



Scouter's Edition

Geocaching

The Crean Award:

Discovery:

Patrol Activity
Skills

Terra Nova:

Task/Role in Patrol
Patrol Activity
Skills

Endurance:

Planning
Develop Teamwork
Skills

Polar:

Skills

SPICES

Intellectual
Character

Adventure Skills

Hillwalking

The Activity:

Objective:

To try out geocaching with your patrol.

Activity Type:

Patrol Activity

Roles:

Activity Leaders
Quartermasters
Navigators
Record Keeper





Plan: Geocaching

Geocaching (*geo-cash-ing*) is a high-tech treasure hunting game played using GPS devices. It involves you both finding and hiding caches.

A cache is a hidden container usually with objects inside which is located using a set of coordinates uploaded to a central website. When you find them you record it record the find in the log within the container and on the website that listed the location. It is also important that non- geocachers do not find the cache.

Geocaching is a great scouting activity as it challenges you to find objects, develop key skills and partake in an activity that is not for the uninitiated.

You will need:

- GPS device or GPS enabled smart phone
- Geocaching Account
- Trade Items (small items & trinkets)
- A physical map of the area

Geocaching Account

You will firstly need a Geocaching account. There are different websites that you can register with and basic membership is free. Also, a number of them have Apps, so you can use your smartphone as your GPS device (once it's enabled). An individual can set up an account, but you might consider setting up one account per patrol or troop.

If a troop/patrol account is being set up, it would probably be a good idea if the scouters also have access to it, just to occasionally monitor it.





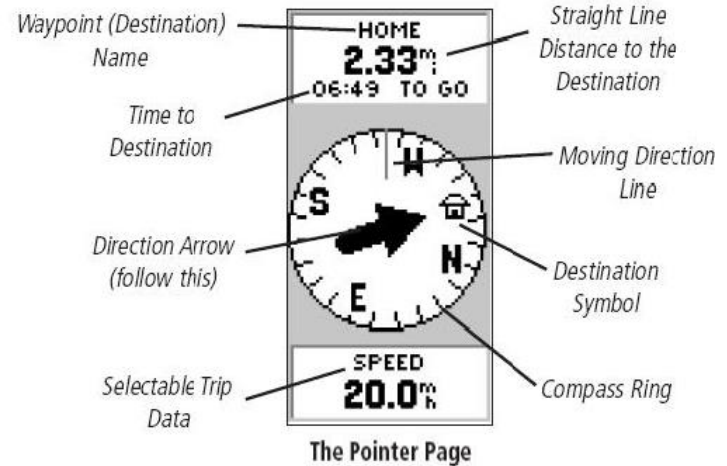
Do: Geocaching

GPS

Global Positioning System use satellites and receivers (GPS devices or more recently smartphones) to tell you where they are. More expensive and professional equipment will offer more functions, but for geocaching a standard GPS unit or phone will do.

Using a GPS

For geocaching, only a basic knowledge of GPS navigation is required. If you are using GPS when hillwalking or in other more complex situations you will need considerably more skills and expertise. When you turn a GPS unit or the GPS function on a phone, it will auto-locate. Different menus and options will allow you to see Trip Meters for distance, elapsed time, time to next or final destination.



Waypoints

A Waypoint is a marked point using GPS. It is recorded using sets of coordinates usually, longitude and latitude. Waypoints can be entered manually or downloaded. Most typically, a waypoint will be your next destination, so in the case of geocaching it is the cache. The GPS then tells you where you are and where the cache is through distance and direction.



Do: Geocaching

Rules for Geocaching:

Geocaches should never be buried or placed in a location that might cause unnecessary concern.

Geocache contents should be family friendly.

Respect local laws and obey posted signs.

Respect property rights and seek permission where appropriate

Remember 'Leave No Trace'

Geocaches are to remain hidden, especially from non-geocachers (aka muggles).

When you find a cache you should:

- Record the find in the logbook and online
- Only take something from the cache, if you have something else to replace it
- Return the cache to the exact position and condition in which it was found.

Please ensure that all Scouts fully understand these rules and committed to following them.

Before going

Search for geocaches online. Either chose an area you intend to be in (i.e. near a campsite or on a trail) or pick an area to go to, based on the caches there. You can then download the caches to your GPS or sync with your App.



Scout Hall
A cache by [DaHaMa](#) Hidden : 03/05/2011

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆ Size:  (small)

Terrain: ★★☆☆☆

N 51° 48.858 W 008° 23.417
UTM: 29U E 542030 N 5740560 [Other Conversions](#) SE 6.8

Print: [No Logs](#) [5 Logs](#) [10 Logs](#) [Driving Directions](#)

Download: [Read about waypoint downloads](#)

[LOC waypoint file](#) [GPX file](#) [Send to My GPS](#) [Send to My Phone](#)

Each cache comes with a description and a difficulty rating of 1-5. This will enable to set the challenge you are want, for beginners or the first few activities ratings 1 or 2 would be good starts.



Do: Geocaching

When you are in the area of the geocache, you can then use your GPS to find it. The GPS will give you direction and distance or you can follow the coordinates yourself. Each geocache has a description as well.

Once you are close to the geocache it's often easier to look for it. Geocaches are hidden in plain sight, but they are usually well camouflaged. So you may have to root around to find the cache. However, remember the principles of leave no trace.



When you've found it, sign the logbook. Most containers have swappable items. You may take an item once you leave something of equal or greater value. You may also record this trade in the log. When trading consider some unique items you can leave as a scout, like badges or woggles.



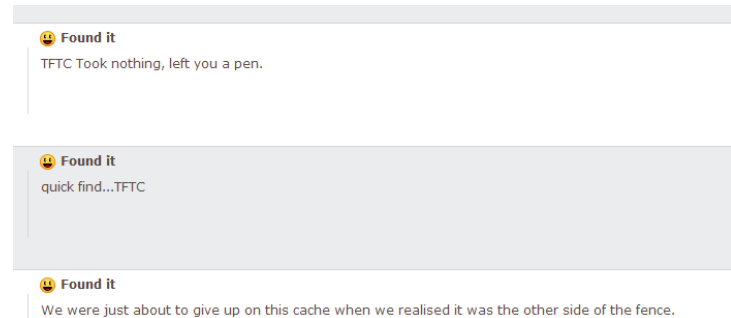
Do: Geocaching

Return the cache and leave it as you found it, i.e. camouflaged/hidden in plain sight. Remember that the cache and the activity should not attract the attention of the general public.

Please ensure all Scouts follow this process, it is very important for geocaching.

Log your caches

Afterwards, your patrol or you can log your experiences online. Similar to the physical log in the cache, you can leave comments and mention what you traded. If you are doing this as a patrol, make sure it is someone's responsibility to maintain the account, perhaps the Patrol Record Keeper.



After you have built up some experiences, you can move on to more difficult caches. Also, thinking about different challenges or competitions you can do as a patrol or troop with geocaches.

To find out more about geocaching check out some these sites:

www.geocaching.com

geocaching.scouts.com.au

www.geocachingscouts.org.uk





Review "SPICES"

Social

- Relationships
- Communication Skills
- Other Cultures
- Community Involvement
- Promise & Law

Physical

- Eat Well
- Personal Hygiene
- Balanced Lifestyle
- How Body works
- Physical Limitations
- Health Choices
- Access Help

Intellectual

- Achieving Goals
- New Ideas/Creativity
- Learn from Decisions
- Team Member

Character

- Promise & Law
- Friends & Friendships
- Plan before do
- Ensuring Fairness
- Respect
- Differences & Views
- Following Dreams
- Live the Scouting Spirit

Emotional

- Aware of feelings
- Asking/Giving Help
- Responsibility for Emotions
- Controlling Emotions
- Going Further
- Beliefs & Values
- Developing Talents

Spiritual

- Promise & Law
- Impact on Environment
- Reflection
- Changing Beliefs





Review

Adventure Skills

How did you progress in your Adventure Skills

Patrol Review

What can we do next?





Scouter Notes

The Intellectual and Character SPICES have been identified as being most relevant to this exercise. This reflects the challenges involved and the spirit of the activity.

In terms of the SPICES, elements of Intellectual have been marked as the Geocaching is an ideal patrol activity that allows scouts to explore, follow instructions, and develop their navigational and observation skills. In terms of Character, the emphasis on honour system in being discrete in finding the cache, using the trading system and hiding the cache again all relate to following the Promise and Law and living the scouting spirit.

Other areas of the personal journey beyond Intellectual maybe applicable, depending on the individuals, the group and the way in which it operated.

In reviewing, ensure those who organised the activity reflect on it different to those who participated. The activity leaders will had to prepare for the activity and then actually do it.

- How well did they prepare?
- How did they do sufficient research
- What were the differences between the concept/abstract (reading about geocaching and checking things out online) and the actual doing?
- Did the patrol improve at finding geocaches?

For participating scouts, they should look at their role in the activity.

- How was the preparation different from doing it?
- What job did they have? How well did they do it?
- What skills did they use?

In reviewing the activity ensure scouts reflect on the spirit of the event and how they participated in this.

