

Geocaching - The Game

www.geocaching.com/guide

What is geocaching?

Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

How is the game played?

At its simplest level, geocaching requires these 8 steps:

1. Register for a free Basic Membership.
2. Visit the "Hide & Seek a Cache" page.
3. Enter your postal code and click "search."
4. Choose any geocache from the list and click on its name.
5. Enter the coordinates of the geocache into your GPS Device.
6. Use your GPS device to assist you in finding the hidden geocache.
7. Sign the logbook and return the geocache to its original location.
8. Share your geocaching stories and photos online.

There are many other levels to the game. Keep reading the guide to learn more!

What are the rules of geocaching?

1. If you take something from the geocache (or "cache"), leave something of equal or greater value.
2. Write about your find in the cache logbook.
3. Log your experience at www.geocaching.com.

What do I need to go geocaching?

The only necessities are a GPS device or a GPS-enabled mobile phone so that you can navigate to the cache, and a Geocaching.com Membership.

Where are geocaches located?

Geocaches can be found all over the world. 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 locations can be quite diverse. They may be at your local park, at the end of a long hike, underwater or on the side of a city street.

Are there different types of geocaches?

Yes. There are currently over a dozen "cache types" in geocaching, with each cache type being a different variation of the game.

Geocache Types



Traditional Geocache: This is the original type of geocache and the most straightforward. These geocaches will be a container at the given coordinates. The size may vary, but at minimum, all of these geocaches will have a logbook. Larger containers may contain items for trade and trackables.



Mystery or Puzzle Caches: The "catch-all" of geocache types, this type may involve complicated puzzles that you will first need to solve to determine the correct coordinates. Mystery/Puzzle Caches often become the staging ground for new and unique geocaches that do not fit in another category.



Multi-Cache: These geocaches involve two or more locations, with the final location being a physical container with a logbook inside. There are many variations, but typically once you're at the first stage, you will receive a clue to the whereabouts of the second stage. The second stage will have a clue for the third, and so on.



EarthCache: An EarthCache is a special geological location people can visit to learn about a unique feature of the Earth. EarthCache pages include a set of educational notes along with coordinates. Visitors to EarthCaches can see how our planet has been shaped by geological processes, how we manage its resources and how scientists gather evidence. Typically, to log an EarthCache, you will have to provide answers to questions by observing the geological location. For more information about EarthCaches visit <http://www.earthcache.org/>.



Letterbox Hybrid: Letterboxing is another form of treasure hunting that uses clues instead of coordinates. In some cases, the letterbox owner has made their container both a letterbox and a geocache and posted its coordinates on Geocaching.com. These types of geocaches will contain a stamp that is meant to remain in the box and is used by letterboxers to record their visit. To read more about letterboxing, visit [Letterboxing North America](#).



Event Cache: An Event Cache is a gathering of local geocachers or geocaching organizations. The Event Cache page specifies a time for the event and provides coordinates to its location. After the event has ended, it is archived.



Cache In Trash Out Event (CITO): [Cache In Trash Out](#) is the environmental initiative supported by the geocaching community. The main aim of this program is to clean up and preserve the natural areas that we enjoy while geocaching. These events are larger gatherings of geocachers that focus on litter clean-up, removal of invasive species, planting trees and vegetation and trail building.



Mega-Event Cache: A Mega-Event Cache is an Event Cache that is attended by 500+ people. Many Mega-Events offer geocachers a day of planned activities. There are often several days of additional activities surrounding a Mega-Event. These large events attract geocachers from all over the world and are often held annually.



Giga-Event Cache: This is one of the rarest geocache types available. A Giga-Event Cache is an event that is attended by 5000+ people. These events are similar to Mega-Events and may include activities, could last several days and are usually held annually. Since Giga-Events are so rare, they attract geocachers from all over the world.



Wherigo™ Cache: Wherigo is a toolset for creating and playing GPS-enabled adventures in the real world. By integrating a Wherigo experience, called a cartridge, with finding a geocache, the geocaching hunt can be an even richer experience. Among other uses, Wherigo allows geocachers to interact with physical and virtual elements such as objects or characters while still finding a physical geocache container. A Wherigo-enabled GPS device is required to play a cartridge. Learn more at Wherigo.com.



Geocaching HQ Geocache: [The Geocaching HQ Geocache](#) is located at Geocaching HQ in Seattle, Washington. Geocachers interested in visiting HQ to log the geocache should make an appointment at least 48 hours in advance via hqvisits@geocaching.com. Appointments help us keep Geocaching HQ running smoothly. Visits are available Tuesday through Friday, from 2–3pm. For the ultimate HQ experience, we recommend scheduling your visit for Friday.



GPS Adventures Maze Exhibit: A find of this type represents attendance at the GPS Adventures Maze Exhibit or a regional variation. GPS Adventures Mazes are designed to teach people of all ages about GPS technology and geocaching through interactive science experiences.



Lab Caches: Welcome to Geocaching HQ Research & Development. A Lab Geocache is an experimental and extremely rare geocache type. These geocaches are a way for us to innovate and test—often at the molecular-level—new ideas to make geocaching even better. By finding a Lab Geocache, you're helping shape the future of geocaching.