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EP003

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Original series

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Ash Catches a Pokémon (Japanese: ポケモン ゲットだぜ！ *I Caught a Pokémon!*) is the third episode of the Pokémon animated series. It was first broadcast in Japan on April 15, 1997, and in the United States on September 10, 1998.

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Spoiler warning: this article may contain major plot or ending details.

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Blurb

Ash discovers and catches a Caterpie—his first Pokémon capture! Though Ash is excited, Misty is grossed out by Bug-type Pokémon, so she is repulsed by its attempts to be friends with her. At night, as Ash and Misty sleep, Caterpie shares with Pikachu its dream of evolving into a Butterfree.

Ash Catches a Pokémon



EP003	
ポケモン ゲットだぜ！ <i>I Caught a Pokémon!</i>	
First broadcast	
Japan	April 15, 1997
United States	September 10, 1998
English themes	
Opening	Pokémon Theme
Japanese themes	
Opening	めざせポケモンマスター
Ending	ひゃくごじゅういち
Credits	
Animation	Team Ota
Screenplay	富岡淳広 Atsuhiro Tomioka
Storyboard	浅田裕二 Yūji Asada

The next day, Ash is able to capture a Pidgeotto after battling it with Pikachu. Before Ash can celebrate too wildly, Misty reminds him that his success is due more to luck than skill.

Team Rocket shows up to steal Pikachu—they realize that there's really something special about this Pokémon—and Ash vows to defend himself. Pikachu and Pidgeotto are weakened by Koffing and Ekans, so he reluctantly sends out Caterpie. To the surprise of Jessie and James—not to mention Ash—Caterpie's String Shot is able to defeat the Team Rocket Pokémon, including Meowth!

When Misty tries to make nice with Caterpie, it evolves into a Metapod. Could a Butterfree Evolution be far behind?

Plot

Look Out, It's A Bug-Type Pokémon!

Picking up right where the previous episode left off, Ash throws his Poké Ball at a Caterpie in Viridian Forest. He attempts to break free but is unsuccessful. Ash celebrates catching his first Pokémon, holding the Poké Ball, and running in circles out of joy. When Ash holds the Poké Ball closer to Misty's face, she reveals that she has a fear of bugs, even if they are contained in a Poké Ball. Pikachu is happy to have Caterpie along, and Ash decides to bring Caterpie out, scaring Misty away. Caterpie wants to make friends with Misty, but she prefers Pikachu. Ash is offended by Misty's discomfort and complaints, which hurt Caterpie's feelings. Ash reassures Caterpie and continues traveling without Misty. However, Misty has other plans, as she is still upset about her ruined bicycle and wants Ash to replace it. Because of this, she continues following Ash.

Early Worm Gets The Bird

Later that night, Ash sets up camp for the night. Misty, also getting ready to go to sleep, exchanges a few smart remarks with Ash, upsetting Pikachu and Caterpie. While Ash and Misty sleep, Pikachu and Caterpie get to know each other a little better. In the morning, Misty remains frightened of Caterpie, causing the Pokémon to become subdued and return to his Poké Ball. Although Ash is angry, a wild Pidgeotto captures his attention.

Wanting to catch Pidgeotto, Ash throws a Poké Ball, but Pidgeotto simply swats it away. Misty retorts that a Trainer needs to battle and weaken a wild Pokémon to capture it. She mentions that he caught Caterpie only because he was weak, irritating Ash, who summons Caterpie to battle it despite the type disadvantage against Pidgeotto, of which both Misty and Pikachu are aware. Ash recalls Caterpie just in time, causing Pidgeotto to get its beak stuck in a tree.

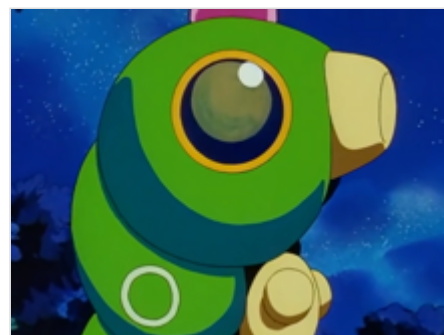
Ash sends Pikachu after Pidgeotto just as it frees itself. Pikachu uses Thunder Shock to hit Pidgeotto, weakening it and allowing Ash to toss a Poké Ball. The Ball takes Pidgeotto in and drops to the ground and starts swaying. After a few moments, the Ball stops

Assistant director 浅田裕二 Yūji Asada

Animation director 玉川明洋 Akihiro Tamagawa

Additional credits

- Screenshots on Filb.de (https://www.filb.de/anim_e/pm/003)
- ポケモン ゲットだぜ! (<https://youtu.be/zXSnlIwwUfo>) on the official Japanese Pokémon YouTube channel
- Ash Catches a Pokémon (<https://youtu.be/ObtS79k2NM4>) on the official Pokémon TV YouTube channel



Caterpie dreaming about evolving into a Butterfree



Pidgeotto being caught by Ash

moving; Ash has captured the Pidgeotto. Despite the success, Misty continues to berate him for his lack of knowledge about strategy and rebukes his idea that simply trying hard enough would make things work out.

Team Rocket Wants Pikachu?

Team Rocket intrudes on their argument, reciting their motto. They decide to target Ash's Pikachu, mentioning his incredible power, which causes them to become distracted in a short internal argument before they decide to attack. They send out Koffing and

Ekans to battle, despite a double-team being considered against the Pokémon League rules. Misty wants to jump in, but Ash does not want to break the rules. Koffing's Sludge attack blinds Pikachu, taking him out of the battle. While he hands Pikachu off to Misty, he sends out his newly caught Pidgeotto, which dodges both Koffing and Ekans's attacks before going into a Quick Attack. Ekans avoids the attack by going underground, forcing Pidgeotto to come to a sudden stop. Koffing fires a Smog attack, which Pidgeotto splits with its wings before dodging multiple Sludge attacks and Ekans's retaliation. Despite soaring high into the sky, both Ekans and Koffing are able to keep up with Pidgeotto. Pidgeotto tries to hit Koffing with Gust but misses and is defeated.

Caterpie, You're My Only Hope

Ash recalls Pidgeotto and tries to fight Team Rocket with his fists, but James easily holds him back. In a final attempt, Ash sends out Caterpie, which only amuses Team Rocket. Ekans and Koffing attack and Caterpie cowers, but Ash orders him to use String Shot. The attack completely incapacitates Koffing before Caterpie muzzles Ekans. Caterpie Tackles Koffing, knocking it into Ekans and taking them both out. Meowth tries to intervene, but he is also wrapped in String Shot. Taken by surprise, Team Rocket flees but promises they will be back.

Ash congratulates Caterpie on coming through, and after some encouragement, Misty pats Caterpie's head. At that moment, Caterpie begins to spray silk from his mouth, startling her. Ash puts Caterpie down as the thread covers his body, signaling his evolution. Caterpie evolves into Metapod, and Ash's Pokédex notes that he has reached this stage more quickly than any other Caterpie on record. In addition, Misty shows approval of Ash's strengthening bonds with his Pokémon. Despite having fewer reservations about Metapod, the sight of a Beedrill scares Misty, who looks forward to leaving the forest.

Major events

- Ash catches the Caterpie from the end of the last episode, making him his first caught Pokémon.
- Ash also catches a Pidgeotto.
- Team Rocket reveals to Ash their intention to steal his Pikachu.
- Meowth is revealed to know Fury Swipes.
- James's Koffing is revealed to know Sludge.
- Jessie's Ekans is revealed to know Dig.
- Caterpie is revealed to know String Shot and Tackle.
- Ash has his first, although unofficial, Trainer battle, and wins.
- Ash's Caterpie evolves into Metapod.