

THE ENRICHMENT PROJECT

Badge Program

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LETTERBOX BASICS

Steps

1. Treasure hunt.

The treasure in the case of letterboxing is to find a waterproof letterbox. The letterbox contains a logbook and a stamp. When you find the letterbox, you stamp the logbook with your unique stamp. Then, you use the letterbox's stamp to stamp in your personal logbook. This serves as proof that you have found the treasure. Work on the steps below to start your treasure hunt.

2. Rules.

Here are a few rules you'll need to keep in mind while letterboxing.

- Letterboxes are hidden on public access land.
- They are placed out-of-the-way so non-letterboxers don't stumble across them.
- The natural area should be minimally disturbed by placing / finding them.
- Contact information of the owner should be in the letterbox in case it needs attention.
- Do not disturb historical landmarks / private property.
- Do not disturb the earth, remove vegetation, etc. Remember to "leave no trace."
- Do not bring attention to the site / letterbox.
- Do not share the secrecy of a letterbox location . . . it ruins the fun for others.
- Leave the site better than you found it . . . clean up trash you find.
- Limit groups to 2-5 people. If the letterbox is off the trail, choose one person to retrieve the letterbox to limit damage to the area.

3. Trail name.

Your trail name is your letterboxing identity. You may wish to use your own name or you can choose a name that means something to you. Decide if you want a unique trail name. If so, create one.

4. Be prepared.

Before you go, be sure you have all the supplies you need. Look through the following list and adjust it as necessary.

- Long pants / hiking shoes
- Bug spray
- Sun block
- First aid kit
- Water
- Heavy gloves
- Rain poncho
- Camera
- Rag for cleaning hands / wiping off letterbox



Letterbox Basics

Letterboxing incorporates the fun of a treasure hunt with art and orienteering. The clues to find a letterbox can be straightforward or a fun challenge. This badge gives you the basics to get you started. If you enjoy this activity, check out "Letterbox Next Steps" to learn even more!



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5. **Create a kit.**

Create your own letterboxing kit. It should include:

- Your personal stamp
- Your logbook
- Ink or markers
- Paper towels and stamp cleaner / water
- Compass
- Road / trail map

6. **Learn more.**

Two online sites should be your “go to” for all things letterboxing. Visit both of these sites.

- www.letterboxing.org
- www.atlasquest.com

Find a letterbox site nearby and visit it.

FINDING TREASURE

7. **Location.**

Letterboxes can be placed anywhere. You can find sites listing locations online. Some organizations keep letterboxes on their own properties to limit the number of people who have access. Check out an online site for letterboxes available in your area.

8. **Check your camp.**

Many camps have their own letterboxes to encourage members to learn this outdoor hobby. Check with your favorite camp to see what they have available and how you can get access to it.

9. **Practice.**

Before you take newbies out, practice hiding things and having them figure out clues to find them. You can also take them to a temporary letterbox you set up just for this purpose.

10. **Tracking usage on-site.**

In your personal logbook, you’ll want to record the trail name, date and message so you can remember your hunt. In the letterbox logbook, you’ll want to include your name, date and message.

11. **Tracking usage online.**

Online sites allow you to put information about the letterbox itself. It might have moved or been removed because it was damaged. When you find a letterbox, be sure to update the sites listing it so others know it is still available.

12. **Clues.**

Some clues are clear and straightforward. Some are cryptic. You may need to be on-site to decipher the information. Take a clue and see if you can find a letterbox.

13. **Navigation.**

Grab your compass. Many clues include compass bearings or cardinal directions. Of course, since many letterboxes are by landmarks and historical sites, you’ll often be able to use your compass to get you going in a general direction, so watch what is along the direction you’re going. If you don’t know about orienteering / navigation, look online to learn more.

14. **Safety.**

Be safe when you go letterboxing. Let others know where you are going, take a cell phone and / or take a buddy with you. What other ways can you be safe when letterboxing?



15. **Art — rubber stamps.**

The stamp you use is your “signature stamp.” It identifies you. Purchasing a rubber stamp does not guarantee that your stamp will be unique, however it is the easiest way to get one. Find a stamp to represent you.

16. **Art — book decoration.**

You may choose to purchase a small journal, artist sketchbook or similar pre-made book to use as your logbook. If you do this, take the time to decorate it so it reflects letterboxing. Be sure to include your contact information in case it gets lost.

17. **Ink.**

You can use an inkpad or markers on your stamps. Read the information on ink carefully. Some inks are designed to stamp on special items (like glass) and the chemicals in it cannot be cleaned off with standard stamp cleaner. Be sure you are aware of what you are stamping with and how to clean it before using it.

Supplements

SUPP_LetterboxEtiquette.pdf

List of rules to start your letterboxing adventure

SUPP_LetterboxSafety.pdf

Some safety tips to keep in mind while letterboxing

Sites to Explore

www.letterboxing.org

letterboxing.info

www.atlasquest.com

www.kidsgardening.org/node/13197

www.learn-orienteeing.org/old

cfern.edublogs.org/2013/02/23/not_geocaching

letterboxpatches.blogspot.com

www.weliveandbreathe.com/history_patches.htm

Check out [Iarajla's Enrichment Project](#) to start your own adventure.