



Above: This geocache is hidden off of 12th and Exchange Streets in Astoria.
Left: The east side of the Astoria Riverwalk is home to about a dozen geocaches, starting around this spot near Pier 39.

Gotta catch 'em all

Stay entertained with geocaching and other fitness phone applications

BY ALYSSA EVANS

After about two months without access to my local gym, I decided to take a break from my home workouts and semi-daily walks.

I downloaded the Geocaching app before going on a walk, not knowing what I was getting into. Having only heard of Geocaching and randomly seen a few videos about the game, all I knew was that people used the app to find hidden treasures, placed by other gamers.

Thinking the game would be fun and easy, I headed out believing I'd be able to find a geocache. I searched high, low, to the right, the left and everywhere in between with no luck. After about 15 minutes of searching, I walked to a second location, where I continued to struggle.

I accepted defeat and went home. After a few days of rain and strategizing, I set out again and was able to find the first geocache. It was in a small nook I had hesitated to check before.

While the geocaches I visited were in Astoria, there are hundreds of geocaches

throughout the North Coast, many of which are in walking distance.

The Geocaching app is one of many that can be safely used when exercising outdoors and following social distancing rules. Here is a beginner's guide to geocaching, with four other apps to try.

Geocaching

The app's main function is a map, which shows the locations of geocaches. The geocaches themselves are hidden objects, ranging from micro size (about the size of a dime) to large.

When you find a geocache, you will find a piece of paper to log your name and the date you found the geocache. If you're lucky, you may also find a prize. It is recommended that if you take a prize home, you leave one in its place for the next person to find the geocache.

To get started, download the app and choose a geocache near you. The app has a navigation tool to help you go to the exact location of the geocache. Once there, read the geocache's description for a hint on where the geocache is hidden.

Information on the difficulty, terrain and size of the geocache is also listed in the geocache's description page. If you get stuck, there should be an extra hint from the person who originally hid the geocache.

If the description and hint aren't enough



Photos by Alyssa Evans

A geocache is hidden near this spot for premium members, who pay a monthly or annual fee.

to help you out, you can also look through the geocache's log, where other people document whether they found the geocache or not.

Sometimes geocaches go missing.

If you think a geocache is missing, you can leave a comment to alert the spot's manager.

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