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Geocaching Safety in Southern Africa

A publication of the 2014 KZN MEGA event
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Introduction

"Safety is like a chain:
only as strong as its weakest link."

"For safety and prevention measures to be efficient,
they must be taken as a whole."

This is a guideline put together to encourage safe geocaching in Southern Africa and while geocaching is inherently a fun, family orientated hobby that is generally safe, this guide is to assist cachers to identify, control and hopefully minimize your risk exposure to incidents of urban violence, in everyday geocaching situations. We have aimed this specifically at urban and peri-urban situations rather than rural and remote locations. But some of the tips can apply equally there too.

The higher the level of safety, the lower the amount of personal freedom is allowed. Everything will depend on the situation and there is no single "cookie cutter" approach to safety.

The need for - **safety and prevention** – is a sad reality in our everyday lives more than ever before. Prevention has become the key for a common citizen to live in peace and tranquility.

Studies show that it is your behavior that is the major inhibiting or preventative factor in preventing safety related incidents. Ultimately minimizing and preventing the risk before it occurs. Thus, this guide focuses mainly on your behaviours rather than controlling the external environment.

Firstly, we must not allow our concern for safety to become an obsession and detract from enjoying life and caching. Rather, we need to be aware and behave in a way that hinders potential criminals and prevents us from being easy targets for criminal and dangerous situations.

Mugging Hazards

A mugging hazard is when you notice the approach of a suspect individual or a group of individuals, both in a crowded or a deserted place. Mugging victims are chosen at **random** – but the criminals are looking for the following indicators:

- Are you looking distracted (constantly looking up a tree or behind signs and not paying attention to the people and situation around you)?
- Are you looking distracted (have kids around who are distracting you)?
- Senior citizens are seen as soft targets unfortunately
- Are you showing off something of value to the criminals (GPSr, cellphones, music players, cameras, wallets, car keys, backpacks with all sorts of goodies in it, jewellery etc.)? And most cachers are!
- Do you look vulnerable (teenage girls alone, all alone in a deserted park etc.)?

So the would be assailant is looking for an easy target. They may be thinking of a quick snatch (grabbing a backpack or camera and running) – or a more deliberate mugging where they interact and take time to get wallets, watches etc.

What can I do?

- **<u>Pay attention</u>** to people standing idly around the caching zone – this means looking not just right here – but think "I need to walk all the way into the middle of this park – and then return…… what could happen?" So not only looking at the people in the immediate vicinity – but think about those people who may be in the middle of the park – or on the other side – keep an eye on them too.

- Always remain alert and vigilant: Not only that **BUT** look alert and show the people around that you are observing everything around you and that they have been seen.

- Do not allow a group of people to surround you as walk; turn in another direction, or simply stop and allow the people to walk ahead.

- Avoid bumping into people or allowing others to bump into you. Pay attention to the people around. Move out of the others' way, change direction sharply, cross the street, walk into a shop, stop and talk to a vendor or official. Later, return to the sidewalk you were on.

- Trust your intuition. When noticing you are being followed or observed, stop, look around, and assume an attitude that will prevent the situation. Try to disorient any observer by not acting in a "normal" way.

- If you happen to witness someone being mugged, do not intervene; do not place your life at risk. Call or phone the police from a safe location and get as much detail as you can. Be careful to stay out the way if they are running or escaping towards you. In the case of a gun being used - pay attention to the mugger's line of fire, to avoid being shot. Remember: reporting the crime may prevent you from becoming the next victim. Only after the aggressor leaves, attempt to help the victim.

- Always communicate the hazard to the police, even if you believe that your attitude will not 'make any difference', or result in a satisfactory solution. Do your share.

- Do something unexpected before the assailant announces the holdup. Improvise. Shout loudly, for example, the name of an imaginary person in the crowd, calling the attention of people around.

Behaviour during a holdup

- Never react during a holdup or stickup. The assailant is frequently being watched and "covered" by another person who remains concealed.

- Try to reduce your 'window of exposure' time by complying with everything, and not hindering the assailant's escape.

- Make sure that you actions are clear and communicated to the assailant (e.g. don't dig in your coat or bag without being asked to by the assailant – or having his permission) – you may be trying to get your wallet – but they may think you are looking for a gun!

- Keep calm; your life, or your family's, will depend on this.

- Announce your moves beforehand, to avoid startling the assailant, for instance by announce you are going to reach for your wallet, before moving your arm

- Avoid talking; only reply when spoken to; merely answer questions.

- Do not underestimate an assailant child. They are more dangerous than adults. They are more reckless and will not hesitate showing they are 'in charge'.

- Do not try and reason with the assailant – if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol – they may have their reasoning impaired – and conversation may add to their stress!

- Report the occurrence at a police station.

Be aware

- It is ALWAYS recommended that you read recent logs. What may have been an awesome park to walk your dog and cache in 2008 – may be a horrific experience today!
- If you are not familiar with the area – send a mail to an active geocacher in that area – follow on Social media like the Facebook groups – or geocaching forums.
- Suggest Buddy-caching with someone –rather than going it alone when doing urban caches.
- NOTE FOR CACHE OWNERS: Maintain your caches and rather archive or disable dodgy caches. Also post notes about best times (and use that "Not Safe at Night" attribute).

What is a high-risk areas

- All geocaches have been reviewed – so you have some confidence that at least 1 person has checked that the cache looks acceptable – but that said – the reviewers in more cases than not – have probably never been to the exact location – so they rely on the guidance of the cache owner/hider – and they are primarily checking other considerations like proximity to other caches and **not safety**!
- There have been muggings at mid-day on a busy stretch of beach and outside shopping malls at a Park and Grab – so treat EVERY cache as possible dangerous or risky cache!
- Assess each and every situation – as things change VERY quickly – don't assume that because all was well

on the way TO the cache – that is will be the same on the way BACK! Keep alert and observant – notice small and big changes – especially people related.

■ The following are areas where you are at a slightly higher risk, but this is not exhaustive and is just to make you think:
➢ Parks
➢ Urban trails
➢ Alley ways
➢ Path ways
➢ Very quiet streets and neighbourhoods
➢ Industrial areas
➢ Open veld areas
➢ Deserted beaches
➢ Areas where line of sight is obscured (behind trees, behind a dune, backyards etc.)
➢ Areas around dumps and dumping areas
➢ Very bushy or well wooded areas
➢ Areas where there is signs of vagrants living / staying (fire places, cardboard sleeping areas, "toilet" areas, paths into the grass)
➢ Anywhere near a taxi rank or public transport zone
➢ Abandoned or deserted buildings
➢ Run down or older housing and residential
➢ Areas with very few passers-by/traffic
➢ Early morning / late afternoon
➢ Night time

Personal safety in high-risk areas

- Avoid high-risk areas. If you must pass by one, remain vigilant and very observant

- Avoid calling attention to yourself, be discrete

- Identify the exit routes and leave quickly

- Sunglasses can be used to hide the direction of your glance

- Look harmless.

- Avoid using the cell phone or GPSr in plain sight

- Know your routes – apply common sense when following the GPSr route - either on foot or by vehicle. – i.e. rather drive around a township that straight through it. Rather take a longer route on municipal roads – than a short cut on a dirt road into open veld.

- Do not carry more than you need (wallets, cash, keys, cameras, ID documents etc.)

- Keep at least one person informed about your route and schedule. If possible, keep a contact routine by 'calling in', contacting the person about your progress. This attitude may make a great difference, in case of an accident. When contact is not made on schedule, the 'contact person' will soon notice that something is wrong, and also know where you were.

- Make a list of useful phones, local and long distance, addresses, and names of people to be contacted in case of emergency, in two languages, and plasticized (plastic covered). Make a copy. Keep one with your documents and another in your pocket.

- Safety First – Don't do the cache if you feel unsafe!

Safe Driving

- Pay attention to everything happening around. Aside from making it possible to take pro-active action (in the case of driving hazards) it also gives a potential criminal the impression that you are not an easy target and that he will not have the element of surprise available. An alert posture and attitude may prevent most attacks. Even when the victim has not seen the criminal, the attitude of alertness is enough to dissuade him.

- Do not place bags, cellphones, GPSr units, iPODs, tablet computers or briefcases in sight, particularly on the passenger seat or back seat. Place them on the ground or in the boot (trunk).

- Do not give rides to strangers

- Always keep the windows closed. Do not open them for people asking for money or selling things at traffic lights.

- Using a cell phone when you are driving sends the message to observers that you are distracted and, therefore, easy to surprise.

- If you notice a suspicious attitude, hoot to attract people's attention. This may inhibit a crime.

- If you see somebody in difficulties in the street, do not stop. Call the police on the phone, (or the road assistance, or ambulance or firemen) to the place; if you run into a police car, report the incident.

- If you observe that your car is being stolen or broken in to, keep in mind that a criminal seldom acts alone. Normally a vehicle is escorting him, or even a pedestrian, at a distance covering the criminal. Observe the characteristics of the criminal, the surroundings, and the route taken. Contact the police and report all

the information you can.

- Report the theft at a police station, detailing everything you observed.

- Always look alert. Criminals seek victims that are easily surprised.

In Parking Lots

- Avoid parking the car in poorly lit places and on deserted streets.

- If possible, use recognised parking spots.
- Always have a safety system, such as a lock and an alarm, in your car

- Park your car in a position so you can leave quickly in an emergency.
- Close the car entirely when parking, even if you are absent only for a few minutes, or in the garage of your house or building.

- If you must leave an object in the car, make a stop and put the object away in the car trunk, before arriving at the parking lot, so the people in the parking lot do not notice.

- When returning to your vehicle in a parking lot, before approaching, look around, set the alarm, and only approach after you feel it is safe.

- Look at the interior of the car before opening the door
- If the alarm involves blinking and beeping, set it off discreetly. Do not attract attention to yourself.
- When you are leaving a parking lot, look alert; send the message the image that you are paying attention to everything around.
- Avoid leaving valuables in a car.

■ If you have a radio or CD with alarm and removable front panel, and always take the panel with you.

Most crimes are improvised and only planned once the mugger sees an opportunity. A mugger walks the streets in search of a chance, a moment, seeking the best conditions for his action to succeed. Your aim needs to be to prevent yourself from fitting the favourable profile and let the criminal look elsewhere when choosing a victim.

Reducing the Risk of being mugged

- Always observe what it happening around you, move your head around, look around, even if only to pass the impression of that you are alert.

- Do not approach a car that stops asking for information.

- Do not show off wristwatches or jewellery while walking.

- Preferable walk in groups.

- Keep a small amount of petty cash for small expenses – you don't need your wallet/purse always.

- If you notice that you are being followed, change direction, cross the street and then come back, show you are alert.

- Seek public places for protection, but make sure there is more than one entry / exit access.

- Avoid crowds. Beware of bumping into people, and people that run into you, once this is the most common pickpocket technique.

- Always try to walk on the sidewalk where the cars are moving in the opposite direction, and far from the curb, so you cannot be surprised by an approaching vehicle.

- At corners, avoid edges, prefer the center.

- Do not place valuables, documents or money in back trouser pockets: this is the easiest pocket to steal from.

- Do not concentrate all your money in a single place, distribute among pockets and bag / wallet. 'Do not place all the eggs in one basket'.

- Modify your routes and itineraries periodically.

- Try to always walk briskly.

- Do not carry valuable objects in backpacks on your back: put the backpacks in front.

- In crowded places, protect your handbag or backpacks with your body and arms, so they cannot be cut off with penknives by the straps: put the backpacks or handbag in front of you.

- When carrying electronic equipment such as tablets, GPSr, handhelds etc., use discreet bags (not their own cases) that do not reveal their content.

If you use a taxi (for tourists)

- Note – taxis are expensive in South Africa – so be careful about catching a lift with any "taxi". Public transport is also not very good (apart from some exceptions like the Gautrain) – so do no rely on these for caching.

- Rather contact a local cacher via the fourms or other Social media to get the best solutions (they may even take you around for the day!)

- Always use taxi cabs from a reputable taxi company, if at all possible (and check with their office number or your hotel).

- Check if the rate and minimum fare are correct for the day and hour.

- Do not leave your belongings spread around, so it is faster and easier to leave the cab and so nothing is forgotten in the vehicle.

- Observe if the vehicle license is in a visible place and if the photo is the driver's; if not, or if you otherwise suspect of anything, request that the vehicle stop, get out of the cab, and pay for the ride standing next to the vehicle. No explanation is necessary, just thank the driver and be polite.

- If you suspect something may be wrong, when you disembark write down the plate number. This information could be useful in the future.

- There are various different types of criminals. Some are addicts, who may be or not be drugged. Some are teenagers, who usually feel invincible, powerful, and believe they are professional criminals. However, these are the most dangerous of criminals: their reactions are unpredictable and temperamental. Often they do not plan on harming anyone, and when they do they despair, but then it's too late. Teenage muggers, particularly addicts, frequently harm their victims accidentally.

- Understand that the criminal is also under a lot of stress in this situation – so do not provoke them in any way.

- The moment of the crime is when the criminal may exert all the authority and power that society denies him or her. The assailant expects to be obeyed, cannot tolerate the frustration caused by the resistance of a victim, and does not have the capacity of perceiving the limitations that a victim may demonstrate under the effect of stress.

- Additional care must be taken the when the criminals are young. With little experience, they need to impose their authority. Most of the times, they have nothing to lose and do not fear death or imprisonment or realise the full consequences of their actions.

- Make your family aware of potential risks and situation, preparing them for these situations, and educate them in order to reduce adverse consequences.

Hiding a Cache in AFRICA

We hope that this gives you some tips and pointers which will enhance the pleasure you get from hiding caches in Africa.

Feel free to contact us for advice or more information, and we welcome discussion and further contributions to improve this guide.
Compiled by the Groundspeak Volunteers, Fish Eagle and GlobalRat

Hiding caches is the wonderful second dimension of geocaching (finding them being the first, and travel bugs/geocoins being the third). We hide caches for several reasons - the common ones being to put something back into the game we enjoy so much, and to derive pleasure from reading the logs of finders on our own caches. But, the most important is that it is an essential part of the "give and take" of the game, and the exchange of pleasure which makes it what it is. This is the essence of what sustains geocaching, and what makes it grow.

Most of this guide is about making your cache hides as good as possible. The exchange of pleasure is directly relative to the quality and experience of the cache. The more WOW which your cache provides, the more WOW the finder will get from it, the more WOW you will get out of reading lovely found logs, and the more it will stimulate others to create WOW caches.

If you're considering hiding your first geocache, then please read this.

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CACHE CONTAINERS -

The minimum requirement for a valid geocache is some form
of container, and some form of logbook/logsheet.
Knowledgebase

Use High Quality Containers
This works out much cheaper in the long run. If you do it
right the first time, you won't be frustrated later. Many
containers which are considered OK by new players simply
don't work well, and continually need maintenance. A good
container, properly hidden, will last for many years without
any attention. Choosing the right container is mainly to do
about weatherproofing, which 99% means moisture.
The following work well:

- Plastic lock-n-lock containers which have a gasket in the lid.
- Metal ammo cans (if available), also with a gasket in the lid, but must be properly painted to protect against rust.
- Purpose made geocaching containers - bison tubes, nano caches, etc.
- Anything that seals tightly with a gasket.
- For micro-caches, 35mm plastic film containers, and plastic pill bottles normally work fairly well, but are quite unappealing.
If you're planning to hide your cache in the desert, then this is much less important.
The following don't work well:
- Cheap plastic containers - lunchboxes, food containers, etc - they look like they should be waterproof, but always seem to get wet inside.
- Glass containers - they get broken.
- Unpainted metal containers - they rust.
- Second-hand food containers. Anything that's had food in it will attract animals and bugs no matter how well you wash it.
- Wood, cardboard, or anything bio-degradable.
If in doubt, submerge your container underwater for a few hours in the bath with a piece of paper inside. Raise and lower the water temperature, and see what happens...... It's really demoralising to get logs for your caches which say that it's wet, and the logbook is a sodden, mildewed mess... yeech!! And obviously, that doesn't create a good impression with your fellow cachers.

Outer Covering
Optionally, you can use some outer covering for your container. The purpose could be to keep the container nice and clean, to further weatherproof it, to camoufage it, etc....
The following are good ideas:
- Plasticised, waterproof canvas bags (can be camo).
- Cloth bags - not waterproof, but do keep the cache nice and clean.

- A piece of plasticised (camo or not) material placed over the cache.
The following are bad ideas:
- Plastic supermarket packets
- Garbage bags
Plastic bags seem an obvious choice, but they're worse than useless. They get damaged and full of holes quickly, they attract condensation and moisture, and they attract bugs and snakes. Most of them are also bio-degrable, which defeats the purpose. A good container doesn't need any outer covering. For info, here's a thread on the SA forums regarding plastic bags.

Camouflaging a Plastic Container
Optionally, you can camouflage your containers, but never try to paint directly onto a plastic container. It won't last, because the paint doesn't take properly on the smooth surface. The trick is to roughen up the container very well with coarse sandpaper before painting. Spray painting is fine, but it's better to use an enamel paint. Paint on a thick coat of enamel, then pour sand over it while wet, dust off the surplus sand, then paint another thick coat again. The final coat should be applied by dabbing the brush, else the sand goes into lumps and it doesn't look good. Choose your colour to blend in with the intended location, normally a shade or two lighter, then add some bits of a darker colour afterwards to create a nice camo.

Cache Labelling
Official geocache labels are optional (and quite expensive), but they're very nice, and they do make your cache look more professional. If you don't use a proper label, always clearly mark your container as being a geocache, so that accidental finders and the authorities will realise that the contents are not harmful.

Container Shape

As a generalisation, square and rectangular is good, round is awkward. Relative to the overall size of the container, very little fits comfortably in a round container - logbooks need to be folded or bent, pencils and pens don't fit, but can go corner-to-corner in a rectangular container, etc......

Container Pictures
It's not necessary to spend a lot of money, or get as fancy as this, but the appearance of the cache does make it look more professional, and creates a good impression with your fellow cachers. Using nice containers also helps to set the standard for the community. New cachers will emulate what they see......

Lock-n-lock container and camo bag

Ammo cans, flare container, and purpose-made geocache

Nano cache - the size of a fingernail

Bison tube micro-caches

CACHE SIZE -
There are several factors which influence the size of the cache.
The main ones are -
Cost - Bigger containers cost more, and it costs more to stock them with trade items (swag).
The Hide Location - Many locations cannot support a larger cache, especially so in Africa where we have major muggle problems.
Precedent - "Monkey see, monkey do". We've seen regions evolve in keeping with the example set by the pioneers.

Opinion - The opinion of finders, and what they say in their logs. If they are critical about size, it could influence future hides.
Availability - of suitable containers.

There is a lot of opinion about cache sizes, and it differs from country to country, differs between urban and rural, and differs between hiders and finders.

Most finders like to find a larger cache, and will often make comments in logs like "Nice location, could handle a much bigger cache though" and "After a long and tiring hike, we were disappointed to find such a small container". We estimate that 90% of finders share this view, which is "hide as large a cache as possible for that location". The other 10% are predominantly urban cachers, who don't trade swag, and would prefer a smaller cache or micro in muggle-dense locations because it makes retrieval, logging, and replacement of the cache easier, less stealth is necessary, and being stealthy makes them feel awkward.

Most experienced hiders in Africa, after learning the hard way, move to smaller containers. It's common for the initial hide to be a regular size, then it gets muggled, and is replaced with a small or micro which lasts better. Hiders want to hide larger caches because they perceive them as more appealing to finders, and many hiders feel "conscience" about their caches being too small. This is also evident from how size often gets mis-stated in listings. The cache listing page has very clear guidance on how to rate the size of a container, yet caches are very often listed as one size bigger, and very rarely the other way around.

First world countries are different. For example, there are large caches in the UK lying wide open in the woods for everyone to see, and they endure!! Many of those caches have had hundreds of visits, and still have their original

logbooks from 3 or 4 years ago. A cache like that wouldn't last 5 minutes in Africa!! In those countries the size of caches is generally much larger than in Africa. I think this illustrates that in Africa the main determining factor for the size of a cache is to protect it from muggles.

Our advice to hiders in Africa is:
- Let the location and muggle risk dictate the container size.
- If in doubt, go one size smaller rather than larger, and it'll endure better.

But, container size is an essential part of providing an attractive variety of caches for finders to hunt. It's important to have a mix of sizes of caches, including some larger caches which are large enough to hold a typical travel bug.

A final note on micro caches -
This is where we find the majority of lame and weak caches. Plastic pill bottles and plastic 35mm film containers can be obtained in bulk for free if you have the right contacts. Add a strip of paper, slap it down somewhere without anything special about the location or the hide, and it's lame. But, there is definately a place for the clever micro which has had some effort put into it regarding the container, the location, or the hiding method. Magnets, camouflage, disguised as something else, clever hides, etc all add up to make micro caches enjoyable. And sometimes they are the only option in an urban environment.

HIDING YOUR CACHE -
Having decided roughly where you want to hide your cache, you'll need to find a suitable hiding spot. Please consider where you are not allowed to hide a cache. There can be a bit of "chicken and egg, which came first" with choosing a hide - meaning that it's interlinked with the size and nature of the container. There is almost infinite variety possible, and some containers suit certain hide methods and locations,

and some don't. Some hides suit certain containers and not others. In a nutshell, the primary consideration when selecting a good hiding spot should be to protect your cache. From watching muggles, accidental discovery, animals, the weather, fire, and whatever other "risks" there may be. A well chosen hide can save a lot of maintenance heartaches later on........ The secondary consideration should be to make it interesting, and have variety in your hides.

Watching Muggles
Try to choose spots where finders won't be visible to muggles, even from a distance. In Africa, it's very common that muggles with lots of time on their hands will investigate after you've left, and bye-bye cache. Also consider that many finders are not careful. That could be because they're newbies and don't realise the importance of being stealthy, or because they don't care, or because they're overseas visitors and don't have to be so stealthy in their own country. The result is the same - cache gone, have to maintain, and costs $$$.

Accidental Discovery
Try to hide your cache away from where people normally go. The more "off the beaten track" your cache is, the less the chance of accidental discovery. However, always be mindful of the environmental impact. Cachers leave trails which point directly to your cache, and sometime trash the nearby vegetation while looking for it. A common mistake made by newbies is to not hide the cache well enough, fearing that finders won't find their cache and they'll have a DNF - horrors!! Often part of the cache is left intentionally exposed to make finding easier. Our advice is - always hide your cache as well as you possibly can. You cannot "over-hide" a cache. But, if you feel that your hide is too difficult to find, then give a detailed hint in your listing. Also consider that finders won't always replace your cache exactly as found. Some well-meaning cachers, especially newbies, might

leave your cache partly exposed if they battled to find it and think it's too difficult.

Animals
Poorly hidden and poorly secured caches are highly susceptable to animal interference. The main culprits are baboons and monkeys, but there are many more. Hyenas, badgers, porcupines, bugs, hyrax, etc can also be a problem. The key consideration here is knowing which animals are the risk, and adapt your hide accordingly. eg: For monkeys and baboons, either secure the cache with a substantial rock, or hide it deep enough in a cleft to be beyond reach of their arms but within reach of a cacher. It's also a good idea to spray the outside of your container with mosquito repellant, and re-do that once a year. That should discourage animals, and keep insects away from your cache.

Weather
The main culprit is rain, but we've seen caches destroyed by wind too. In very cold regions, snow and ice can be a consideration, and in very hot regions, the temperature could also be an issue. The primary protection against moisture is the type and quality of container as mentioned earlier, but the actual hide is important too. Consider where water will flow in a heavy rainstorm. Often, obvious hiding spots are under something like a rock, but that could be a drainage channel. Hiding caches out of the rain (like under a big, flat rock) provides a second level of moisture protection. Be aware of the flood level of rivers and streams, and the extreme high water mark on beaches. This sounds obvious, but many caches have been lost to high water levels.

Fire
A common cache killer. Caches are generally very combustible - we've seen very mild fires cause minor damage to vegetation, but reduce a cache to ashes. There are some obvious "fire-resistant" hides - in rocks, in holes in

the ground, etc. But, hiding a cache in rocks doesn't guarantee that it will survive a fire - how it's hidden is critical. If there is any vegetation above the cache, like a small bush at the top of a rockpile, the small embers falling from the bush will destroy the cache. So, if fire could be a risk, always consider nearby vegetation, consider the effect of heat (plastic melts very easily), and also consider where the wind could carry embers. Hidden deep in rock clefts works well. Also, don't underestimate the frequency of fires. Many locations that we though weren't fire risk areas have proved us wrong. The result is always the same - cache gone, have to maintain, and costs $$$.

There's a region in South Africa which is very prone to wildfires. The locals protect their caches by hiding them in OPORs. Derogatory acronym for an Obvious Pile Of Rocks. It's become a joke, but it's necessary, and one can normally spot the hide from 20m away which dilutes the potential allure of the cache. But that doesn't have to be boring - they could create an even more obvious OPOR as a decoy, or make a very big OPOR, and hide the cache at the very bottom making finders unpack and rebuild the whole "cairn". Anything unexpected adds to the value of the cache, as long as it's not just a frustration.

Variety
Try to make hides that are unconventional and unexpected - that adds to the WOW factor of the cache. Avoid falling into the trap of doing stereotype hides - other cachers will be able to predict your hides, and that's boring.

Access versus Difficulty
It's great to have some "difficult to find" caches. It's also great to have some "easy to find" caches. But each has it's place. If you make a monster of a hide at the end of a 5km hike, you won't have many friends. That's pure frustration. If you make a very easy hide within 30m of the parking spot, and your cache lacks allure and excitement, that's lame.

Basic rule of thumb - remote locations, beautiful spots, long hikes - make an easier hide. Urban locations, short walk, ability to revisit the location again easily if not found - suitable for a sneaky hide. By "easier", like mentioned with a 5km hike, we mean hide the cache as well as you can, and make it easier by giving a detailed hint.

Terrain and Safety

Caches in difficult terrain - stiff climbs, cliffs, scuba, etc are not popular, but they are highly appreciated by the few who like that sort of thing. Generally speaking, most cachers have enough challenges at work, and prefer having fun the easy way when caching. But, if a cache doesn't involve a bit of effort - mental, physical, the search, or by pushing boundaries, then it must have something else that's good to avoid being lame. Safety of cachers is a concern, but that does not stop one hiding "extreme" caches. Cachers assume all responsibility for their own safety when geocaching, and reviewers won't normally deny a cache listing because it's dangerous. But, if the dangers aren't obvious, the reviewer might insist on a prominent warning in the listing. eg's: The edge of a cliff (obvious). Wild animal attack (not obvious for a cacher from overseas).

DISGUISED CACHES -

A disguised cache is different to a camouflaged cache. Camouflage entails changing the appearance of the container to make it less visible. Disguising a cache entails making it look like something else, and disguised caches are normally placed in open view.

This is a creative and fun part of hiding caches, and serves a useful purpose in muggle-full Africa. It's time-consuming, but really enjoyable to make up a disguised cache, and they normally attract super logs too. Disguised caches are part of the variety mentioned earlier, and contribute to the WOW factor.

Some examples of disguised caches:
- fake bolts and nuts
- fake sprinkler fittings
- fake waterpipes
- fake rocks, or hollowed out rocks
- hollowed out tree stumps and branches
- fake acorns
- fake pine cones
- etc, etc - there's almost no limit to creativity.

However, there are some No-No's. We're not allowed to deface property, or damage trees and plants to make a hide. So, drilling a hole in a living tree is not allowed, but placing a piece of hollowed out tree-stump, or a hollowed out fallen branch is OK. Fake electrical fittings are not allowed, and there are probably others - use common sense.

Here's a link to an interesting thread on the geocaching forums. It's lengthy, but interesting to see some of the pics.

CACHE CONTENTS -
The minimum requirement for a valid geocache is some form of container and some form of logbook/logsheet.

So, a logbook or logsheet is essential, and your cache cannot be published without that. These come in many guises.

For a tiny nano-cache, the logsheet is a long, thin strip of paper, about 30cm long, by 0.5cm wide.

For a micro cache, the logsheet is normally several strips of paper, about 20cm long, by 2-3cm wide. These may be plain, or have lines on them, and may be personalised. We like to personalise micro logsheets because it looks more professional. A word of advice with micro logsheets - allow for a minimum of 50-100 log entries. A common mistake is

underestimating the number of visits a cache will get.

For small, regular and large containers - the choice is yours. Our only advice is same as above - don't underestimate the number of visits your cache will get - you'll be surprised. Small hard cover notebooks, and soft cover note books are normally used. It's common for logbooks to be personalised, and we've seen some very nice logbooks - but that's optional. Normally, the cache hider writes the cache name, cache hider's geonick, contact details, and date placed, either on the cover, or on page one. We've seen some innovative logbooks too - eg: a pack of cards where each finder logs on a seperate card.

Every cache should include a copy of the standard cache note which explains what geocaching is all about. The purpose is to let muggles and authorities know what it is if discovered by accident, and (hopefully) help to preserve the cache in such an event. These are available here in a variety of sizes, formats, and languages.

Excluding nanos, each cache should have something to write with, but that's not a requirement, just desirable. For micros, we recommend a short pencil, and if it'll fit, a pencil sharpener. For larger caches, pencil and pencil sharpener, or a pen. We find pencils work best because pens are affected by temperature and moisture.

Trade items (swag) are not recommended for micro-caches. Some players put small trade items in micros, but it's a pain, and can be irritating. Swag in a micro often hampers removal and replacement of the logsheet, or the container won't close properly and gets wet, etc.

For small, regular and large containers, the choice is yours. It's expected that there should be some trade items, but it's not necessary to spend lots of $$$. Many adult cachers don't

trade, but kids love it!! Keep the swag simple, and mainly kid stuff like small toys, etc. These items are not allowed in caches.

Some players create "high value" caches with expensive trade items. We don't recommend this, especially not in Africa. Keeping it simple seems to work best....

It's wise to put your cache contents in a ziploc type bag. We normally use two bags, one for the logbook and pencil, and one for the swag. No matter how waterproof your container is, somebody won't close it properly, and it'll get wet inside - guaranteed!! The ziplocs normally keep the contents dry if that happens, and the next finder will hopefully dry out the container, and there'll be no real damage.

CACHE THEMES -
Many cachers try to create "themes" with their caches, or create a "series" of caches, intending to make them more attractive and interesting.
Typical themes and series:
- Trade only foreign coins.
- Book or CD exchange.
- Caches highlighting unusual architecture.
- Caches focusing on battlefields.
- Etc, etc.
Unless they're very well done, they don't work satisfactorily and don't endure, so our advice is don't worry about themes or trying to create a series of caches. They don't work well because they end up being restrictive in some way. Either restricting finders in what they can trade - the majority of cachers simply won't trade. Or restricting the choice of locations because it must fit the theme - this leads to inferior caches, weak locations, and weak hides.
Our advice is - ignore themes, they're not worth the effort, and likely to be disappointing.

CACHE TYPES -
The various cache types can be found here.

For the purposes of opening up a new area in Africa, we recommend that the primary focus be on placing traditional caches. Once you have an established local geo-community, then it's fun to do the occasional complex multi-cache or puzzle to create a nice challenge.

To create a good Multi or Puzzle cache needs some experience. It's a common weakness that new cachers try to be too ambitious, and attempt to create a "masterpiece". These often end up not working properly, not being publishable, or not well received by finders. There's a fine line between a challenge and outright frustration!!

But, there's a BIG place in Africa for the simple two-stage multi-cache.
This is one of our main tools for combating the muggle problem.

An example - You find a stunning waterfall, that deserves a cache, but...... there's nowhere safe to hide a cache because you get mobbed by muggle kids, and privacy is impossible. (sound familiar?)

No problem, a two stage multi is the solution - The published co-ords can take the finder to the waterfall, which achieves the objective of the cache. There, they need to find a virtual clue - use a sign, a feature, a monument, or something already there which is permanent. A simple calculation provides the co-ords of the final cache, which can be hidden anywhere in the vicinity at a suitable location that is safe, and muggle-free. "Vicinity" need not be the immediate vicinity - there is no restriction on distance between stages of a multi-cache. But realistically, it should be somewhere nearby, or on the route to/from the waterfall. The final cache

location need not have any specific merit of it's own (like a great view) - all it needs to be is a safe, muggle-free hiding spot to fulfil the requirement for a valid geocache. Most African geocachers understand these realities, and you can also mention in your listing why it's like that. The same technique can be used if you cannot get permission for a physical cache hide at your chosen location, or the location is too sensitive for a physical hide.

The other use for a multiple stage multi-cache is to provide a guided tour of an area (this is the proper purpose of a multi-cache).

Once your local geo-community starts evolving, having an "event cache" is highly desirable. Geocaching is not a social game, and is normally played independant from other players. Often local players communicate by email, but it's rare to accidentally bump into another cacher at a cache or en-route to a cache. Events provide the opportunity to meet and share experiences with other cachers. We've found that cachers immediately become friends with each other. Amazing, but true. There's something like an invisible bond because we share the same interest and crazy hobby, and are part of a "secret society".....

THE CACHE LISTING -
We must emphasize the importance of creating an attractive cache listing. Your listing is the first thing that potential finders see, and it creates the all-important first impression. Sure, we've found terrible caches which have great listings, and we've found some great caches which have terrible listings. But, the bottom line is that a nice listing makes your cache appear more professional and attractive.
There are several aspects to creating an attractive and effective listing, which we'll run through -

Cache Name

Don't use a business name or a brand name in your cache's name - that's not allowed, but a clever play on words is OK. eg: "McDonalds Hamburger Cache" is not OK, but "This Old Guy also had a Farm" is OK. Try to avoid using the obvious name of the location. eg: Instead of calling it "Victoria Falls Cache", use something like "The Smoke that Thunders" or "Livingstone's Legacy" - that adds to the mystery and allure. Don't use any non-standard characters in the cache name. eg: Characters specific to some languages, which won't display properly on other computers which don't have that font loaded. Keep your cache name fairly short - more than 4 or 5 words can cause weird displays.

Layout of the Listing
This is not important with a short listing, but when you're giving a lot of information, then try to put the important cache info at the top and the bottom, with the optional information in the middle. Many cachers don't bother to read all the blurb if it doesn't interest them - they just want to get to the nitty-gritty, and go find the cache. Here's an example to illustrate what we mean. We think this long listing is well laid out, and readers can get to the nitty-gritty of the cache in a few seconds....

Giving Directions
Many new cachers tend to give too much info in their listings about how to get to the cache. Finders have got GPS units to get them there - that's what geocaching is all about.... Only give info necessary to avoid frustration and/or if there's a safety concern - eg: the co-ords of the right turnoff, or which trail to take if it's not obvious. Info like "walk past the big tree, then take 50 paces towards the hill, and go around the big rock" is unnecessary, and undesirable in our opinion. You may want to give more guidance if the cache is in an environmentally sensitive area to avoid cachers short-cutting and trashing the area. Sometimes, a multi-cache which forces finders to take the proper route is the best protection

against environmental damage.

Information

We believe that it's important to give info about the location, history, etc. As we said above, not everyone will read it, but most will, and if they go away with something they didn't know before, then that's added to the value of your cache. Feel free to link to websites providing additional info, but remember that links to commercial websites are not allowed.

Contents of the Cache

It's not necessary to list the initial cache contents on your cache page. After a few visits that will have changed and be irrelevant anyway, and then it just clutters up your listing. We don't believe that listing the contents will make anyone rush to your cache to trade a specific item, but if you have put really nice swag items in it, then feel free to mention that. If you wish, you may list the contents in a "note" type log, which will be relevant to the first few finders, and will drop out of sight later on.

Difficulty and Terrain Ratings

These are very important, and if done incorrectly, can be very frustrating for finders. It's especially important if your cache warrents 3 or more stars for terrain, then it's also wise to say something in your listing about why. eg: 4-star terrain could mean a long hike or a cliff climb. Some cachers do long hikes, but don't do cliff climbs, so they need to know, and if they can't work out the reason for the high terrain rating, they'll probably skip your cache.

1-Star Terrain - This should indicate that the cache is wheelchair accessible. Often, the cache owner forgets to set the difficulty and terrain ratings, and the default of 1/1 can be confusing. 1-star terrain should go together with the handicapped attribute icon.

5-Star Difficulty and 5-Star Terrain used together - Normally happens when the cache owner is trying to make a

statement about an "extreme" cache. A 5/5 rating is very rarely correct, because the cache might warrant 5 stars for one or the other, but not for both. A 5/5 rating does not make the cache attractive - it does exactly the opposite because very few cachers want to endure 5-star terrain (a mega-long hike, difficult climb, etc), and then deal with a 5-star hide which they are unlikely to find.

On the cache edit page, there's a link to the cache rating tool which is excellent for standardising difficulty and terrain ratings. This generally provides a very good indication of what the terrain and difficulty should be, but tweak it up or down a bit if you feel it necessary. The tweak should be no more than 1 star either way, unless you have a specific reason. An example of a specific reason could be a "Liar's Cache" where the difficulty and terrain are intentionally mis-stated. Knowledgebase

Spelling and Grammar

It's easy to avoid silly mistakes by using a spelling checker, or asking for some help, but so few cachers do.... The result is an unprofessional looking listing, which creates a negative first impression. If the cache owner can't be bothered to put a bit of effort into the listing - well, what's the cache likely to be like..? There are various plug-in free spelling checkers for Internet Explorer and Firefox, or you can draft your listing in MS Word, check the spelling, then copy it to the listing form. The trick for setting up your listing professionally is to take your time, and check it carefully. Make your listing a "Work-in-Progress", by unticking the little box which says "Yes, this listing is active etc.", then you can save your listing, call it up again and edit it as much as you like, and when you're happy with it, then tick the little box, and it'll go through to the reviewer for review.

Language

Feel free to do your listing in any language, but we recommend that you include an English translation,

especially if your cache is in a tourist area. In the body of a listing, the use of special language characters is fine - they seem to work much better than in cache titles. Keep the translated sections apart. Have the full listing in one language, and then in the other language. If it's a long listing, and you're using HTML, you can also put links to each language at the top of your listing. It may also be useful to readers to have each language in a different colour or format. If using multiple languages, and you have hints, remember to provide the hint in multiple languages as well.

HTML - Fonts, colours, embedded images, text size, etc. The use of HTML in a listing is optional, but it can add to the professional impression it creates. To use HTML, you'll need to tick the little HTML box on the listing page, and have a very basic knowledge of how it works. It's actually very easy, and if you'd like to experiment, this is a good site that provides the basics. An example of a listing using HTML. Don't try to get too fancy. An image or two, some colour, a table if necessary, some proper paragraphing and/or indenting. These go a long way to making a page look professional. Keep colours simple and readable, and the same goes for fonts, nothing worse than a cute girly font that hardly anyone can read. The easiest way is to find a listing which you like the look of, and then use your browser to view the source code, and use that as a base. Also keep in mind that not all HTML code will work on a cache listing, but most of the basic stuff works. It's important to review your listing a few times and tweak where necessary before activating the listing for review. Don't use something like Word to generate the HTML code for you. It generates too much irrelevant code. Knowledgebase

Images
We believe that adding images to cache listings makes them attractive, but some cachers don't agree - they believe that an image can take away some of the surprise of the location.

After a few visits, there are likely to be uploaded images in the gallery anyway.....To embed an image into a cache listing, you'll need to use some simple HTML. Be considerate with the size and resolution of your images - they shouldn't be more than 40-60Kb, to avoid frustrating folk with slow connections. Alternately, you can upload an image on your listing without HTML, but then it will show as a link below the text, and not display in the listing itself. Never upload images for your cache listing onto a log, rather upload them directly onto the listing. Knowledgebase

The Hint
Giving an encrypted hint is optional, but recommended. Keep your hints short because a long hint can be a mission to decrypt on site. Remember that most cachers will use the hint to find the cache. It's a minority who use it only as a last resort. Keep your hint relative to your difficulty rating. If you want to have a challenging hide, it's pointless to give it away in the hint. Don't put in the "too easy for one" type hints - that just irritates cachers, and it's better to leave it blank if that is the case. Hints should be viewed as additional info for a cacher when he/she is at the cache site. Information that is pertinent to the find, i.e. the cache can not be found without it, should rather be in the body of the description than in the hint. Hints should be used as additional information.

Additional Waypoints
Adding additional waypoints into the system is required for multi-caches and mystery caches, and optional for parking locations, turnoffs, points of interest, etc. We strongly recommend that you add them too, so that they download to finders' GPS units automatically. How to add additional waypoints to your listing.

Attribute Icons
These are the cute little pictures which we can put on our cache pages, and sadly, so few of us do....

They are not a requirement, but they're important because they look nice, are informative, and can be used to search for caches with Pocket Queries. Especially important here is the wheelchair icon if your cache is wheelchair accessible. So, please take the extra few minutes to add them to your cache listings. Knowledgebase

MANAGING YOUR CACHE LISTINGS -
This topic consists of two parts - managing your listing, and maintaining your cache, but they are often interlinked, so we'll deal with them together. It's all good and well to create great caches, and nice listings, but it's just as important to keep them great.
Regular maintenance visits to your cache
This is especially important when there are few cachers and few caches, and finds may be sparse. Cache owners should check up on caches pro-actively and not just when there is a DNF or a problem reported. A problem with a cache, be it missing, or wet, or burnt, etc, could put off that all-important new cacher for good. Remember that the environment changes all the time which may jeopardise your placement. Once you are getting frequent visits to your cache, you can rely more on feedback from visitors.
In a fledgling caching area, the community needs to have a strong "Good Samaritan" culture. Cache owners and finders alike should be helping each other keep the caches maintained and in tip-top shape. One idealistically hopes that this culture will remain, but sadly it doesn't. As an area becomes more "busy", the Good Samaritan culture gets less and less.
Quote - Globalrat: "No-one wants to play tennis on a broken tennis court sans net".

Reviewers Role Regarding Maintenance
Reviewers do periodic sweeps to check for abandoned, unmaintained and long-disabled caches. This is a

housekeeping duty, and is necessary to keep the game "clean & tidy". Normally a reviewer won't interfere until a cache has been unattended to for at least 3 months, or even longer if it's at a remote location. Then the reviewer will log a polite reminder, and give some more time hoping it'll be sorted out. As a last resort, the reviewer could archive the cache, which can still be unarchived and reactivated thereafter, provided that another cache hasn't taken the spot.

Responding to a "Did Not Find" log
A DNF is a cache owner's nightmare, but is a reality, and needs to be dealt with. You, as the cache owner need to be the judge, and decide what to do. The obvious "first prize" is to quickly check on your cache, and if it's there log a note of reassurance, or replace it if it's missing. But that's not always possible within a short time frame, especially for more remote caches.

If you can't get there quickly, you need to decide whether to disable the cache (to avoid others having the same disappointment), or to "wait and see..."
Consider the difficulty of your hide - some challenging hides have many DNF's which aren't a cause for concern.
Consider the previous "found" history of your cache - if everybody's been finding it easily, it's probably gone.
Consider the experience and determination of the cacher - would you have expected them to find it.
Consider the risks pertinent to that location - eg if it's a high muggle spot, it's probably been stolen.
Try contacting the cacher and find out more - to help decide whether it's still there or not. Maybe they were looking in the wrong place.
If you think it's still there - you could wait and see, but there could be the risk of frustrating other cachers.
If you think it's gone - temporarily disable the cache.

When you can't find a cache, consider when to log a DNF

versus when to log a note. We recommend that you only log a DNF if you got to the location, searched for the cache properly, and couldn't find it. Rather log a note if you made a half-hearted attempt, or couldn't get there because the road was blocked, or there was a muggle watching, etc. Consider the cache owner, and only log a DNF if you made diligent search and couldn't find it.

Writing DNF's or Notes are as important as Found logs. These notes provide a cache owner with up to date information on the status of their cache and any possible problems. It also lets them know that there is interest in their cache and provides some motivation to keep it in good condition. Don't ever be too embarrassed to log a DNF.

If your cache has gone missing, and it had a travel bug or geocoin in it - it's common courtesy to drop the traveller's owner an apologetic note, and mark it as "missing".

Responding to criticism of your cache
Yes, criticism happens, but obviously relative to the quality of the cache experience you've created. Great caches are rarely criticised, and lame caches - well, they get what they deserve..... You need to decide how to react, but our advice is to remember that it's only a game - don't take it to heart, and don't overreact. Consider what's been said with an open mind - maybe he/she is right. Sometimes the "finder's" experience is very different to the "hider's" intention. A simple issue like battling to find the right road could cause a negative experience, and can be easily solved. You can learn from criticism too. Often our own views are not the same as the broader geo-community. Also consider from who it comes - some cachers are naturally arrogant and offensive. Don't let that minority get to you. If it comes from a newbie (they sometimes start off by acting like they own the game), then try to guide them, rather than flay them. Should you feel that the criticism is unwarrented, then you have a

choice of actions.

You could ignore it, and move on.

You, as the cache owner, could delete the offending log - that's your right, but doesn't win you any friends.

You could ask the cacher to amend their log, and tone it down - sometimes works.

Our advice, if you disagree with a log, is to let it stand, but post a note for everyone to see politely countering the offending opinions, and move on.

Important to keep in mind that not everyone has the same interests or outlooks so one can get a mixed bag of comments from fantastic to terrible. The general trend however if you have created a good cache will be pleasant comments and you will get a warm and fuzzy feeling, but you may not please everyone's palate. It is best to view any criticism constructively. Obviously rude logs should be deleted by default, but always follow this up with an email to the logger explaining your actions and keep a copy of the original log. Keep it polite. If a cacher is particularly negative, and you choose to confront them, rather try and gain a deeper understanding of their issue. More often than not, engaging with a cacher in this way leads them to editing their logs which were perhaps written at the end of a long frustrating day. If they have legitimate reasons for being upset and it's not an isolated incident, consider amending the cache accordingly. Keep an open mind, and a bag of salt.

Keep your listing up to date

Things change, and you need to update your listing when necessary. If you replace a muggled cache, or change anything at the location - did the co-ords change? If so, change them using a "co-ords change" log entry. Is it still the same size? If not, update the size in the listing. Does a new hide affect the hint. If so, remember to update it. If you've replaced the cache in a new hide - is the terrain and difficulty

the same? Do you want to add a warning about the risks, etc, etc. It's very frustrating to search for what you think is a regular size cache, but has been replaced with a micro, and the old hint is irrelevant and misleading.

Controlling your listing
As the cache owner, you control the quality and validity of logs on your cache listing. Groundspeak tries to have the minimum of rules so that we can all play the game with as much flexibility as possible. For example - When finding remnants of a muggled cache, some cachers will log a find, most won't. Some cache owners will allow such logs, and some won't. Some cachers will log a second find if they visit the cache again, most won't. Etc.

But there are some generally accepted norms and practices, which aren't Groundspeak rules. Generally, one find per cache listing, and log a find only if you've signed the logbook. However you choose to deal with logs on your caches, please be courteous and patient. Even if others don't play the game the way you'd like them to, they're important to sustain and grow it.

Reviewers (and Groundspeak) are not log policemen. They will only take action regarding a log if it violates the Groundspeak Terms of Use - like bad language, attack on another cacher, etc.

Temporarily disabling a cache
This is the cache owner's way of telling others "don't hunt my cache right now - it's got a problem", and avoiding frustration. There could be many reasons for disabling a cache, the common one's are:
- It's had multiple DNF's and needs to be checked.
- There have been reports of environmental damage, and you need to check.
- It's been muggled and needs to be replaced.

- It's temporarily inaccessible - eg: road washed away, construction in the area, high water levels, etc.
When disabling a cache, it's good to explain why in the disable log. This let's the community know what the issue is, and how long it's likely to be unavailable. When re-enabling the cache, it's also good to write something encouraging - like "Replaced and back in action. Enjoy!!"

Archiving a cache
When a cache is archived, it disappears from searches and lists, but is still available to view, and keeps all the history of it's logs. There is no "stigma" with archiving a cache, and it's sometimes the right thing to do. There are various reasons for archiving a cache:
- The location was a poor choice, and it keeps getting muggled.
- The location has changed, and is no longer suitable for a cache.
- There are unforeseen safety or environmental or other considerations.
- Our initial hides are often amateurish, and we outgrow them. If it can't be upgraded, archive it and do better next time.
- You change a cache materially. By archiving and listing a new cache, you invite previous finders to hunt it in it's new location.

So, if a cache is not working properly, or not up to your growing standards, and you can't correct it, then archive it and move on. But always make sure there are no cache remnants left - we don't want to leave geo-litter lying around.

Needs Maintenance log
One of the log options is "Needs Maintenance". This is the tool for letting a cache owner know that there is a problem with their cache. When you get one of them for your cache, it's never good news, so be sensitive when you write an NM

log. Consider the person reading it. Always give as much info in an NM log as possible. It's the pits to react to a "wet logbook" report, only to also find that the container's cracked and you don't have a replacement with. If possible, upload a picture/s with an NM log. It helps the owner work out how to deal with the problem. An NM log adds the "needs maintenance" attribute to the listing. Needs maintenance logs do not go to reviewers, so don't expect reviewers to react because they won't know about it.

Owner Maintenance log
When you maintain your cache, or do a routine check on it, always log an "Owner Maintenance" log. There are two main reasons:
- It reassures others that your cache is being cared for, and is likely to be in good shape if they hunt it.
- It removes the "needs maintenance" icon from your listing.

Should Be Archived log
SBA logs are emailed to reviewers, and reviewers will react on them. This is an extreme measure, and should only be used as a last resort when reviewer intervention is deemed necessary. This could be for a variety of reasons:
- The cache violates the guidelines, eg: trespassing, breaking laws, illegal hide, etc, etc.
- The cache is abandoned, has a problem, and NM logs have elicited no response from the owner.
SBA logs don't make friends, so use them with great care. They can be abused - we've seen SBA logs for caches which someone couldn't find, and that's how they've expressed their frustration!! If you get an SBA log on one of your caches - don't overreact, leave it in the hands of the reviewer.

Conclusion

We trust that you have found this document useful and would welcome any comments and additions.

This was not developed by professionals – but rather by the inputs from the local Volunteers (Reviewers and Moderators) – in particular inputs from Fish Eagle & GlobalRat on Hiding Caches – and Carbon Hunter (Afrika Rocks/GeoawareAFR) on the safety side (with acknowledgements to one of his Brazilian colleagues at work).

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