

GEOCACHE ALASKA! Inc.

Exploring the Last Frontier • www.geocachealaska.org



GeoCaching FUNdamentals

by

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& Broadcast over the Internet via WebEx
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Tonight's Topics:



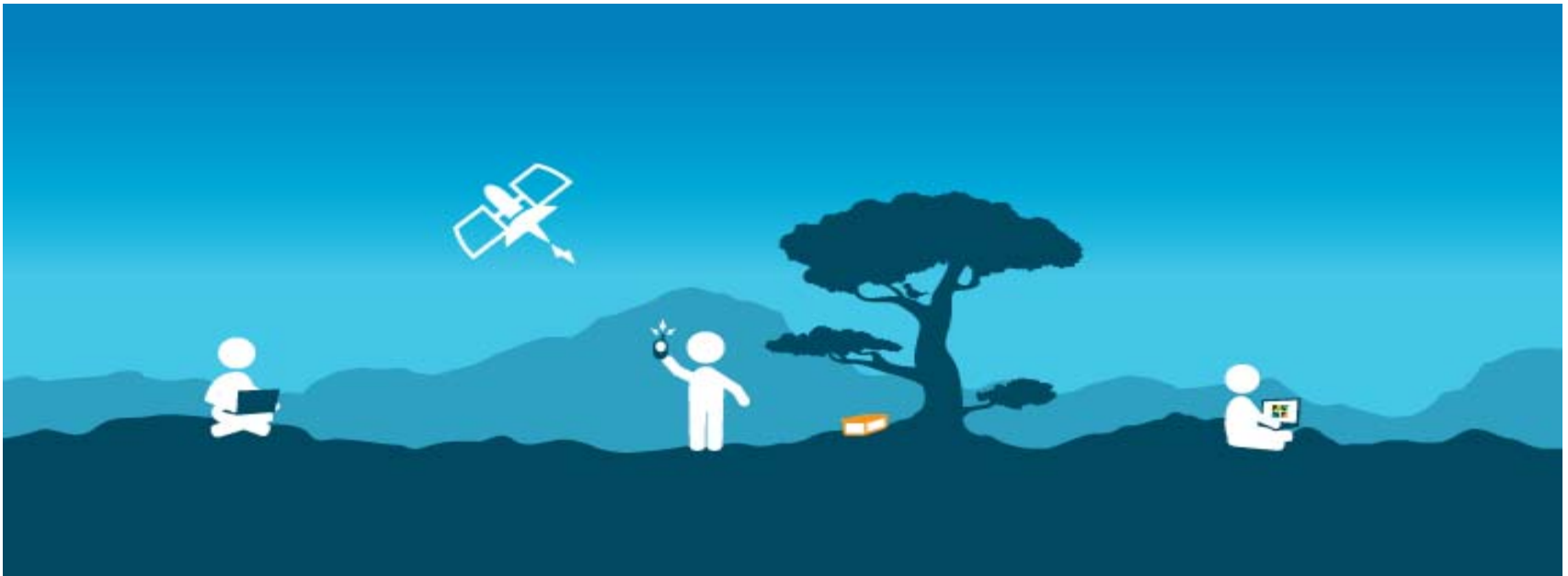
- ▶ What is Geocaching?
- ▶ How to Get Started
- ▶ Geocaching Gear and GPSr's
- ▶ Finding Geocaches
- ▶ In the Field – After the Find
- ▶ Logging Geocaches Online
- ▶ What is “GeocacheAlaska!”?



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.



What is Geocaching?



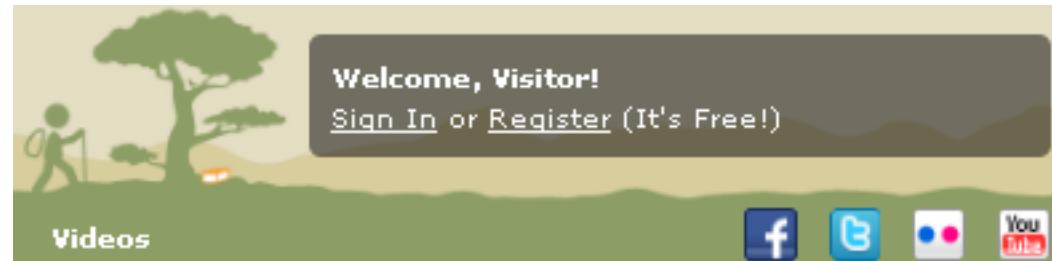
- ❖ In it's most basic form, a Geocacher need only sign up for a free “basic” account at geocaching.com and get themselves nearly any GPS-enabled device
- ❖ Look at the list of geocaches that are hidden in your area, pick some and enter the coordinates in the GPSr
- ❖ Use the GPSr to navigate to the 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



How to Get Started



Register an account at geocaching.com



Click the Register link at the top right corner

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

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

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

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)


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

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”

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!

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

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

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

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

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

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!

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



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

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