

YOUTH GROUP GAMES



**WATER**  
*GAMES*

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YM360



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BY J. ROGER DAVIS

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Youth Group Games: Water Games  
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# INTRODUCTION

In the decades that I've been involved in youth ministry, I have encountered people who think that recreation activities or playing games have little value. I believe this is because they haven't seen games used well as a part of a good ministry strategy. Over the years, I have seen games with a purpose help empower successful youth ministry events and be an incredible asset to weekly programming. However, this takes having a strategy. If you are not careful in your planning, games can quickly become just about competition or killing time. While competition can be a useful tool, the time spent on fields, inside gyms, or on stages should never turn into discovering the best athlete or highlighting the most popular students. Use them wisely, and games will serve your students, leaders, and small groups well and help foster a spirit of community and connection within your group.

You have taken a significant step in your planning and preparing by putting this resource in your hands. Remember to embrace the many different aspects of games in your planning, from traditional tournaments and group building games to water days or large groups games and all-play games to good old-fashioned face-offs. This book is just one in our line of games resources that can serve you and your students.

Each game you will find within the pages of this resource has been curated from years of experience leading camps, weekly gatherings, and special events. Every game has been field-tested by our summer teams. Testing is essential with it comes to games. There is little worse than when something is beautiful in your mind, perfect on paper, but a huge flop when your students start playing it. Rest assured, the games in this resource have been designed and used for hours with students at camps and events with great success. I am grateful for the creative minds and energetic leaders that I have served with over the years. Great people help make great games, and these are some of our favorites.

Each of the games found within this resource is tagged with specific categories so you can decide what fits your needs. Each game entry features simple instructions, along with various supplies you may need. I believe this is true with all games: often, the secret to success is how you adapt it to fit your unique group of students. Changing a rule or varying the supplies might result in a home run with your group. Don't become so rigid in getting the game right that you forget the games must have a purpose. It is also important to remember that games should be fun, especially youth group games!

There are two final notes before we move on. First, be aware that you may need to make appropriate adjustments or accommodations to the games if you have anyone with physical limitations so all students can participate. This is true of any game or activity you facilitate with people. The more you can create an inclusive experience, the better return you will get. Second, prioritize safety in all your games. Once people get in motion, things can go wrong quickly. Think ahead and make sure the playing area is safe and the rules are clear. It is good to remember that rules are not designed to limit fun but to serve to protect those participating. When a game is safe, everyone participating can enjoy it.

Cheering you on!



## A WORD ABOUT WATER GAMES

Water games can play a unique role when planning and executing recreation. Especially during the summer months, they are an excellent tool for creating connections and breaking down walls within a group. When the water comes out, you see some students smile and laugh that you may not have seen much out of all week. Water is also a great tool to deal with summer heat (and students that complain about it being hot outside).

Within the pages of this book, I am sharing 25 of my favorite water games with you to help make your next event even more impactful. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind as you plan and prepare:

- Water games help break down barriers. Often, you have students that are not sure about camp or just seem reserved. Water activities can help get them out of their shells.
- When you have movement and water, it can increase the risk of accidents if not properly managed. A great example is a slip-n-slide not being executed properly. Whatever your safety protocols are, make sure they are enforced for the safety and fun of all.
- If you are doing recreation over a week, it is best for you and the participants to have the “water day” in the middle of the week. This helps clothes and gear dry before you have to pack and travel home.
- Think about the damage after you are gone. Many locations cringe when you ask to do water activities because the people that came before you destroyed their fields. Think about things like moving around water sources to not damage an area and always pick

up items, leaving no trace when you are done. All it takes is for one group to leave water balloon pieces everywhere for a location to not want future groups to use those.

- Encourage your adults to participate as much as possible. When they get in there with the group and have fun, it will earn a lot of street cred, and students will very likely be more engaged later in Bible studies.

Here are 25 simple water game ideas to make your recreation the best ever!

# SPLASH OF THE DICE

## CATEGORY

Head-to-head, icebreaker, large group

## INSTRUCTIONS

Using the dice, declare a water war with the opposing team. A player from each team will have a cup of water and one lawn dice. Whoever rolls the bigger number splashes the other person in the face. Tie results in both players splashing each other.

## SUPPLIES

Big lawn dice, spot markers, bucket for refill, cups

## TIPS

You can do the game with just one cup in a large 45-55 gallon trash can or a kiddie pool filled with water. The winner grabs the cup and gets to win the battle with a splash.

# PIPE IT UP

## CATEGORY

Team building, large group, challenge based, icebreaker

## INSTRUCTIONS

There will be a smaller PVC pipe (2 feet or so) next to a 45-55 gallon trash can where two players from each team are trying to fill it up with water from the trash can. The goal is to transfer the water from the smaller PVC pipe to the larger PVC pipe (6 feet x 1 foot wide, with a cap on one end.) In both PVC pipes, put multiple holes in them. The two players holding the smaller PVC pipe must close up as many holes as possible to prevent water from coming out, while everyone else on the team will be closing up holes on the big PVC pipe. Players can swap out from the larger PVC pipe to the smaller PVC pipe. Whoever has the most water in the large PVC pipe at the end of the game wins.

## SUPPLIES

Large trash can, two Smaller PVC Pipes, two Larger PVC Pipes

## TIPS

One way to add difficulty is to make sure it's not just one group of students carrying water back and forth. Having students switch out which holes they are stopping up on the big PVC pipe will add fun and variety to your game.



# FISH OUTTA WATER

## CATEGORY

Tag, large group, fast-paced, multi-round

## INSTRUCTIONS

Before the round starts, one player will be designated as the person trying to tag others with a pool noodle. The game's goal is for the other players to make it to the other side of the field without getting tagged. Create a playing area that is no smaller than a basketball court and larger depending on how many people you have playing. If a player is tagged, they will join the person in the middle and tag other players. Inside the field of play, there will be three kiddie pools, which are the safe zones. Only two people can be in each safe zone, and they can only stay in the kiddie pool for one round. The last person standing wins.

## SUPPLIES

Three kiddie pools, pool noodles, cones

## TIPS

Cutting your pool noodles in half helps them not break as easily.

## Youth Group Games: Water Games

Game Master and Youth Minister are two titles that often go hand in hand. Whether you have the experience or not, approaching games for your events and retreats can often become an overwhelming task. Creativity can become stifled as other tasks, and to-dos overwhelm your plate. Youth Group Games was designed by J. Roger Davis, who has decades of games experience. These books are designed to help you have easy and effective games ready for the next time you put on a big event.

Water Games is one of five books within the Youth Group Games line. Escaping the summer heat and adding a splash to your recreation time always brings added fun to your retreat or event. There are certain games that sink, and others will make waves within your youth group. J. Roger Davis has compiled years of successful water games from his recreation experiences to provide you with games guaranteed to keep you from going off the deep end!

**“Water Games” is part of YM360’s youth group games line of resources and is ideal for:**

- *Any large group setting*
- *Camp or retreat settings*
- *Mid-week youth service*



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