**Teacher Page: Geocaching With Your Students Using Garmin eTrex20s**

**What exactly is a cache?**

What you’re looking for- the cache (pronounced “cash”) is usually a small box, anywhere from the size of an Altoids container to a shoebox. They are hidden of view so that a casual passerby will not see or notice them. They can have a magnet inside to affix it to the bottom/back of a sign, rail, or fence, or simply be hidden behind a tree stump or rock.

Optional: show this **video** “GeoCache 101” (1:16 min) to the students: <http://www.geocaching.com/guide/>

**Geocaching is a modern-day scavenger hunt**

You can either set up your own geocache, OR download someone else’s geocache.

**Option 1: Set up your own geocache** *(Do this before you take students outdoors)*

1. Collect 5-10 waterproof containers (coffee cans work great). Optional: camouflage the container- paint in natural colors, wrap it in dark-colored duct tape, etc.

2. Plan where you’d like to hide your caches. Geocaches should be hidden near something interesting, such as a large dead tree, boulder, or other object. But hide each one where it wouldn’t be seen by casual passerby. Make the walk a pleasant one that people would enjoy visiting even if the cache wasn’t there.

3. Label the outside as a geocache, and add contact information. In today’s world, suspicious packages can create alarm.

4. Stock each cache—include a laminated index card explaining what it is, a logbook, pencil, and trinkets.

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5. Go outside and hide your caches.

*If you have beginning or younger students,* bring all 25 GPS units to each cache hiding spot and record the coordinates of each cache into each unit.

*If you have more advanced or older students,* bring only one GPS unit to each cache. Record the coordinates of each cache on a worksheet that you will give your students later. The students will then need to manually enter the coordinates into their GPS units as they go.

*Hint:* Make sure you have a good satellite signal, let your GPS settle at the cache site for a minute or two before marking the waypoint. You can leave a hint about where the cache is hidden on the worksheet you will give to the students.

6. Optional: Post your cache on [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com) so that other residents can use it. (Other websites include: [www.navicache.com](http://www.navicache.com), [www.terracaching.com](http://www.terracaching.com), and [www.opencaching.us](http://www.opencaching.us) ).

7. To start the lesson with students, have them watch <http://www.geocaching.com/guide/> (3:53 min) to get an overview of what a geocache is and how to one.

**Option 2: Downloading someone else’s geocaches**

This method works IF someone else has already created a geocache in an area where you can bring your students.

1. Connect your device to a computer.
2. Go to [www.opencaching.com](http://www.opencaching.com)
3. If necessary, create an account.
4. Sign in.
5. Follow the on-screen directions to find a geocache located closest to you and download geocaches to your device. (Note: you will have to do this for each GPS unit.)