

Pokemon Go Safely: Tips for Playing Issue-Free



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With unprecedented speed, the **Pokemon Go** app has seemingly taken over the world. Millions of people around the globe, largely but not only kids and teens, are searching everywhere for Jigglypuffs, Pikachu and other Pokemon as part of this “augmented reality” game in which players or “trainers” attempt to catch the animated creatures and other items which appear on their phones as if they were hovering at a nearby real-world location.

Pokemon Go, Players



But Pokemon Go has safety officials, police, and parents going a bit crazy at the actual dangers of playing in this quasi-virtual world. As reported in the [Wall Street Journal](#), [USA Today](#), and hundreds of other news outlets that are following the global phenomenon, players are placing themselves at risk for injuries, unwanted confrontations from trespassing on private property, and other problems as they focus on their phones rather than their surroundings. A [statement](#) issued by the National Safety Council on July 12 noted that “reports of close calls associated with playing Pokémon Go already are rolling in” and urged players “to consider

safety over their scores before a life is lost. No race to “capture” a cartoon monster is worth a life.”

Agreed. So if you or one of your kids is on the hunt for the next “PokeStop” or “gym,” make sure to follow these common-sense Pokemon Go safety tips:

- Don’t trespass on private property or go to other places you wouldn’t otherwise go, such as dark alleys or unsafe areas. There have been reports of robbers waiting at PokeStops for players to show up so they can take their phones and valuables.
- Stop and look around. Even before Pokemon Go, “distracted walking” has become a serious public safety issue, with emergency rooms reporting a major uptick in injuries caused by pedestrians whose eyes were glued to their phone screens instead of the objects, people (including muggers), and, most seriously, the vehicles around them. As the San Francisco Police Department put it in their recently released safety tips: “Do not run into trees, meters, and things that are attached to the sidewalk; they hurt.”
- Don’t play behind the wheel. Using your hand-held phone in any capacity while driving is extremely dangerous and often illegal. One of the ostensible upsides of Pokemon Go is that it gets people up and active; it wasn’t meant to be played in your car, so don’t.
- Know where your kids are when playing, and set limits on where they go and when they have to stop playing.

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