

Geocaching and Scouts
Pow Wow 2015
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WHAT IS GEOCACHING?

- Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices.
- The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online.
- Geocaching is enjoyed by people from all age groups, with a strong sense of community and support for the environment.

A BRIEF HISTORY

- On May 1, 2000 “Selective Availability” was turned off.
 - An intentional time varying error that decreased the accuracy of a civilian GPS device by up to 100m.
- 2 days later Dave Ulmer of Beavercreek, Oregon placed the first cache. Several people who found it also created their own caches and the sport was off and running.
- www.geocaching.com is the primary website where the caches are listed.

WHAT IS A GEOCACHE?

- There are a variety of Geocache types
 - Traditional – single item
 - Multi – need to find several locations
 - Mystery or Puzzle – solve a puzzle in the field or before heading out
 - Virtual – perform a task in the field
 - Earthcache – need to answer questions about the geology of the location
 - Event – gathering of geocachers
 - CITO – Cache In, Trash Out event
 - Webcam – smile for the camera

DIFFICULTY AND TERRAIN

- Scale of 1 to 5
- Difficulty Rating
 - 1 = easy, in plain sight, found in a few minutes
 - 5 = extreme, may require several hours or a return trip
- Terrain Rating
 - 1 = Handicapped accessible
 - 5 = specialized equipment or knowledge needed, long hike, overnight stay, extremely difficult to reach

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

- A cache container can look like almost anything and they often blend in with the surrounding environment.
- Sizes range from very small to very large.
- They must have a log sheet to sign.
- They might have trinkets to trade.

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Handheld GPS receiver
- Smart phone with a GPS and application
- Pen or pencil
- Trinkets to trade
- 10 essentials if going on a hike
- TOTT – Tools Of The Trade
- Sense of adventure

WHERE DO I GO?

- With over 2.55 million active geocaches hidden on all 7 continents the answer is anywhere you are going.
- A day hike in the local mountains
- Bike ride around town
- As part of your camping trip
- Cache to Eagle Series

WHAT ELSE?

- Cub Scouts
 - Map and Compass belt loop and pin
 - Den hike
 - Leave No Trace
- Boy Scouts
 - Geocaching Merit Badge
 - Leave No Trace
- Travel Bugs

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- <http://www.geocaching.com> – The primary website for geocaching.
- <http://www.geocaching.com/blog> - The Official Blog of Geocaching.com filled with lots of useful information and fun articles.
- <http://www.gsak.net> – Geocaching Swiss Army Knife – an application used to track your geocaches, including those that you have found, want to find, and ones you have created. Also useful for loading Pocket Queries into your GPS receiver.
- <http://www.geoscouting.com/index.html> - An excellent source of ideas and stuff to incorporate Geocaching into your scouting program.
- <http://www.scouting.org/> - Information about the Geocaching Merit Badge

Answers and Questions!?