Placemark>.....poi position data..... (repeated)

</Folder>

<Folder><name>CCC_Forest_Site</name><metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\CCC_Forest_Site.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Placemark>.....poi position data..... (repeated)

</Folder>

<Folder><name>CCC_CS</name><metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\CCC_CS.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Placemark>.....poi position data..... (repeated)

</Folder>

<Folder><name>CCC_Listed_Site</name><metadata><igoicon>
<filename>content\userdata\poi\CCC_Listed_Site.bmp
</filename></igoicon></metadata>

<Placemark>.....poi position data..... (repeated)

</Folder>

</Document>

</kml>

It consists of a top-level "document" (Which I've created), containing downloaded categories of sites as "folders" (the individual files came like that; indeed, most of the coding already exists in all downloaded or converted files). The headers have been edited to enable custom POIs, the main body of each file containing POI data has been left well alone, and the whole lot has been put together in one file using Notepad.

Note, each occurrence of <Document>, <Folder>, <kml> must be terminated with </Document>, </Folder>, </kml> respectively, and in the right sequential place.

It is quite easy to mis-edit, so a test of the final file with Google Earth (see previous text) is a very good idea.

I've only used a maximum of two-levels of nesting, (Folder within Folder within Document representing the levels EU-Camping, Aires, and Aires Categories) but see no reason why it shouldn't work to further levels.

Once edited, the (combined) file and any associated .bmp Icon files should be loaded to the device/card at the location already detailed above.

My POIs

Should anyone be interested, at the time of writing in July 2012, I have a reasonably up-to-date combined set of (nested) .kml files and associated .bmp icons that I could make available as a zip for download. (PM requests accepted).

It contains:

- CC sites and CLs
- C&CC sites, CSs, Forest Sites, Listed Sites
- Archies Europe
- Bordatlas (Stellplatze)
- Campingcar_infos (Aires - excluding those which are service points only).

.....and if loaded as above, should only require (possibly) the Google Earth Icon deletion (already detailed) to give full functionality for the whole of the UK and Europe. (PM requests accepted).