



Dice & Disasters

A Tabletop Role-playing Game
of Disaster Preparedness!

When Disaster Strikes, What Happens Next?

That's ultimately up to you and the people around you at the time! Preparedness and survival skills will help you and your friends/families get through any situation that, but it's more than just building a kit or stashing supplies. You may find out that your skills, hobbies, or interests will help you out in ways you never imagined!

However... no matter how prepared you are, there's always going to be some measure of chance involved... whether you're in a very inconvenient location, or someone nearby wasn't as prepared as you. That's why we roll the dice - but just like in real life, more preparedness and/or practice increases your odds of succeeding at everything during a disaster! So gather your party (3-5 people is best), get some **six-sided dice (d6)**, assign a **Master of Disaster, or MoD** (*See second page for instructions*) who will run the game, and ...*prepare for the worst!*

Playing the game

Sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but you and your friends are about to experience a disaster.

The **MoD** will narrate a scenario for you, and whenever you come to a situation where the results are unsure (*How well did you protect yourself from earthquake shaking? How well did you administer first aid?*) you will **roll a D6** to determine the results!

Since being prepared can help improve your odds, if you think your character's **Class**, or **Background** can provide any boosts (Performing first aid might be easier for a *Healer*, or *First Responder*, or who knows what sort of tools/skills a *Collector* might have to help in a situation?) The **MoD** may let you roll an extra die, or maybe even more! Take the highest number from your results and see what that means for your adventure based on the table below!

Dice Roll Results

5-6: You completely succeed at what you were trying to do, and you, and those around you are safer as a result. Well done!

3-4: That was close! You succeeded, but it was definitely too close for your comfort. There may be some additional complications based on the situation, like using more supplies than you anticipated using, or you might face a minor complication.

1-2: Luck was not on your side. You experience a complication like an injury, a loss of supplies, face an additional danger, or need help! Things will get tougher before they get better.

The **MoD** will describe what happened based on your dice rolls, and what the consequences are, and you move on to the next task or challenge.

Getting Started: Who are you?

Here's the "role-playing" part of the game: each player will pick a class, and a background. Alternatively, you can always play as yourself, but not everyone wants to imagine experiencing a disaster. Here are some options if you want to be someone else for a little while. Feel free to choose amongst yourselves, roll dice to pick, or make up your own.

Classes: What do you do?!

That stuff on your resumé might not seem like it would help in a disaster, but maybe you'll find out it does! Here are some examples: **Roll a d6**, and see what you've been doing with your life:

- 1. The Artificer:** Gearhead. Good at working with technology, tools, machines, repairs, electronics... troubleshooting skills much better than just asking: "Is it plugged in?"
- 2. The Healer** = Taking care of people in need? You could do this all day... and do most days. (Think medical professional: Doctor, Nurse, EMT, Veterinarian, etc).
- 3. The Champion** = You're the kind of person who sees a problem and needs to fix it! You might have organized a neighborhood preparedness group, or earthquake drill.
- 4. The Fighter** = You probably won't be doing any fighting in this scenario, but your time and training in Armed forces certainly gave you skills that might be useful in a disaster.
- 5. The Prepper** = You're not sure whether a natural hazard, a foreign or domestic threat, or the aliens are going to cause the next disaster, but you're determined to be ready for it!
- 6. The Bystander** = Sometimes the hero doesn't arise until the proper challenge shows up. ...Yours hasn't yet, but you get to choose (or roll) *2 backgrounds*, on the table below, instead of 1.

Backgrounds: What are you known for?

What else do you do? Your background in this game helps define what skills you have, but also how you interact with other members of your community. **Roll two D6s** and see what you're known for based on the table below:

- 2. Volunteer:** *With the Red Cross, a local charity, your local CERT Team, etc.*
- 3. Collector:** *You've got everything! Now to find out if it's useful...*
- 4. First Responder:** *You spent some time as a Firefighter, EMT, or police officer*
- 5. Entertainer:** *You're known for providing music, jokes, and/or good stories!*
- 6. Craftsperson/DIY-er:** *If someone needs something created or fixed, they call you.*
- 7. Athlete:** *You're one of many "I"'s in a team; or just working to improve yourself.*
- 8. Gardener:** *Your green thumb (and extra produce) are well-known in your community.*
- 9. Local historian:** *You know this place like the back of your hand!*
- 10. Outdoor Enthusiast:** *Backpacking or glamping, you know what you're doing outside.*
- 11. Pet Parent:** *Two legs, four legs, eight legs? Your pets are an important part of your life.*
- 12. Big Family:** *Keeping close to family is important to you-fortunately, they're all nearby!*

The Preparedness Pool:

The team also has a limited supply of extra dice, one die per player in the game (*3 players = 3 preparedness dice total*). If you come to a situation where you're really concerned about the results and want to even the odds a bit more, describe one additional step you took to be more prepared for the task/challenge you're rolling against (Maybe you practiced your evacuation routes, or had a "go-bag" ready with supplies). If the **MoD** approves, add **one d6** to the dice you roll!

Remember, this is a limited resource, so check with your team before using one of these dice!

Oh, and if you roll 2 sixes on any roll, your party adds one Preparedness dice to the pool!

To be serious for a moment-*disasters are negative situations, and we hope you never have to face one!* However, they're also unpredictable. We hope that through enjoying this game, you get an opportunity to think about disasters, and preparing for them, in a new way!

So, have fun, good luck, and may your preparedness pay off!

How to be the Master of Disaster (MoD)

Welcome! In a game about preparedness, as the **MoD**, you're the one who will need to be the most prepared for the game. Thank you for taking this opportunity, and hopefully all players will have a good time, and also learn a bit about hazards, risks, and that being prepared is not as difficult/daunting as it sounds!

As the **MoD**, you'll be in charge of:

- Guiding the players through the story
- Describing the results of their dice rolls on the story (including coming up with the consequences)
- Encouraging them to think about what might be available to aid in their rolls
- Playing the role of any additional characters who show up in the story.

Basically, you're the one driving this game, and that will involve interacting with the players' ideas. There will be some improvisation involved!
See below for some tips on preparing for, and playing this game!

Choose A Disaster to Master What is hazard will the players face in this scenario?

This is what will lead the story: what will they be facing? Maybe you want to focus on a natural hazard in your area, and help your friends think about how to prepare for it? Maybe you have a favorite disaster movie you want to reenact? Maybe you don't know where to start, and just want a handy table where you can roll a six-sided die, and let fate decide. If that's the case, here's one!

- 1: Earthquake
- 2: Hurricane
- 3: Fire/Wildfire
- 4: Flood
- 5: Volcanic Eruption
- 6: Hazardous Materials Incident

Think about the potential impacts of this scenario. Will it only impact the area where your characters live, or a wider area? What kinds of additional complications can it cause? Earthquakes can cause tsunamis and landslides; hurricanes can spin off tornadoes; and any sudden event can cause traffic jams, power outages, shortages in supplies, or other conditions! Having a list of some potential complications or other dangers can come in handy when your players roll lower than a 5!

Decide on a Scenario

Where does it all begin? How will the players learn that it's happening?

Once you have a general disaster scenario in mind, time to decide where it will begin. Think about how different areas could interact with your hazard. A fire will be different in a skyscraper than a small building; an earthquake will have very different impacts on the coast than inland.

Different hazards also begin in different ways. Earthquakes strike without (or with very little) warning. Severe weather usually has at least several hours of warning via forecasts – try to come up with a realistic way that the players would learn about how the event is happening. Will they be alerted by the TV or a weather radio, or will the event just happen? Feel free to introduce other characters to interact with your players throughout the story as well.

Keep the Story Going with Interesting Scenarios

What happens when a character “fails” a roll?

While serious injury, or even death, are possible in situations like these, the idea of the game is to help players think about how to be prepared for situations, and how they would respond in different scenarios. As the MoD, it's up to you to decide what it means, when they roll a **3-4** and partially succeed on what they were trying to do, or a **1-2**, and fail. Think about what failing to do what they were trying to do could mean in that scenario, and what might make the situation more complicated for everyone else in the party.

Was there an injury? You could have them roll one fewer dice from now on, until someone else can help them. When the number of dice is zero, have them roll two d6, and use the lower number.

Was there a complication? Maybe someone else along the path needs help? Maybe the route they originally intended to take was blocked (by a downed tree, landslide, etc.).

Were there secondary hazards involved? Hazardous situations can cause leaks, fires, explosions, critical infrastructure failures – all sorts of additional hazards.

Did they lose something? You can always remove a use of their preparedness die as a consequence of a low roll, too.

Feel free to take suggestions from the players on what might have complicated the situation as well, or how they succeeded! *You* are the **Master of Disaster** – decide whether you want something inconvenient to happen to just one person, or whether it should impact the whole party. Mix it up, see how the players interact with the scenario and one another and have fun with it!

How Does it End?

What happens *after* the disaster?

This is a tough question and it's up to you and the players to answer. Are the players trying to “save the day” or just to survive/make it to a safe location as a group? Some of their goals may be driven by their knowledge of the disaster. Feel free to inject tips (or even bad advice, if your group is doing really well), by role-playing other characters coming into the situation.

Do you want each player to share something about what they did to help recover from the disaster? Something they learned? What their next steps will be? This will also largely depend who your players are, and even how the game went.

It is likely that you will be able to tell when the adventure feels like the game is coming to a close, but if players still seem interested, feel free to throw in an aftershock, or any of the other complications. You are the Master of this Disaster, after all!

For More Information:

Learning about disasters and preparedness can seem like a big task! We highly recommend checking to see which resources are available from your local emergency management office, to learn relevant hazard information and preparedness tips for your area. For a guide to help you get started on preparedness tips, check out the “Prepare in a Year” guide, from Washington Emergency Management Division, at www.disasterreadywashington.com. Watch a video of this game in action in our Prepare Northwest Playlist at <https://mil.wa.gov/activities>

