

What is Geocaching?

Geocaching (pronounced gee-oh-cash-ing like cashing a cheque) is a worldwide game of hiding and seeking treasure (the "cache") suitable for all ages. Many families go Geocaching together as an exciting way to get children out of the house to enjoy the great outdoors and to visit some interesting locations which they may otherwise never have discovered. A Geocacher can place a Geocache anywhere in the world, pinpoint its location using GPS technology and then share the Geocache's existence and coordinates online. Anyone with a GPS unit can then try to locate the Geocache. You can enter the coordinates of the cache in to your GPS and it will guide you to the location, then using the description and hints given by the Geocache owner, you locate and open the the Geocache, which is typically a hidden plastic container or film canister, you then enter your user name (created through www.geocaching.com) in to the log book inside the cache to show that you have been there. There are often small prizes or gifts inside the cache left by the owner of the cache or previous Geocachers. You may take an item out of the cache, provided that you replace it with an item of similar or higher value. These items may be small toys, a pen or general small nick-nacks. You then close up the cache and replace it exactly where you found it, including replacing any stones or branches covering the cache. You can then log back in to www.geocaching.com and log the cache as found (or not found), to keep an online tally of the caches you have found, and to let the owner of the cache know that you have visited the cache. Non Geocaching members of the public are known as "muggles", and it is important that you use stealth when uncovering a cache in a busy area, so as to avoid the cache being discovered by someone who does not understand what it is and may interfere with, move, vandalize or remove the cache altogether. Geocaches are never buried, but are often left in very public places either cleverly disguised or just tucked in a corner where you just would not look unless you knew something was there. Many Geocache owners like to give very detailed directions to the cache, where others can be quite cryptic causing new Geocachers to make several visits to locate a cache. We suggest looking on google image search for Geocache to get an idea of what they look like, and also youtube will give some good instructional videos showing hiding places, geocache types and advice from geocaching experts. There are three main types of Geocache:

Traditional Cache or "Trad"

These are the best ones for new Geocachers as they give the direct location of the cache.

Multi- Cache

These give a location, then using information gathered

at that place you can work out where the next clue is, and ultimately where the Geocache is.

Mystery or Puzzle Cache

These involve complicated puzzles you will need to solve to determine the coordinates

What is the meaning of "Geocaching"?

The word Geocaching refers to GEO for geography, and to CACHING, the process of hiding a cache. A cache in computer terms is information usually stored in memory to make it faster to retrieve, but the term is also used in hiking/camping as a hiding place for concealing and preserving provisions.

How do I use my GPS for Geocaching?

In order to go geocaching, you will need to know how to enter waypoints in your GPS device. This can vary from model to model, but if you review your GPS user manual this should explain the process of entering a waypoint (coordinates).

What is usually in a Geocache?

In it's simplest form, a cache always contains a logbook. The logbook contains information from the owner of the cache, notes from visitors and can contain much valuable, rewarding and entertaining information. In smaller caches, a log sheet may be used. Larger caches may contain a logbook and any number of more or less valuable items. These items turn the cache into a true treasure hunt and make the game very exciting for children. You never know what the owner or other visitors of the cache may have left there for you. Remember, if you take something, it is only fair for you to leave something in return. It is recommended that items in a cache be individually packaged in a clear, zipped plastic bag to protect against the elements.



What are the rules of Geocaching??

1. If you take something from a cache, leave something of equal or greater value.
2. Write about your find in the cache logbook.
3. Log your find at www.geocaching.com
4. Do not leave anything illegal or dangerous in a cache.
5. Respect the environment, other cachers, private property, the public and the cache.

This is a basic set of rules to get you started, but visit www.geocaching.com for a full set of rules and forums discussing etiquette etc.

Where are Geocaches found?

Your home is probably surrounded by several right now, within just a few km. It is common for Geocachers to hide caches in locations that are important to them, reflecting a special interest or skill of the cache owner. These unique locations can be quite diverse. Make sure to read the cache descriptions carefully, especially the difficulty and terrain ratings as some cache finds can be technical and physically challenging. For instance, a cache located on the side of a rocky cliff accessible only by rock climbing equipment may be hard to find. An underwater cache may only be accessed by scuba. Other caches may be located in cities both above and below the ground (tunnels), and outside of buildings. Even the skillful placement of a small logbook in an urban environment may be quite challenging to find.

What should not be placed in a cache?

People of all ages hide and seek caches, so think carefully before placing an item into a cache. Explosives, ammunition, knives, drugs and alcohol should not be placed in a cache. Respect the local laws. Dont leave food in the cache as it may attract wildlife which could damage or remove the cache trying to get in to it.

Can I move a cache once I find it?

Never move a cache from it's original location. If you feel that the cache may not be located in the correct location, please email the cache owner directly or post a log on the cache detail page, notifying the owner of your concern. It's the owners responsibility to maintain the cache placement.

What do I do if I find a cache is missing?

If you visit a cache location and the cache is missing, make sure to log the cache as one that you "Did Not Find" so the cache owner is notified. Cache owners who repeatedly receive "Did Not Find" logs should check to see that their cache has not been removed.

Tips for Geocaching with Children

Kids love Geocaching and it gives a great excuse to spend quality time together outdoors, and helps build teamwork. Choose low difficulty caches to start with, and give them all the information and clues before you start, then review them as you get closer. Often kids will have a different perspective than adults, so don't be surprised if they sometimes figure them out when you could not. Many caches are what is known as "park and

grab" and they can be only metres from the side of a road, so you can clock up several in an hour. This helps keep the attention of younger children, so sometimes if you have spent a long time locating a cache (or failed to find one altogether), it is good to go and grab a quick easy one to get their spirits back up. It is always wise to finish a day on a win too.



A typical Geocache



A tiny magnetic 'nano' cache, containing only a small scroll to add your name to. These are often magnetic.



A magnetic fake bolt cache can be placed in plain view without being noticed by muggles.