

Safety and Social Tips for Pokemon Go

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July 2016 brought us the release of Pokemon Go, to unexpected and unprecedented reception. It seems like everyone is playing it, from the grandmother to the coworker to the kid that lives in your house and steals your phone (just me?). It is also opening up new and interesting opportunities for exploration of your community and social interaction, as people travel to community attractions that have been assigned Pokestops and businesses organize gatherings for players. There have been, however, incidents of players getting so involved in the game that their safety was then compromised. With that in mind, there are a few safety and social tips that players need to keep in mind in order to continue the fun safely.

1. That alert at the beginning of the game that tells you to be aware of your surroundings. Heed it. Watch where you're walking. Pikachu is not worth getting hit by a car.
2. Be aware of the people around you. People may become offended if you walk into them while throwing a Pokeball. In addition, one does have to be aware of those people, because unfortunately, there are people that will look at someone's obvious distraction as an opportunity to victimize them. Charizard is not worth getting mugged.
3. **Do NOT** ever play while driving. Treat Pokemon Go the same as texting or checking Facebook while driving, in that it is a terrible idea. If you want to drive around town hitting Pokestops, either Google several of them and map out a route of stops to make, or set up a date with someone where they do the driving and you work the phone. This is coming from a now experienced Pokechauffeur.
4. Play in a group if possible. Everything is safer in groups, and many businesses are setting up gatherings that allow players to safely gather and enjoy their games.
5. Do not trespass. There have been complaints of players trespassing on private property, and people do call the police. There are plenty of public locations that are welcoming players that will not land someone with a trespassing charge. Eevee is not worth a trespass charge.