




GEOCACHE ALASKA! Inc. 
 Exploring the Last Frontier • www.geocachealaska.org

GeoCaching FUNdamentals
 by
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Anchorage BP Energy Center
 & Broadcast over the Internet via WebEx
 16 February 2012

Tonight's Topics: 

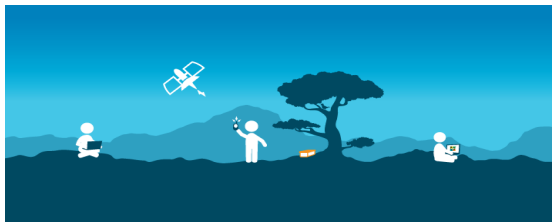
- ▶ What is Geocaching?
- ▶ How to Get Started
- ▶ Geocaching Gear and GPSr's
- ▶ Finding Geocaches
- ▶ In the Field – After the Find
- ▶ Logging Geocaches Online
- ▶ What is "GeocacheAlaska!"?



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What is Geocaching? 

A real-world outdoor treasure hunting game where players try to locate hidden containers (Geocaches) using GPS-enabled devices and then share their experiences online.



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What is Geocaching?



- ❖ In it's most basic form, a Geocacher need only sign up for a free "basic" account at geocaching.com and get themselves nearly any GPS-enabled device
- ❖ Look at the list of geocaches that are hidden in your area, pick some and enter the coordinates in the GPSr
- ❖ Use the GPSr to navigate to the location and search for the geocache container using the description from the geocache listing to help narrow down the location
- ❖ When you find the container, sign the log, put the cache back where it was found, and then return to your computer to enter an online log of your adventure



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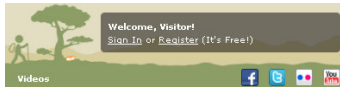
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How to Get Started



Register an account at geocaching.com



Click the Register link at the top right corner

Basic Membership Free Get a Basic Membership	Premium Membership \$30 /Year \$10 /3 Months Get a Premium Membership
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Pick Membership Type: **Basic** or **Premium**

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Basic "FREE" Membership



- Allows you access to view the listings of most traditional geocaches, events and a multitude of other geocache types such as multi's & puzzles
- You can view the coordinates online and print individual cache listings to take to the field
- You can enter online logs and upload photos to individual caches when you find or don't find them (DNF) after putting in a good try
- You can hide caches and log trackable items

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Premium Membership



- You can add cache ratings to individual caches
- Access "Premium Member Only" cache listings
- Addition of a caching statistics profile page
- Map view filters for sorting cache listings
- Create and view cache lists and bookmarks
- Pocket Query searches that download thousands of cache listings to your computer, GSAK, or GPS device
- Instant notifications of user definable cache logs
- Use the caches along a route feature for traveling
- Access to many premium member tools and features

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Geocaching Gear



- Bring a pen (or pencil) – The "Space Pen" is a good one as it will write on wet paper and *Rite in the Rain* papers
- Cache Listings via printouts or a "paperless" device
- Maps and a traditional compass for wilderness visits
- Appropriate outdoor gear for the area and season
- TOTT such as gloves, multi-tool, flashlight, mirror, camera, cache maintenance kit, spare logs, etc.
- Various inexpensive SWAG items to trade in the cache
- A good GPSr (Global Positioning System receiver)

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The GPS Receiver



- Most any handheld GPSr will work for geocaching, though some are specifically built or programmed to make geocaching easier
- When shopping for a GPSr, it is a good idea to put hands on a number of makes and models – the easy way to do that is to attend these events and talk to other geocachers about their GPSr's
- Check the online GPSr reviews to see what other geocachers around the globe have to say about each make and model you're considering


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Finding Geocaches



- ❑ Start with the Traditional Geocache type 
- ❑ Caches are rated by size, difficulty, and terrain
- ❑ Sizes are Micro, Small, Regular, and Large
- ❑ Difficulty is a hider rating on how hard it is to find the cache from easy (1) up to hard (5)
- ❑ Terrain has to do with the means of getting to the geocache location, from easy (1) to hard (5)
- ❑ Note that all of these items are rated by the cache hider and are subject to "perspective"

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Finding Geocaches



- New geocachers should start out looking for Traditional caches that are Regular or Large sizes and have low Difficulty and Terrain ratings of about 1 or 2 stars



- Also choose caches that have been found by other geocachers quite recently (check the logs)
- Going with an experienced geocacher on your first trip or two will give you some valuable experiences before striking out on your own
- Remember, this game should be played how YOU want to! The point is to get out there and have FUN!

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Finding Geocaches



- When you get to Ground Zero (GZ) on the GPSr, it is time to stop looking at the screen and start searching for the geocache container
- Take a good look around the area for places that a container of the listed size could hide
- Lift – Look – Replace is the proper search technique so that you do not damage the area
- If you are in view of the public (muggles), use stealth so as not to advertise the location of the geocache, which can lead to it being stolen

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In the Field – After the Find



- When you find the cache, take a good look before you grab it from the hiding spot so you don't damage anything and you can put it back exactly as found
- Find the logbook or logsheet and enter your geocaching "handle" and the find date – with regular and large caches that have a larger logbook, you can enter a longer log describing your adventure, the weather, the view or whatever you wish to write for others to read
- With micro and "nano" caches, please write small and enter just your name and date so the log will last longer
- Trade fair with SWAG! Pick up and/or drop off your trackable travel bugs and geocoins as appropriate

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In the Field – After the Find



- If the inside is wet, please dry it out if you can
- Replace the log and contents and put the cap or lid back on securely
- Micro capsules usually have the log rolled up and placed in the cap first, and then screw the body of the cache back onto the cap
- Put the cache back exactly in the same place that it was found and replace any "natural" camo materials that you moved to get to the cache

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Logging your Visit



- ⚡ Found It – You found the cache and signed the log
- ⚡ Didn't Find It – You searched but did not find (DNF) the geocache container... on this visit – Multiples are OK
- ⚡ Write Note – Used for a subsequent visit to drop trackables or to add more information about your visit than the original Found It log can hold (non statistical)
- ⚡ Needs Archived – This log type should ONLY be used in a situation where the geocache listing needs to be permanently removed by a GC Reviewer
- ⚡ Needs Maintenance – This log type is used to flag a cache that has an issue requiring the Cache Owner to visit the cache to perform some level of maintenance – The inability of the geocacher to find the cache is NOT justification for a NM log type, use DNF instead

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Logging your Visit



- ✦ Change the date to the actual find date
- ✦ Share your adventures about your visit
- ✦ Be polite and do not write hints or spoilers about how to find the cache container
- ✦ Cache Owners (CO) as well as other geocachers appreciate good online logs; most find super-abbreviated logs (TFTC) to be insulting, so try to enter at least a few words about the cache or location

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What is GeocacheAlaska!



- Geocache Alaska! is YOUR Local Organization
- Volunteer members are the force that make these events possible
- We obtain the permits that allow cache placements in our local and state Parks



We NEED You!

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Membership is Vital



- Get involved with your local geocaching organization
- Geocache Alaska! brings the power of the geocaching community together to secure permits with land managers
- Backed by a large membership role, we become a united group when negotiating permit terms



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Tooting our own Horn



- As an organization, we are able to bring together statewide events such as this one
- We secured a section of highway near Girdwood for an ongoing CITO location
- We design and purchase some great Alaskan geocoins; perfect for collectors
- We've become a licensed dealer for GroundSpeak and GxProxy merchandise

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Resources



- [What is Geocaching video on YouTube](#)
- Groundspeak Help Center: support.groundspeak.com
- GeocacheAlaska! Forums: geocachealaska.proboards.com
- Geocacher University: geocacher-u.com
- Prime Suspect's GeoLexicon: geolex.locusprime.net

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