

# Geocaching

## Join the hunt for hidden treasure!

Geocaching is a modern-day treasure hunt! People hide geocaches everywhere - from just down the street to the remote wilderness areas. Many are hidden in your state and local parks.





## What is geocaching?

Geocaching is the hunt for any of more than 2 million geocaches worldwide hidden by folks like you. Each treasure hunt will take you to a fun, creative or beautiful place outdoors.

**Geo** means earth and **cache** means hidden item. Geocaches range from very small (like a film canister) to large (such as a metal lunch box). Many are camouflaged, but they are not buried. Geocaches hold things like a log book to sign your name, tradable items for kids and adults, and more.

Use a GPS unit or smartphone app to find the coordinates (the exact location) of a geocache nearby. then set out on your adventure!





## How can I play?

1. **Visit** [Geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com/) [http://www.geocaching.com/], or use a smartphone app to find caches. Choose an easy cache for your first hunt. Caches have ratings on difficulty, size and terrain.
2. **Download** the coordinates to your GPS or use your smartphone. It might take a few minutes to find the cache once you reach the destination!
3. **Approach** the cache safely. Some of the best hiding spots can also be homes for wildlife. Open the container, sign the log, and trade a family-friendly item with something in the cache.
4. **Replace** the container exactly as you found it. This helps the next geocacher.
5. **Log** your find on [Geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com/) [http://www.geocaching.com/]! Collect a "smiley" face symbol for each find you report.





## What should I bring?

- GPS or smartphone with coordinates
- Pen or pencil
- Water
- Hat, hiking shoes and rain gear, if needed
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Park or trail map
- Inexpensive small items to trade for cache "swag"
- Your family and/or friends
- A sense of adventure!



## What else do I need to know?

- [Geocaching terms \[#definitions\]](#)
- [Geocaching.com \[http://www.geocaching.com/\]](http://www.geocaching.com/)
- [TPWD geocaching workshops \[https://tpwd.texas.gov/calendar/geocaching\]](https://tpwd.texas.gov/calendar/geocaching)
- Please check with park headquarters before placing a geocache in a park.
- Leave no trace of your visit!
  - **Stay** on trails for as long as you can.
  - **Leave** what you find, including flowers, rocks and artifacts.
  - **Consider** others. Don't park in campsites; keep voices low.
  - **Take** your trash. Help keep our spaces beautiful.
  - **Respect** wildlife; you are in their backyard!

## Introduction to Geocaching

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## Geocaching terms

- **Size:** The size of each geocache is posted on [Geocaching.com \[http://www.geocaching.com/\]](http://www.geocaching.com/)
- **Terrain:** Each geocache has a terrain rating of one to five stars.
  - **One star** means the geocache is accessible by wheelchair.

- **Five stars** means you will need special equipment (boat, 4WD, etc.) to find the cache.
- **Difficulty:** Each geocache also has a difficulty rating of one to five stars, based on how hard it is to find.
  - **One star** means the cache can be found quickly.
  - **Five stars** means the cache is hard to find or open.
- **FTF:** First to Find, or the first person to find a new geocache.
- **TFTC:** Thanks for the cache, or a thanks to the original hider of the cache.
- **Ground Zero or GZ:** A cache's location.
- **TNLN:** Took Nothing Left Nothing, meaning that the finder did not trade any swag.
- **SL:** Signed Log
- **Muggles:** Someone who is not geocaching. Avoid muggles while geocaching, so that they won't vandalize or "muggle" the caches.
- **Geocoin, Travelbug or Pathtag:** These items have identification numbers. They can be shared with friends and tracked as they are carried from one cache to the next.

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