

# GOAL OF THE GAME

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Water Hack is a roleplaying game, which means you and your friends make up cool, creepy, and hopefully funny stories about a post-apocalyptic future where everyone is *thirsty*. This game is inspired by some elements from David Black's Black Hack.<sup>2</sup> If you have ever played a version of classic popular fantasy roleplaying games, you'll know enough to get started with a few tweaks.

## SOMEONE PLAYS THE GM

Every game needs a GameMaster (GM) who is kind of the narrator and referee. You craft some conflicts, play the villains or weird survivors that the players encounter, and toss in Waterless Waste flavor. Of course, the players can screw up your story, which is good. A GM has the following basic goals for each session:

- **Stretch your imagination!** The Waterless Wastes are a weird place, so nothing should be as it seems. Use post-apocalyptic movies as inspiration, and do your best to keep the players guessing. The players should have permission to stretch their imagination too and toss their Accountants into situations that might mean certain death in other games. Do your best to find bizarre ways to keep them alive.<sup>3</sup>
- **Throw weird conflicts, situations, and creatures at them.** The players will solve mysteries, find solutions to bizarre conflicts, and try to stay alive. They may be tempted to pour some awful liquid-like substances down the throats of their characters. Try to figure out how to create conflicts that make life difficult for your players.
- **Emphasize how precious water is.** This game should reinforce the sacredness of a good glass of water.

## OTHERS PLAY ACCOUNTANTS

A player gets to create a fictional hero who is called an Accountant. On one hand, they seek to protect the remaining sources of water to give humanity a chance in the bleak days to come. On the other hand, they have rightly earned the reputation as the last vestige of any governmental apparatus in the Waterless Wastes, settling disputes and aiding struggling communities. Players are encouraged to make quirky characters ready to wade into tense situations and uphold the sanctity of carefully regulated H<sub>2</sub>O.

The goal in a game of Water Hack for the player is:

- **Protect the water.** Life is miserable in the Wastes, and *water is life*. Water sources are limited, and war and violence only threaten that precarious situation. Make difficult choices to protect the water and the people who depend on it. Along the way, try to get a few cups for yourself so you can move on to the next town, a hero or a failure. For some Accountants, your spirituality and respect for the preciousness of H<sub>2</sub>O is what you fuel your day in and day out, even when the

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<sup>2</sup> See: <https://the-black-hack.jehaisleprintemps.net>

<sup>3</sup> A short painless death might be preferable to dehydration.

water runs dry. For others, the potential for power or fame get you to the next stop.

- **Bring order to the Wastes.** Negotiate. Haggle. Adjudicate. Steal, if you need to. Take down the crazed prophet as a last resort with guns and fists. Figure out a Plan B when a robotic army jealously guards a water source. While you may detest the warlord and his thugs, the community around that same warlord deserves a shot at life. Do what you need to to bring some sense of order and fairness to the Wastes, protecting limited water sources along the way.

Everyone shares one goal - make each other laugh.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

You need two twenty-sided dice to play and at least one six-sided die.

Pencil and paper is also helpful to have to jot down notes and information about your hero.

Use the character sheet at the end of this book.

Most importantly, you will require some sort of receptacles for water. This is pretty important. Grab a glass, plastic cup, hollowed hole in a wooden log, or something that is designed to hold liquid ounces.<sup>4</sup> A single receptacle for each player suffices. Ideally, they should be all about the same size.

## WATER IS LIFE

In reality, water is precious, and many communities are struggling for access and protection of water rights. If you are curious about efforts by indigenous peoples to preserve and care for the environment and precious resources, visit [culturalsurvival.org](http://culturalsurvival.org).



ABOVE: A WELL-EQUIPPED ACCOUNTANT SCANS THE VISTA FOR QUESTS.

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<sup>4</sup> If you don't use or understand ounces, I humbly apologize. It's not that important.