

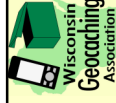
Geocaching 101

An Introduction To Geocaching

Created by the Wisconsin Geocaching Association (WGA)

Jeremy Vechinski & Friends

August 16, 2008



A Geocaching Primer (Fun With Dick & Jane)



- See Dick hide a geocache
- Dick uses his GPS to determine the exact location (coordinates) of the geocache
- Dick posts information about the geocache online (geocaching.com website)
- Jane reads about the geocache on the website
- Jane uses her GPS to go to the location (coordinates) Dick determined
- Jane finds the geocache and goes home happy!



Basic Terminology

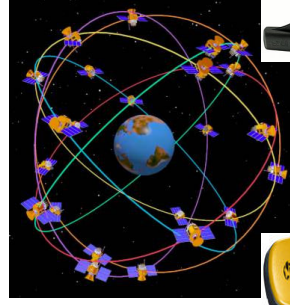


GPS (Global Positioning System)

- A system of 24 satellites (+3 spares) in orbit around the earth that can be used for location determination

GPS Receiver or GPSr

- Handheld (usually) device that uses radio signals from the GPS satellites to triangulate its position, expressed in coordinates



Basic Terminology (2)



- Coordinates
 - Define an exact position / location on the earth
 - Example: N 43° 26.005' W 088° 11.548'
- Latitude
 - Part of coordinates; how far north or south of the equator
 - Example: N 43° 26.005'
- Longitude
 - Part of coordinates; how far east or west of the Prime Meridian
 - Example: W 088° 11.548'
- Geocache or Cache
 - Container hidden at a known location; coordinates determined via GPSr and published online



How To Find A Geocache (Step By Step Instructions)



- Three distinct phases:
 - Planning The Hunt
 - aka Doing Your Homework
 - Seeking The Geocache
 - aka Field Work
 - Documenting The Hunt
 - aka Recording Your Visit



Phase 1: Planning The Hunt



- Create geocaching.com user account
- Search geocaching.com for nearby geocaches
- Read and print out cache page(s)
- Enter coordinates into GPSr



Create geocaching.com User Account



- You must have a user account to view the coordinates of geocaches listed online
 - Go to <http://www.geocaching.com>
 - Click on "Create one now!" link
- Free, but requires a valid email address
- There are other geocache listing sites such as terracaching.com and navicache.com. However these are not as popular.



Search For Nearby Geocaches



- There are many ways to search the geocaching.com database of geocaches
- Easiest is to enter your zip code (or the zip code of the place you will be visiting) on the geocaching.com home page
- Obtain a listing of nearby geocaches, sorted by distance from the zip code "center"

Search For Nearby Geocaches (2)

Wisconsin Geocaching Association

You are logged in as jvechinski. Log out

[Geocaching Home](#) > [Hide & Seek](#) > Search for Geocaches

All Geocaches

GETTING STARTED
HIDE & SEEK A CACHE
FIND A BENCHMARK
TRACKABLE ITEMS
MY ACCOUNT
FORUMS
SHOP FOR GEAR
RESOURCES

From State: WI (WEST BEND - 53095) [New Search](#)
Search for caches with Google Maps

Total Records: 2590 - Page: 1 of 130 - [Prev.](#) << <1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 >> [Next](#)

Icons	(D/F)	Placed	Description	Last Found
	(2/1.5)	14 Sep 06	Heart of Washington County - Dove (GCYAE2)	6 days ago* 30 Dec 07
	(1/1.5)	4 Mar 06	Extra Extra Extra read all about it by russell_53040 (GCTPRV)	Yesterday*
	(1/1)	15 Aug 08	Drink and Think and Conk by Ecorangers and Dove (GCYDZK)	Yesterday*
	(2/2)	20 Sep 06	Watch out for these! by Dove (GCYDZK)	Yesterday*
	(2/2)	11 Aug 05	Union Cemetery by Ecorangers: Earth Angel, Duellist, Prince of Darkness (GCYQNI)	02 Aug 08 11 Sep 05
	(1.5/1.5)	13 Jun 05	Pledge Best Geocaching Cache by Ecorangers: Earth Angel & Prince of Darkness (GCPZG2)	Yesterday*

Click On Name Of Cache To View Details

Search For Nearby Geocaches (3)

Wisconsin Geocaching Association

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[Geocaching Home](#) > [Hide & Seek](#) > Search for Geocaches

All Geocaches

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Click On Name Of Cache To View Details

How To Read A Geocache Page

Wisconsin Geocaching Association

You are logged in as jvechinski. Log out

[Geocaching Home](#) > [Hide & Seek](#) > Search for Geocaches

Cache Type **Waypoint Code** **Cache Name** **GCYDZK**

Watch out for these!

Coordinates

Get Driving Directions

Print

Download

Please note: To use the services of geocaching.com, you must agree to the terms and conditions in our disclaimer.

Wheelchair accessible, easy to get to. Park in the old fields parking lot to the East off of Veteran's Avenue.

Inventory

There are no Travel Bugs in this cache.

See the history

How To Read A Geocache Page (2)

Wisconsin Geocaching Association

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How To Read A Geocache Page (3)



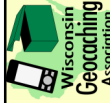
- Geocache Size
 - Micro – 35mm film canister, a pill bottle, or even smaller (nano)
 - Small – Small plastic (tupperware) container, thermos
 - Regular – Metal ammo box, large plastic (tupperware) container
 - Large – 5 gallon pail, garbage can, plastic tote

How To Read A Geocache Page (4)



- Geocache Type
- **Caution!** Not all geocaches are a single physical container! Check the type first!
 - Traditional Cache – A single container at the posted coordinates
 - Multi-cache – Multiple stages / containers that lead you to a final cache location
 - Mystery Cache – Need to solve a puzzle to get the cache coordinates (usually)
 - Earthcache – No container, need to answer geology or earth science questions to log
 - Event Cache – A gathering of geocachers at a specific location

Print Geocache Page



- Print out the geocache page for the caches you wish to seek (unless you have a photographic memory)
 - Use PDF print option to save paper
- May also want to print out maps
- Driving directions (using Google Maps) can be obtained by simply clicking on the “Driving Directions” link
 - Links to other mapping websites are also on the cache page

Enter Geocache Coordinates Into Your GPSr



GCG9EW	
Note FOLLOWYELLOSTIRO	
Location	N 43°38.323'
Elevation	0'
Depth	0.57'
From Current Location	SW
Delete	Map Go To

Waypoint Code

Waypoint Note (Optional)

Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude)

- Generically this operation is known as marking or entering a waypoint
- Exactly how to do this varies from device to device



Phase 2: Seeking The Geocache



- Use GPSr to navigate to the geocache coordinates
- Search for and locate geocache
- Sign log book and trade items
- Pick up or leave trackable items
- Rehide the cache



Use GPSr To Navigate To The Geocache

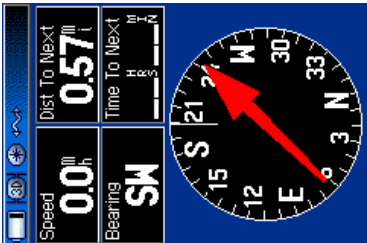


- Use your GPSr to navigate to the previously entered waypoint
- Generically this is known as a GOTO operation
 - Often you need to “find” the waypoint you entered, then “goto” it
- Again (unfortunately) the exact key sequence to accomplish this task varies from device to device



Use GPSr To Navigate To The Geocache (2)





- Most GPS units have a similar navigation screen, use page or menu buttons to get to it
- Simply follow the arrow – **but it is usually only accurate when you are moving**
- When the arrow points straight up you are headed in the right direction
- Display also shows distance to the selected waypoint (the cache)



Search For And Locate Geocache



- GPS technology is only so accurate
 - 10 to 25 feet under “normal” conditions, can be much worse
- Most caches are not lying out in the open and blend in well with their surroundings
- So at some point (when you reach “ground zero”) it is best to put the GPSr away and just start looking



Search For And Locate Geocache (2)



- Stumped? Maybe a hint would help?
Check the cache page printout!
 - May need to use decryption key to decode an encrypted hint

Additional Hints ([Decrypt](#))

srryvaf yvtug ba zl sirrg gbqnl

Decryption Key
A|B|C|D|E|F|G|H|I|J|K|L|M

N|O|P|Q|R|S|T|U|V|W|X|Y|Z
(letter above equals below,
and vice versa)



Sign Log Book And Trade Items



- **Success!** ☺ You've found the cache... but now what?
- Open it up, find the log book, and sign it
 - All traditional geocaches **MUST** have a log book, and you **MUST** sign it
 - May need to bring your own pen/pencil for micro sized caches
- Optionally trade items
 - Trade up, trade even, or don't trade



Pick Up Or Leave Trackable Items



- Trackable items may be present in a cache
 - Travel bugs or geocoins
 - They are not normal trade items! Do not take them unless you know what you are doing!
 - They are supposed to travel from cache to cache, usually with a specific mission
 - Have tracking number which is used to log them on geocaching.com
 - Have their own page on geocaching.com



Rehide The Geocache



- Put everything back in the container and replace the cache **EXACTLY** where you found it
- Hide it well or “muggles” (non-geocachers) could discover and take it

- Log geocache find on

- Log any trackable items moved

- Logging your find online is useful because:

- Allows you to share your adventures with other teachers

- Lets the owner know the geocache is OK

- Provides you with a record of what geocaches

- Log into goosceaching.com you've found

- Log into geocaching.com
- Return to the geocache page for the

- Return to the geocache page for the geocache you found

- Enter waypoint code on the home page

- Click on the “log your visit” link in the upper right hand corner

- Enter log entry and submit

- Enter log entry and submit

- Geocaching - The Official Global GPS Cache Hunt Site





WELCOME TO 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.






THE SOUTH WESTERN COASTLINE THE SPANISH FRONTIER

GETTING STARTED

HIDE & SEEK A CACHE

FIND A BENCHMARK

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MY ACCOUNT

FORUMS

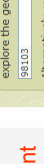
SHOP FOR GEAR

RESOURCES

Waypoint

Code Here

Enter



Geocaching - The Official Global GPS Cache Hunt Site

You are logged in as **tychostick**, Log Out

GCYDZK

Navigation
[Log your visit](#)
[View gallery](#)
[Watch listing](#)
[Ignore listing](#)
[Bookmark listing](#)

Attributes

Inventory
 There are no Travel Bugs in this cache.
 See the history

Click Here To Log

Terrain: ★☆☆☆☆ (1 is easiest, 5 is hardest)

N 43° 35'-353 W 088° 10'-886 [Other Coordinates]

UTM : 18T UTM Zone: 18T
 UTM : 18T UTM Zone: 18T
 Size: 2.000m Difficulty: 2.000m

Watch out for these!
 Cache by [Dove](#)
 Created: 12/19/2006
 Difficulty: 2.000m

N 43° 35'-353 W 088° 10'-886 [Other Coordinates]
 UTM : 18T UTM Zone: 18T
 UTM : 18T UTM Zone: 18T
 Size: 2.000m Difficulty: 2.000m

Print: [Print this List](#) | [Online Database](#)
[Download](#) | [Read About Waypoint Downloads](#)

LOC Waypoint File | [GPX exchange file](#) | [Send to GPS](#) | [Send to Phone](#)

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RESOURCES

Premium Member

Find

Members only

Get more

Access with Us



Log Geocache Find On geocaching.com (4)



Geocaching - The Official Global GPS Cache Hunt Site



[Geocaching Home](#) > [Seek](#) > [Cache Logs](#)

Post a new log

In reference to: [Watch out for these!](#) (Traditional Cache)

Type of log: Found it v

Date Logged: (mm/dd/yyyy) August 15 2008 v

☐ Add a waypoint to the log

 **Comments:**
 If you decide to encrypt the logs, text within brackets [like this] will not be encrypted.
 This was a very clever cache. I walked by it several times before spotting the container. While I was signing the log, a muggle stopped and asked me for directions... no sweat since I had my GPS with me. [:)] Thanks for placing this cache Laurell!



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[TRACKABLE ITEMS](#)
[MY ACCOUNT](#)
[FORUMS](#)
[SHOP FOR GEAR](#)
[RESOURCES](#)



Advanced Topics



- GPS Waypoint Downloads
 - No hand entering coordinates!
- Hiding Your Own Geocache
- Solving Puzzle Caches
- Paperless Geocaching
- Maps, Autorouting, And Other Advanced GPS Features



Resources (For More Information)



- Getting Started page on geocaching.com
 - <http://www.geocaching.com/about>
- Wisconsin Geocaching Association
 - <http://www.wi-geocaching.com>
 - Forums where you can ask for help, state specific geocaching info, additional training classes
- Cacheopedia (including glossary of many terms)
 - <http://cacheopedia.com/wiki/Glossary>
- Markwell's Geocaching FAQ
 - <http://www.markwell.us/geofaq.htm>
- At your local library or bookstore:
 - Geocaching For Dummies (ISBN 978-0764575716)
 - The Complete Idiot's Guide To Geocaching (ISBN 978-1592572359)



Questions?

