

Geocaching: A World-Wide Scavenger Hunt



Welcome to the great outdoors! Geocaching is a real-world outdoor adventure that is happening all the time, all around the globe. To take part, participants use the Geocaching app and/or a GPS device to navigate to cleverly hidden containers called geocaches. Once you find a geocache, open it up and sign the logbook. You may discover some trade or swag items (small toys, keychains, trinkets) inside the geocache. The general rule of thumb is if you take something, leave something of equal or greater value. Then, place the container back exactly how you found it.

There are geocaches all around – in parks, neighborhoods, downtown, and maybe even your favorite Girl Scout camp. You just have to know where to look. Instead of using a map where “X marks the spot”, you will use an app on a smartphone and your powers of observation. Instead of digging deep into the ground for a buried chest, you are looking for a **container called a “cache”**, hidden in an eco-friendly site above the ground. You may not always strike gold. In fact, there will be many times that you cannot find **the cache that you are seeking, but keep trying. Once you get started, you won’t want to stop.**

You Will Need:

- A charged GPS-enabled device (cell phone, tablet, GPS unit)
- A first trade item (in Geocaching, there are often opportunities to trade small trinkets for other small trinkets, called “swag”)
- Pencils (when wet, pen bleeds, but pencil does not)

How to Geocache:

1. Follow the technology instructions on the next page to choose a starting point.
2. Head out with at least one other person and let someone else know where you will be and when they should hear from you next.
3. Use the coordinates to help you to navigate to a cache! You will need to walk in the direction of where the dot is. Remember to follow Leave No Trace when you can – stay on the trail as much as possible and if you do have to go through an off-trail area, try to have each member of the group take a slightly different route in so as to disturb the area less.
4. Search. It will not be out in plain sight. You may need to move rocks, search around, etc to find them. Make sure they are put back exactly as they were found!

•



- Note: GPS coordinates are usually only accurate within 30 feet; You may not be lead directly to the geocache, but it will bring you to the general area. Be prepared to do a little searching!
5. Once you find the cache (usually a small box or waterproof case of some sort), sign the logbook, and write a note for others who will find the box. If there are trade items inside, you can decide if you want to trade your item for what is in the geocache.
 - If the item that you find is trackable, you are now obligated to move that item along to a new cache. Only take trackables if you will help to move them along and make sure to log its movement online on the Geocaching app or website.
 6. **Once you're finished you return the contents of the cache, be sure to seal it back up, close it tightly and return it to where you found it.**

Technology

Choose one way to begin your Geocaching adventures. You will need a free account.

Option One:

Geocaching.com + Google Maps

1. Go to the Geocaching.com website.
2. In the search bar, enter the city or town that you want to try geocaching in.
3. In the right corner of the search results, **press "map these results" to see a map** of the geocaches in the area of your adventure.
4. Zoom in and out of the map to find caches.
5. Click on the cache you want to find.
6. **Click "More info" to be brought to the cache page.**
7. **Check under "Logged Visits" to make sure that the cache is still findable.**
8. Read the description to learn more about the cache.
9. Copy or record the coordinates. Do this for as many Geocaches as you would like.
10. Open Google Maps.
11. Paste or type the coordinates into the search bar. Include the symbols in the coordinates when you search.
12. Head out on your adventure!

Option Two:

Geocaching mobile app

1. Open the app.
2. **Go to the "Map" page and press the magnifying glass.** Type in where you want to search for caches. The app can often recognize specific parks if you search.
3. Zoom in and out of the map to find caches.
4. Click on the cache you want to find.
5. **Check under "activity" to make sure that the cache is still findable.**
6. Read the description to learn more about the cache.
7. **Press "Navigate" to navigate to the cache immediately.**
8. Head out on your adventure! If you find the cache you were aiming for, you can use the app to help you navigate to other caches in the area.

