

How to play Pokemon Go

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A man holds up his cell phone with a screen shot of the Pokemon Go game in front of the White House on July 12, 2016

Pokemon Go mania has players armed with smartphones hunting streets, parks, rivers, landmarks and other sites to capture monsters and gather supplies.

The free app, based on a Nintendo title that debuted 20 years ago, has been adapted to the mobile internet age by Niantic Labs, a company spun out of Google last year.

Pokemon Go uses smartphone satellite location, graphics and camera capabilities to overlay cartoon [monsters](#) on real world settings, challenging players to capture and train the creatures for battles.

Here are monster-hunting basics for those interested in trying Pokemon Go.

GOAL

Capture and train monsters to battle for control of virtual "gyms" displayed on smartphone maps of real-world settings.

Players win by controlling gyms and collecting Pokemon.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- Download a free Android or Apple smartphone Pokemon Go app.
- Choose an avatar.
- Walk to a "PokeStop" icon pictured on the map and tap on it to reveal photos of the real-world location you are standing in front of.
- Spin image to obtain supplies such as balls for capturing monsters.
- Progress to the next level by visiting PokeStops and capturing Pokemon.

CATCHING MONSTERS

- While walking, watch smartphone map for what appear to be bursts of leaves or grass.

- Go closer.
- When a Pokemon image appears on a screen tap it.
- Switch to camera mode.
- Scan surroundings through smartphone camera to see Pokemon.
- Hold finger on Pokeball at bottom of smartphone screen.
- Swipe finger to toss Pokeball at Pokemon.
- Hit target to capture Pokemon.

TRAINING MONSTERS

- Increase a Pokemon's power using stardust and creature-specific candy found in the game.
- Reach Level 5.
- Walk to a gym, represented on a map as a tower.
- Once close enough, tap on the icon to enter the gym.
- Chose to join the red, blue or yellow team.
- If a gym is controlled by a rival team, challenge the ruling Pokemon for dominance.
- After defeating a rival Pokemon, leave your own Pokemon to rule the gym.

- If a gym is controlled by your team, challenge the incumbent Pokemon for status.

WHERE TO PLAY

- Essentially everywhere in places the app is available.
- Pokemon Go has been released in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

TIPS

- Carry backup power.
- Use teamwork to keep control of gyms.
- Don't venture where it is not safe or you are not wanted.
- Remember your location is being tracked so others might find you.
- At the start, refrain from selecting a Pokemon to get coveted Pikachu later.

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