



**An instruction manual for those new to Interactive Fiction**

# CONTENTS

Introduction	3
What do I need to play this game?	4
Launching Six	5
Playing Six – An Overview	6
Moving around and exploring	8
Time	9
The Map	9
How do I do stuff?	10
Important Commands	10
Use-em-all-the-time Commands	11
Hide and Seek Commands	14
Status Bar Commands	16
Utility Commands	17
A few words of advice	19
What if I get stuck?	20
What are lollies, lolly bags and fairy bread?	21
Credits	22

# Introduction

Welcome to Six, an Interactive Fiction adventure suitable for players of all ages and for those new to this kind of game.

In Six, you play the part of the main character, Harriet Leitner, a little girl who just turned six today along with her twin sister Demi. Harriet is about to play a game of Hide and Seek Tip at her birthday party in the park, and it's up to you to help Harriet find and catch all of her friends. There are adventures to be had, people and animals to meet and tricks to play. And of course, Harriet really wants to win the game by catching everyone.

The instructions you're reading now are aimed at two groups of people:

- 1. People who have never played an Interactive Fiction game before, and*
- 2. People who might have played Interactive Fiction games before, but a while ago.*

If you fall into one of these two groups, this manual will tell you all you need to know to play Six.

If you're experienced with Interactive Fiction, you can stop reading this manual right now. All you need to do is consult the game's built-in HELP menu when you start the game, by entering the command HELP, to learn about features specific to Six before you begin playing.

## ***What do I need to play this game?***

You most likely obtained these instructions as part of a download bundle. The file in that bundle called *Six.gblorb* is the Interactive Fiction story file for Six. To play it, you need to run it in a piece of software known as an Interactive Fiction Interpreter. These interpreters are available as free downloads for all major computer operating systems, though different interpreters come and go, and picking the right one for a particular interactive fiction job can be fiddly.

To make this task as easy as possible for new players of Six, I maintain a list of interpreters that are good for this game on Six's webpage. Click the following link to go there and you'll find handy download links for interpreters for MacOS, Windows and Unix:

<http://six.wadecclarke.com/downloadsix/>

Once you've downloaded and installed an interpreter for your system, you'll be ready to play.

## Launching Six

Every interpreter has some kind of OPEN command. Start up your interpreter and use its OPEN command to open the *Six.gblorb* file. That's the most reliable way to launch Six for the first time.

In future, or depending on your interpreter, you might be able to start the game by just double-clicking on the *Six.gblorb* file, or by dragging and dropping this file on the interpreter application.

The first time you run the game, it will take you through a handful of configuration tests to make sure your interpreter is set up correctly for playing. Just follow the onscreen instructions. When you reach the game's main menu, press '1' to start a new game.



## *Playing Six - An Overview*

Your goal in the game is to explore the park, find all of your friends (some are in hiding, some are out in the open) and TIP them. Some of your friends can be quite tricky, and will always seem to escape from you at first. Finding each friend and working out how to tip them is a little puzzle you will need to solve using logic, your imagination and ingenuity. By watching how each friend behaves, by talking to them and by seeing how they react when you chase them, you will get the clues you need to catch them.

In most cases, working out the right actions to take will be all you need to do to outsmart one of your friends. In some cases, though, you may need to first pick up an object you find on the ground in the park, and use it in some clever way.

During each move of the game, you will be told where you are, what you can see and hear there and any other interesting stuff which might be happening. This is all done with text, as if you're reading a book in which you are the main character, so you won't see any graphics during gameplay after the title page. However, Six does use music and sound effects, and the sound effects can even help you solve some of the game's puzzles.

The opening scene of Six (after the introduction) looks like this:

### **The Edge of the Park**

You're at the south edge of the park. It's super hot today and the sun is pouring down on the grass and the flowerbeds. The trees here reach for the sky. Most of them are green and bright, but a few look unhappy and are covered in loose, dry leaves which wobble in the breeze. A good wind will blow them free.

From here, paths lead north, east and west through the park, and to the south is the picnic area where mum and dad will set up lunch later.

(If this is your first time playing Six, type HELP to learn some very helpful stuff).

>

That little > symbol is called the command prompt, and whenever you see it, it's time to tell the game what you want to do next. You do this by typing in a simple English sentence, then pressing ENTER. Here are some sample commands you might use at different times while playing Six:

examine my dress

point wand at the dog

talk to mum

kick sister

climb tree

go east

As you can see, most of these commands consist of an ACTION (examine, point, talk, kick etc.) followed by a PERSON or an OBJECT, the thing you want to do the command to. The game doesn't understand the whole English language, but it does understand all the important actions, people and object names you will need to make your way through the story of Six. The game will do what it can to guide you if you type something it doesn't understand.



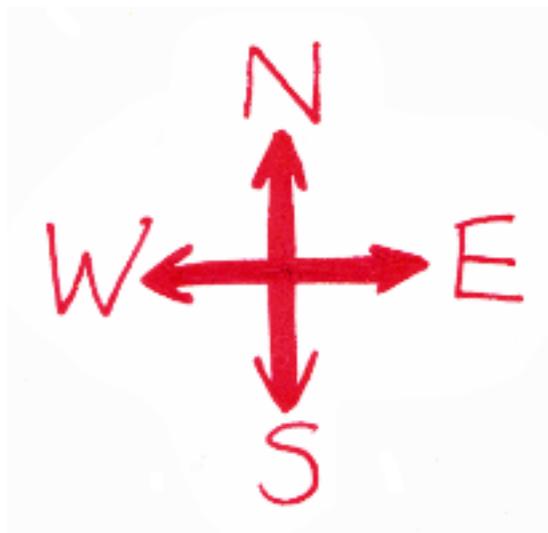
## Moving Around And Exploring

The game is divided up into locations. The first location is **The Edge of the Park**. A location's name always appears above the description of what's going on in the location.

To move to a different location, just type the compass direction in which you want to go. Type **NORTH** or just the abbreviation **N** to go north from where you are. Type **SOUTH** or **S** to go south. Type **E** for east and **W** for west. You can also type **U** for up and **D** for down when it's relevant, for instance when there's a ladder to climb.

At the top of the screen you will see a coloured band called the **Status Bar**. The left edge of the Status Bar always shows the current location name, and below that, a list of the directions of obvious exits from this location. Directions you have already moved in from here will be printed in lowercase letters. Directions you haven't moved in are CAPITALISED. If you want to change the colour of the Status Bar, type in the command **COLOUR**. (See the section *Status Bar Commands* on page 16 for more details.)

In the centre of the Status Bar is a small compass rose. The N, S, W and E are just there to remind you which way is which if you're not used to compass directions; note that the compass rose doesn't provide any information specific to your location in the game.



## Time

On the right side of the Status Bar you will see a few numbers. The first two numbers show your score out of six points. The rightmost number shows how many turns have passed during the game. There is no overall time limit in Six, and you should also note that the game only has a chance to move forward a turn after you type in a command and press ENTER, so there is no rush while playing.

However, time is significant in that some of your actions will use up a turn (like whenever you move or speak) and others won't. And whenever you do something that takes a turn, all the other characters in the game get to do something as well. You can always check if the last thing you typed in took a turn by glancing at the right side of the Status Bar, where there's a "No Time" indicator just below your score. When the indicator is on, you will see a row of plus signs there, and that means that your last command took No Time. When the indicator is off, it means your last command took a turn as usual.

The following image of the Status Bar shows what the No Time indicator looks like when it is on:



## The Map

Your sister Demi once made a map of the park with mum's help, so check this map to get ideas about where to explore. The map is included as a separate file with this game, but you can also view it in-game by entering the command **MAP**.

## How do I do stuff?

When you enter each new location, read its description carefully. You can probably interact with anything and anyone that is mentioned in the description. You will want to try examining objects and people you can see, talking to friends and animals, and of course, tipping, chasing and following your tricky friends.

You shouldn't waste time trying to interact with things you don't see described but which you think might be in your location anyway. For example, your local park might have a palm tree in it, but if you don't see a palm tree mentioned in Six, trying to climb one (by typing **CLIMB PALM TREE**) will result in the message *'You can't see any such thing.'* The game only includes the details and objects necessary to this story. If a person or object is not mentioned in a location's description, it's very unlikely that that object is present, or that such an object would be of any help to you in progressing through the game.

## Important Commands

Coming up is a list of some of the most important commands you'll need to type in to play Six. The game knows lots of commands and verbs not listed here, so don't be afraid to try a new action you think could help you.

The commands aren't listed in alphabetical order, but in an approximate order of how important they are for playing the game. First come the commands you'll want to use all the time, then the special commands needed to chase and tip your friends, and finally the utility commands for doing things like changing the game's status displays and saving and restoring games.

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## *Use-em-all-the-time Commands*

**LOOK** (abbreviation: **L**) – Typing **LOOK** on its own will reprint the description of your present location. This doesn't take a turn.

**EXAMINE** (abbreviation: **X**) – To examine a person or thing that's in your present location in detail, type **EXAMINE (THING)** or **X (THING)**.

*Examples:*    **EXAMINE TREE, X DAD, EXAMINE JACK**

When the game begins, examine yourself! (**EXAMINE ME**) Examine everyone and everything you see to learn about the game world. You might also get clues that will help you tip your friends.

**INVENTORY** (abbreviation: **I**) – Type **I** to see what you're carrying and wearing.

**GET / TAKE** – If you come across an object that you think might be useful, type **GET (THING)** or **TAKE (THING)** to try to pick it up.

*Example:*    **GET BARK**

In Six, there are actually very few objects you can pick up, but if you find something you can pick up, it is almost guaranteed to be of use.

**TALK** – To start talking to a person or an animal in your location, or to talk to them some more, type **TALK TO** (PERSON), the shorter **TALK** (PERSON) or the super short **T** (PERSON). If there's only one other character around, you can just type **TALK**. A lot of commands in Six work this way. If you don't mention an object, the game might make an intelligent guess about who or what you want to do the action to.

Other characters in Six, whether they're friends or family or people you meet in the park, will have different things to say at different times and in different situations, so do lots of talking. If you like the way a conversation is going, **TALK** to the character again right away to keep it going.

*Examples:*    **TALK TO DEMI, TALK DAD, T BIRD**

Note that if you've played other Interactive Fiction games, none of the other usual communication commands work in this game, and none are needed. There's no **ASK**, **TELL**, **YES**, **NO**, **ORDER**, etc... just **TALK**.

**AGAIN** (abbreviation: press **ENTER** at the prompt) – Often during the game, you will find you want to repeat your last command. Maybe you want to talk to the same person again, or take another step in the same direction, or follow the same character you followed last turn.

Rather than type the whole command out again, just press **ENTER** at the command prompt without typing anything new first. This will make you repeat your last action. By tapping **ENTER** a few times in a row, you can handily perform the same action over and over without typing anything new.

You can also tell the game you want to repeat your last command by entering the command **AGAIN**, or its abbreviation **G**. (*Note that the UNDO command can't be repeated by any of these methods.*)

**WAIT** (abbreviation: **Z**) – Sometimes you might want to pass a turn. You might be waiting for another character to leave or arrive, or just to see what one of your friends does next. To pass a turn like this, type **WAIT**, or **Z**. (*Just typing LOOK does not cause a turn to pass! You'll know that because whenever you type LOOK, the No Time indicator will come on in the Status Bar.*)

**UNDO** – Using the Undo command takes you back one turn in the game. Players often Undo if they think they've just made a mistake of some kind, or they don't like what just happened. You can undo many moves in a row if you want, though the exact limits of undoability depend on your Interactive Fiction interpreter software. You will also be given the option to Undo if the game ends in some bad way. However, Six is not a game that you can 'wreck'— no matter what you do, it's impossible to make yourself stuck in a way that would prevent you from reaching the end of the game.



## *Hide and Seek Commands*

**TIP** – When you see one of your friends, try to **TIP** them by typing **TIP (PERSON)**.

*Example:*     **TIP JACK**

**CHASE** – You can use the **CHASE** command to try to chase one of your friends in a particular direction. To do this, type **CHASE (PERSON) (DIRECTION)**. So if you type **CHASE JACK WEST**, and Jack doesn't outsmart you – and there is an exit to the west! – Jack will end up running west and you will follow him.

Note that just typing **CHASE (PERSON)** without mentioning a direction is the same as trying to tip that person.

Chasing your friends where you want them to go can help you catch them, so don't forget to try it.

**FOLLOW** – If someone just left the location you're in, you can follow them to wherever they went by typing **FOLLOW (PERSON)**.

*Example:*     **FOLLOW JACK**

If you go somewhere else first, though, you will lose track of any people you could have followed from your previous location.

**SEARCH** – This is the command you can use to reveal friends of yours who are hiding in the park. If you see a likely hiding place in your location, type **SEARCH** (PLACE OR THING) to check if anyone is hiding behind it. You can also use prepositions like **BEHIND** or **UNDER** (these will alter the nature of your search) but you should feel confident knowing that just typing **SEARCH** (THING) will perform a thorough search.

*Examples:*    **SEARCH TREE, SEARCH BEHIND ROUNDABOUT**

Be careful! **SEARCH** and **EXAMINE** are different. Just typing **EXAMINE** (SOMETHING) will not reveal a hidden person, though you will find out whether the object you examined is worth searching.

Also, you can replace the word **SEARCH** with **LOOK** or **CHECK** if you prefer, so you can type things like **LOOK BEHIND TREE** or **CHECK UNDER TABLE**. There is one exception – typing plain old **LOOK** (THING) will not perform a search. That is no different than typing **EXAMINE** (THING).

**LISTEN** – If you're walking around the park and you hear someone make a noise, you might want to stop and listen carefully to see if you can work out where it came from. All you have to do is type **LISTEN**. You don't have to type any other words.

**SCORE** – Find out which friends you haven't tipped yet with this command.

## Status Bar Commands

**COLOUR** – The Status Bar at the top of the screen is usually coloured green. Type **COLOUR** if you want to pick a different colour for it. Your choice will be retained between games.

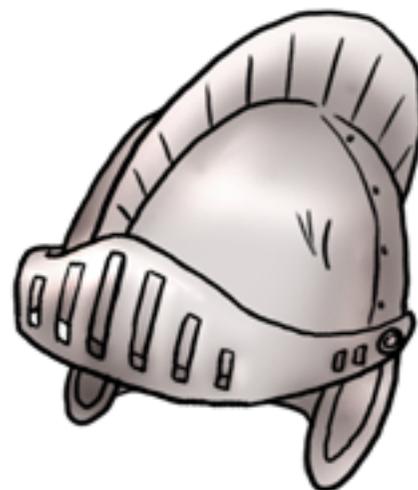
**EXITS OFF** – If you want to hide the list of exits displayed in the Status Bar for any reason, type **EXITS OFF**.

**EXITS** – Type **EXITS** on its own to receive a list of obvious exits. You'll also be told where those exits lead to, if you happen to know.

**EXITS ON** – Shows the list of exits in the Status Bar again.

**COMPASS OFF** – If you'd like to hide the Status Bar compass and thus reduce the size of the Status Bar, type **COMPASS OFF**.

**COMPASS ON** – Shows the compass rose again.



## Utility Commands

**HANDY** – Brings up a quick reminder list of Six's special commands.

**HELP** or **ABOUT** – Brings up an in-game menu system where the most important command descriptions and pieces of advice from these instructions are summarised. There's also some technical info in there about where Six stores its data files.

**SAVE** – Type this to save your game so you can restore it later.

**RESTORE** – Restores a saved game.

**RESTART** – Abandon your current game and go back to Six's main menu.

**QUIT** – Abandon your current game and quit.

**TRANSCRIPT** and **TRANSCRIPT OFF** – Want to record your game session to a text file? Type **TRANSCRIPT**. When you want to stop recording, type **TRANSCRIPT OFF**, or **QUIT** the game.

**VERBOSE**, **BRIEF** and **SUPERBRIEF** – In Six's usual mode (called Verbose) the game will tell you about everything you see, every time you see it.

To receive less information and make your display less spammy, you can switch to **BRIEF** or **SUPERBRIEF** modes. In Brief, you'll see descriptions of places only the first time you visit them. After that, you need to **LOOK** to get the full location description again. In Superbrief, you

will not even receive a location description when you first enter a room. Just type **VERBOSE**, **BRIEF** or **SUPERBRIEF** to switch to the corresponding mode.

**VOLUME** – Use this command to set the volume of the game's sound and music to levels between 0 (off) and 5 (full volume, the default.)



## A few words of advice

- \* Tip is a game of action, so timing is important in Six. Whenever you move or talk, it takes a turn, and everyone else in the game gets the chance to do something as well. Sometimes if you don't act at the right moment, your friends will escape from you.
- \* Typing in commands which don't make you move or talk, like **LOOK**, **EXAMINE** or **SCORE** for instance, will not take a turn. The No Time indicator in the Status Bar will always show you whether or not your last command took a turn. (See the section *Time* on page 9 for details.)
- \* Tip is a game for persistent people! You should try to tip your friends lots of times, as they will always be running away from you. There is often a trick to tipping each friend. Pay attention to what your friends do and say and where they go as you chase them around. Don't forget to **SEARCH** interesting things you see in the park, too, in case your friends are hiding. **TALK** to all the people and animals you can in different situations, and keep talking to them if what they're saying is interesting, helpful or fun.
- \* Tip is a game for witty people. Your friends will do some things differently every time you start a new game of Six, so keep your wits about you.
- \* Don't forget that you can type **HANDY** while playing to see a list of all the special commands. And the less special commands.

## What if I get stuck?

Six is a friendly Interactive Fiction game suitable for players of all ages and levels of experience. Inexperienced players will find the game more satisfying if they have the chance to work out how to solve its puzzles (EG “How do I tip so and so? She always manages to run away from me...”) for themselves. The game has been designed so that many of its responses to the player already act as in-game hints.

If you find yourself stuck, try re-reading the section *A few words of advice* on page 19. Maybe there are commands or ideas you haven't tried yet. Also – have you explored all locations you can reach? Are there any hiding places you've not yet **SEARCH**ed? Have you picked up an object and not used it yet? These are the kinds of questions you can ask yourself as you search for new ways to progress in the game.

If you find yourself really stuck, try asking your friends or family to play with you, or try the good old “sleep on it” method. Solving a puzzle after a little brainstorming can be very fulfilling.



## ***What are lollies, lolly bags and fairy bread?***

Six takes place in Australia, so depending on where you live in the world, you might not know some of these terms you will see in the game.

**Lollies** are sweets and chocolates.

In Australia, it's a tradition that each child at a birthday party receives a **lolly bag** when they leave. The bag is usually small enough to sit comfortably in the palm of the hand, and is filled up with an assortment of lollies before the party. You won't find out what's in your lolly bag until the party is over.

**Fairy bread** is white bread spread with margarine, covered in hundreds and thousands and cut into triangles. (If you don't know what hundreds and thousands are, they might be called 'sprinkles' where you live.) Fairy bread is commonly served at children's parties.



# CREDITS

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Wade would like to thank Eric Eve and Erik Temple for additional help with their extensions, and all the folks on the Inform 6 and 7 Development board @ [intfiction.org](http://intfiction.org) who fielded programming questions.

Six makes use of samples of the following sound files from Freesound (<http://www.freesound.org>): DogBarkPapillon02 from adamlhumphreys, Walking on Leaves from bsumusictech, Handclaps from NoiseCollector, Blood Hitting Window from Rock Savage, Bush8 from schademans, puddlewalk from j1987, Splatt from SlykMrByches, tree\_leaves\_rustling from Spleencast.

Manual typeset with Nisus Writer Pro.

Manual last updated in July of 2017.

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