

Geocache

The Official Gulf Coast Council Geocache Hunt Site

“GET IN THE GAME”

How to Create and Hide a Geocache

Geocaching is a relatively new, family friendly hobby where participants use GPS equipment to seek geocaches hidden by their fellow geocachers. Here is our advice on how to make and effectively hide a Geocache.



Steps

1. Find a good spot for your Geocache. A quality Geocache will be hidden near something natural, human, historic or of scenic interest, or at least at the end of a pleasant walk in the woods.
2. Make certain geocaches are allowed there. If it is a private property get permission from the land owner. Some park systems require permits, so completely check with park management to make sure a permit is not required or obtain one if it is required.
3. Select an appropriate container. Geocache containers should be waterproof and durable. Military surplus ammo boxes are a favorite of many geocachers. Also, make sure the container is appropriate for the area. See following “tips”.
4. Camouflage the container. This is a good idea, as you do not want non-geocachers finding it. Painting it in colors to match the area, or wrapping it in camouflage duct tape are two of a variety of ways that will help conceal your Geocache. Other methods include gluing bark to the container or hiding it under fake rocks and tree stumps.
5. Label the outside. In today’s world, suspicious packages can create alarm. Clearly labeling your container as a Geocache and with contact information may help reduce the chances of your cache being reported as a suspicious package and possibly removed by others.
6. Stock the cache. Include a letter explaining what it is, in case a non-geocacher finds it. Also, include a small logbook (a spiral bound notebook) and a pen or pencil so the finders of your Geocache can record time, date and a message. Put in several special trinkets for finders to trade. Please use only scouting related trinkets or objects in your Geocache.
7. Hide your cache. Your cache is more likely to last if you choose a low traffic area where it is not likely to be accidentally discovered and where searchers won’t be spotted by passersby or homeowners.
8. Use your GPS to obtain the coordinates of your Geocache. Make sure you have a good satellite signal, and then let your GPS settle at the cache site for a minute or two before marking. Check your owner’s manual for the section on how to make a waypoint if you don’t know how.
9. List your cache. You need to post it on the Gulf Coast Council website under the “Geocache” link, so other geocachers can obtain the coordinates and try to find your cache. The Council website is www.gulfcoastcouncil.org. Look for the Geocache link.
10. Maintain your cache. Be ready to respond promptly to reported problems such as a missing container, wet or full logbooks, or other signs of tampering. If you lose interest, remove your cache and archive the listing. Call the Council office and we will remove your site from our list of geocaches.
11. Your Geocache may be selected for a “travel bug”. There will be four (4) District Travel Bugs (one for each district) and one (1) each Council Travel Bug. Keep the District Travel Bugs moving so that they are visit as

many geocaches as possible in their district.

Keep the Council Travel Bug moving so that it visits all of the districts. Include comments about these travel bugs on the logbook and on this website.

Tips

1. Stock your cache with trinkets and interesting kinds of things you might like to find. You do not need to break the bank; a few inexpensive, but useful items would be great. The Council Scout Shop is a good place to shop for these items. Do not put trash in the cache!
2. If you use an ammo box, be sure to cover the military markings.
3. Use an appropriate sized container. Deep in the woods, large containers are acceptable. In urban and suburban or high traffic areas, use a smaller, more easily concealed container, so the container is less likely to be accidentally discovered.
4. Try to hide it where searchers will not be observed by non-geocachers. This lessens the likelihood of someone reporting suspicious activity, or removing your cache.
5. Know the guidelines of this website. Really read them and make sure your cache is in compliance.
6. Before hiding your cache, step back and consider what a non-geocacher might think if one were to see a stranger wandering the area with a GPS.
7. When hiding your Geocache, make it look as natural as possible. Simply covering it with a pile of sticks, rocks or bark might encourage a non-geocacher to investigate.
8. Also, consider the impact on the environment. Hide on durable surfaces where possible (e.g. rocky outcrops, firm soil, and vegetation). Avoid steep hillsides where your cache and searchers can contribute to erosion.
9. Have fun and make this a special outing for your unit. Invite others who are not scouts to show them the fun things that we do in scouting.

Warning

1. Do not hide caches near bridges, tunnels, military installations, airports, bus terminals, train stations, RR tracks, schools and other places that might be deemed terrorist targets.
2. If your cache is accidentally discovered and creates public alarm, you might be subject to prosecution and fines.
3. Do not hide your cache on private property without first consulting with the owner.
4. Many park systems have rules governing geocaches. Find out about them and follow the rules when hiding your cache.
5. Lands managed by the National Park Service (e.g. national parks, national recreation areas and national historic sites) and by the US Fish and Wildlife Department (e.g. national wildlife refuges) are off limits for geocaches. Many nationally designated wilderness areas are also off limits, as are some state and local parks. If in doubt contact the managing authority and ask. Always follow the rules of the land owner or manager.

Things you will need

1. A reliable GPS device.
2. A durable waterproof container.
3. Small notebook and pen or pencil to include in the Geocache.
4. Special scout related trinkets or other small objects to include in your Geocache.
5. The time to hide and take care of your cache.
6. A good place to hide your cache.