

# Middle East and the Arabian Gulf

## Regional Geocaching Policies Wiki

An evolving, community-created wiki on where you can and can't hide geocaches.

Countries included in this Regional Guideline include the following but not limited to:-

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, KSA, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Syria, UAE and Yemin

## COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

**During the period of this pandemic, the reviewing team will not be publishing event type caches until restrictions of movement have been lifted by the various governments in the region. We will monitor the situation and act accordingly**

Update November 2020

### UAE:

With ongoing restrictions on travel and social gatherings between the various Emirates and large fines for transgressions. The Reviewing Team will publish Physical caches but not Event type caches. Please keep updated on ongoing restrictions via The United Arab Emirates Government portal (<https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-the-covid-19-outbreak>)

### Qatar:

Wearing face masks in public remains mandatory nationwide. The rule applies to all individuals except those exercising or doing sports. Individuals who do not comply with the regulation will face fines and imprisonment

Qatari authorities announced that they would begin the initial steps of Phase 4 of its plan to lift the country's coronavirus disease (COVID-19) lockdown restrictions from Sept. 1. Measures under the first part that will affect Geocaching events include :

Increasing the permitted capacity at restaurants to 30 percent.

Opening of all malls and shopping centers with normal hours. The capacity at malls is limited to 50 percent

Allowing gatherings of up to 15 people indoors and 30 people outdoors

Update 16 July 2020

Events will still not be published due to either movement restrictions or limited numbers allowed by law to assemble together. Only when free movement and unlimited numbers may once again assemble will events be considered . Each country will be dealt with individually. Please continue to respect and follow the guidelines of the local government.

UPDATE: 6th May 2020:

Due to the lifting of some movement restrictions in Middle East countries, the reviewing team will now review all non-event type caches.

### Reviewers for The Middle East

Xanthe Terra, Knagur Green

Earth Cache Reviewer: [geowareA](#)  
[FR](#)

### About This Guide

The local laws and guidelines for geocaching placement vary from place to place. As community reviewers learn geocache placement policies for a certain location, they can add it here. This site may not be a complete or accurate list of land policies. These policies are made by the land owner or manager, they are neither the reviewer's nor Geocaching HQ's. This guide is just for reference, if no policies for the area you're looking for are listed, that doesn't mean no policies exist. You must still obtain permission to place your geocache from the landowner or land manager, comply with all applicable laws, and follow the [Geocaching Listing Requirements](#).

If you have an update, email the community reviewer(s) listed.



Caching in the Middle East is a unique experience however in addition to Geocaching Guidelines, there are local laws that need to be adhered to as well as some common sense procedures, especially when caching in the desert. Please familiarise yourself with Geocaching HQ policy as this wiki is in addition to their policies and not in place thereof. This wiki is as guidance and there may be other things taken into consideration when your cache is reviewed. Each cache and event submission is taken on its own merits. There are no precedents for placing geocaches. Past publication of a similar geocache is not justification for publication of a new geocache. If a geocache was published that you feel violated the guidelines, you may report it.

Below are a few additional points to take in consideration when submitting your listing.

- Cache hides - places to avoid
- Cache Containers
- Event caches

## Cache hides - places to avoid

1. Women & Children only parks
2. Palaces and other buildings associated with Royalty
3. Oil Fields & Pipelines
4. Airports & associated structures
5. Any areas where photography is prohibited
6. Highly maintained gardens and walk ways.
7. Close to any Embassy
8. Close to any Military base
9. Gated compounds
10. Roundabouts ( traffic circles)

## Cache Containers

1. Plastic containers degrade in the extreme temperatures so use with care, 'Take out food plastic' type containers are not suitable as they are made to degrade quickly. Please do not wrap your cache in plastic as it quickly breaks into smaller pieces and is eaten by camels causing harm.
2. In desert areas it is recommended that you place your cache in a sock/ fabric bag or such-like then cover your cache with a rock. It will both protect your cache and prevent it becoming camel food.

## Event caches

We review strictly in accordance with the Guidelines pertain to [Events](#) as stipulated by Geocaching HQ. Events are social gatherings of geocachers and are not just an excuse to get a 'smiley'. Events that are requested in areas where there are no local cachers or only cachers that are with the CO's party, may be declined as private events to gain a new country or smiley .

- **Events whilst in Transit:** Event caches will not be published within any airport / Cruise Ship Port / Train Station or their associated structures including land owned by or managed by the Transportation company concerned. This includes parking facilities. Please provide on the reviewers note your expected lay over should you wish to place an event while in transit and feel you are able to leave the airport. Please be aware that it can take a long time to exit and enter the airport through customs. During Ramadan there are longer delays as well as August to October where expatriates arrive back after the summer break.
- **Vacation Events:** Events submitted whilst on vacation must be in a public accessible location. Due to the heat in the region it is advisable to have events in shaded areas , preferably within air conditioned areas. Local law and customs must be adhered to, be aware of Ramadan timings as it is illegal to eat or drink during these hours even if you are a tourist. Parking areas are usually not suitable for events in these areas , however coffee shops and parks are numerous and better locations.
- **Event stacking:** This phrase refers to holding multiple events that are close to each other or at similar times. As stated events are social gatherings of geocachers and having too many too close to each other diminishes their value to the community. Events are not just an excuse to get a 'smiley'. If an event is submitted and another event is either already published or also waiting review and they are too close to each other then the following guidance will apply:

Events will be published within a similar time period only if they are more than 20 km apart (as the crow flies). Events closer to each other than 20 km will only be published if the end time of the first is more 5 hours before the start time of the next. Events perceived to be for the same community will be taken on a one to one situation and will not automatically be published even outside these time frames.

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And, you agree to keep content current by checking back regularly for updates.

- **Event Timing:** Events as state are the social aspect of caching, and events that are deemed to be at unsocial hours for the local region and unlikely to attract other caching parties, may be disallowed. Common unsocial event times are often placed by those in transit with limited time.
- **Location:** Places to avoid when planning your event, would include but are not limited to the following,

As per guidelines

In or near transportation centers such as

- Airports
- Cruise ship ports
- Train stations

#### **Regional**

- Next to major roadways , unless there is a dedicated public structure , such as a picnic /area, coffee shop ect.
  - In or next to roundabouts ( traffic circles). Unless these have a dedicated underpass and as per highways have a dedicated formal park or refreshment area.
  - Mosques and government building areas.
  - within remote areas.
- **Traveling Groups:** When traveling in a group consisting of other Geocachers, we will consider publishing 2 events per group per country on condition that they are 10 days apart and conform to the criteria listed in points 1 to 5 above. At the time of submission the Event Host is to provide us with the list of cachers within the traveling group. There is no precedent set and each submission will be taken into consideration individually. As per Geocaching HQ guidelines there is also a limited number of events a group may place on one trip.

**Military Bases-** Traditionally in the past Groundspeak ,due to a special agreement allowed caches to be placed ( and maintained by visiting servicemen) and events to be held on military bases . However due to changes in this policy, it is no longer the case and ground speak has advised that all caches and events must follow the general guidelines regarding 'available to all ' events and general maintenance as per vacation caches guidelines.

## Syria

Due to the ongoing conflict in the region no new caches will be published. All existing caches are monitored and at this stage will not be archived. Events will also not be published.

#### Reviewer Contact

For the Regional Reviews for this area contact either "Xanthe Terra" or "Knagur Green" for clarification or "geoawareAFR" for any Earth Cache clarification