

Sudoku Mild No 14,901

	6		5		4		8	
	9			2	3	4		
9				7		1	6	
2	1	4			6	8		
8			9				4	
4				3				
				4		2	1	
7		1	2	8	9			

Difficult No 14,902

Fiendish No 14,903

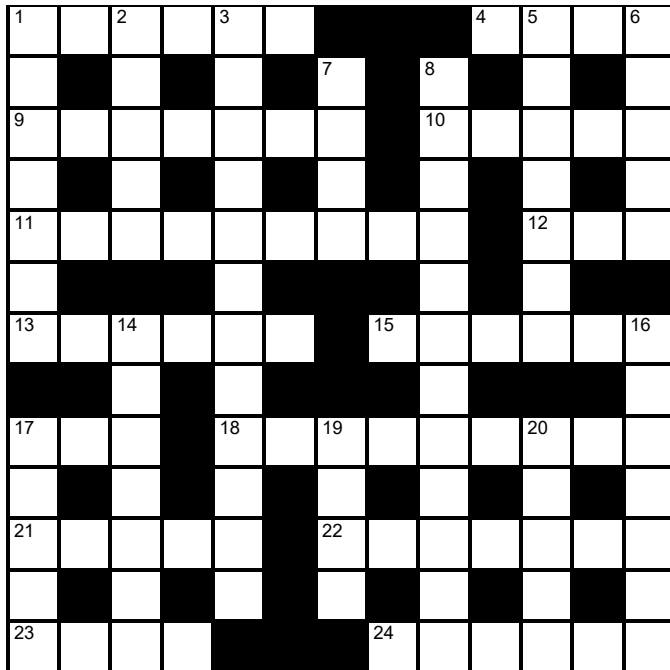
			9	3			8	
				4	1	5		
	9				8	7	2	
	5	2						8
		6	1				9	5
		3	6			2		9
	6		3		4		5	
				5	2	6		

				6				
	5		2		1			
1		7			4			
	2			7		6	9	
					9			2
	7	6	4				8	
2			9			1		
7			3		2		4	
	9	4				7		

© PUZZLER MEDIA

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

The Times Quick Cryptic No 2672 by Hurley



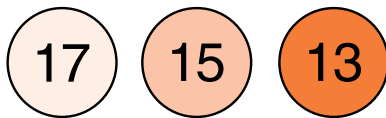
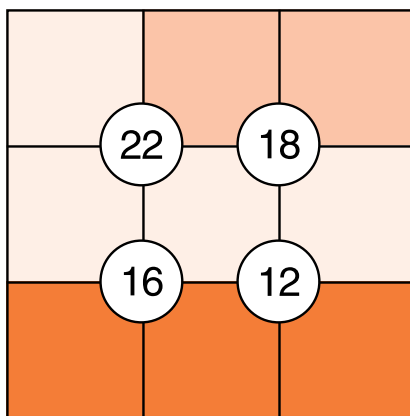
Across

- 1 Comfort from very delicate fabric (6)
- 4 Philosopher grinding here (4)
- 9 In morning Naomi lively, a gas! (7)
- 10 House style reportedly (5)
- 11 Be cause of criminal sit-in by entrance (9)
- 12 Offer, British, is declined initially (3)
- 13 Notice extremely explicit point of sale? (6)
- 15 Limitless cash, money, used in rise (6)
- 17 Cheers good children's game (3)
- 18 Spider natural at swimming (9)
- 21 Friend with mother in tourist centre (5)
- 22 Ornamental pattern, say, from part of classical Attic era (7)
- 23 Talk about bowler maybe (4)
- 24 Drink trademark, ultimately legendary (6)

Down

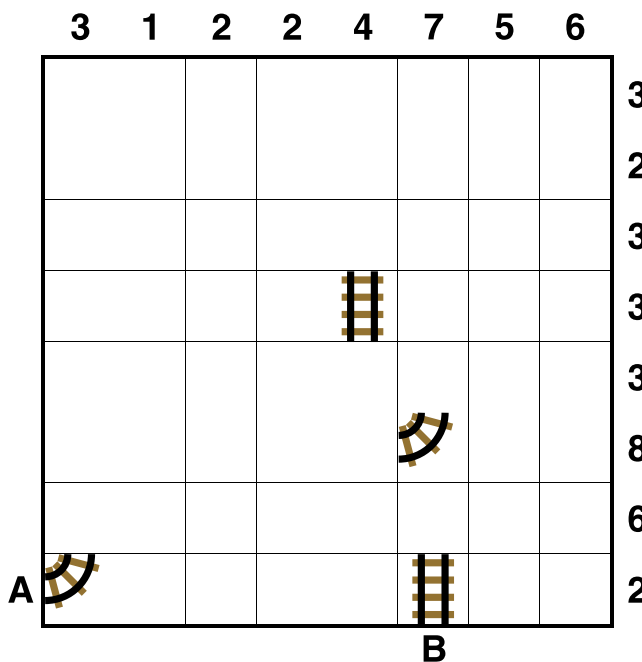
- 1 Figure is beginning to mention system of central control (7)
- 2 Regularly claim Maoism has these means to move forward? (5)
- 3 Hush-hush online fact I'd worked out (12)
- 5 One glib, slippery — of low character (7)
- 6 Sensational and clear, getting run for Conservative leader (5)
- 7 Indonesian island's programming language (4)
- 8 I'm somebody with upcoming round of duties as entertainer (12)
- 14 First-class beer brought up in splendid clothing (7)
- 16 Grew older in attempt to produce *Hamlet*? (7)
- 17 Section of Giotto picture is item for discussion (5)
- 19 Right word of encouragement for Spanish actor's part (4)
- 20 Global body, one old and new, that might represent workers (5)

Suko No 4112



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Train Tracks No 2241



Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Word watch
David Parfitt

Mezzaluna

- a An operatic vocal register
- b A type of kitchen chopper
- c An hors d'oeuvre eaten with an aperitif

Kibe

- a To shift a sail from one side to another
- b A chilblain on the heel
- c To put a stop to

Choragium

- a A cartilaginous structure in the throat
- b A dancing ground
- c An early type of clock

Backgammon Chris Bray

Danny's quandary

When Danny De Meester sends me a position, I know it won't be a simple problem. He had this week's position in a match. With his (Black's) double threes, he had played 8/2(2)* without too much thought. When he later analysed the match with XG, the computer kindly informed him that he had made an error and indicated that he should have moved 14/5, 6/3. Danny wanted to know why that play was better than his 8/2(2)*.

Let us analyse. First we should understand that, as it stands, this is a prime versus prime (pvp) position, with both players having a five-point prime.

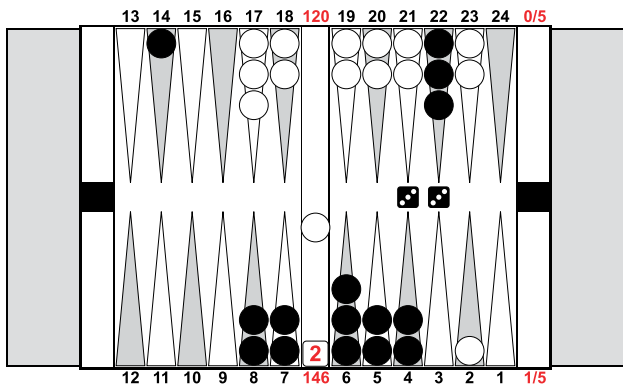
The key to understanding the position is to decide if Black should continue to play it as a pure pvp or whether he should use some brute force to create time for his rear checkers to escape. After 8/2(2)*, Black has very few spare pips to play with before he must roll at least one six to escape a rear checker in order to maintain his timing. Meanwhile, if White can stay on the bar for a couple of

rolls, Black's prime may well self-destruct.

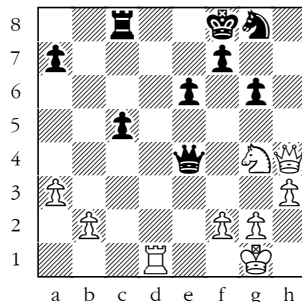
14/5, 6/3 is the attempt to continue to play the position as a pvp. After that play, there are several variations to consider: White might roll 33, 15, 25 or 35 and crack his prime immediately; White could hit the checker on Black's 3-pt and then Black may stay on the bar and watch White's prime crack if he doesn't quickly roll a six; or Black could enter quickly and his own prime might crack on his next roll.

Calculating all these variations exactly over the board is impossible, and so one must rely on experience and some calculation to make one's decision.

I have seen positions like this many times before, and my initial thought was to continue to play it as a pure pvp and move 14/5, 6/3 precisely because Black had so few spare pips to play with. In general, one should try to keep one's prime for as long as possible. In this position, 14/5, 6/3 gives Black his best chance of doing that. XG rates 8/2(2)* as an error but not a blunder.



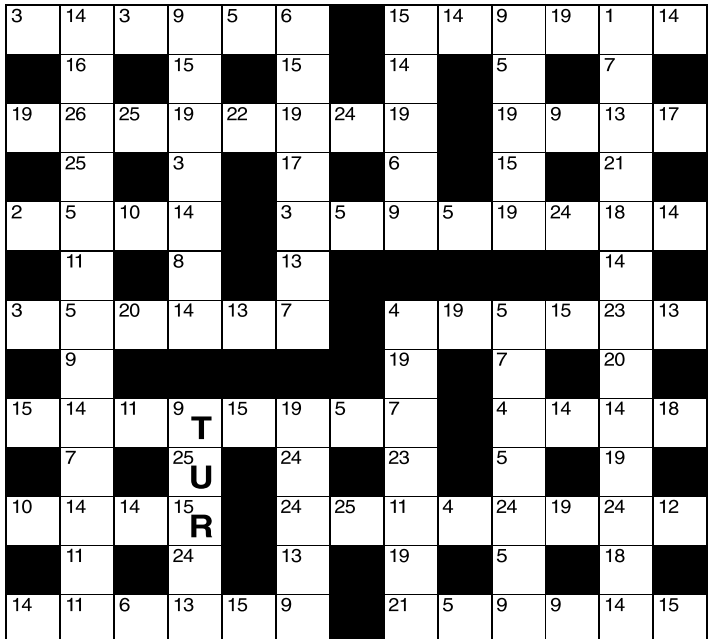
Winning Move



White to play. This position is from Indjic-Vlassov, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2024.

The chess teacher Alexander Kotov identified two types of calculation: thickets and branches. Thickets arise when calculations are complex with numerous possibilities on every move. Branches are the opposite – clean lines with no, or very few, diversions. Can you find your way along the winning branch?

Codeword No 5211



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

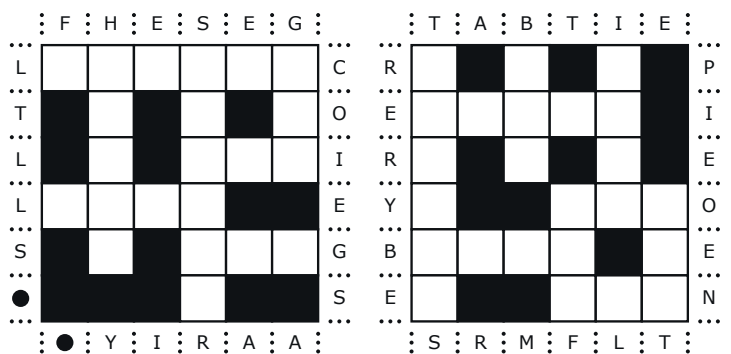


Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Yesterday's solution, right*

Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

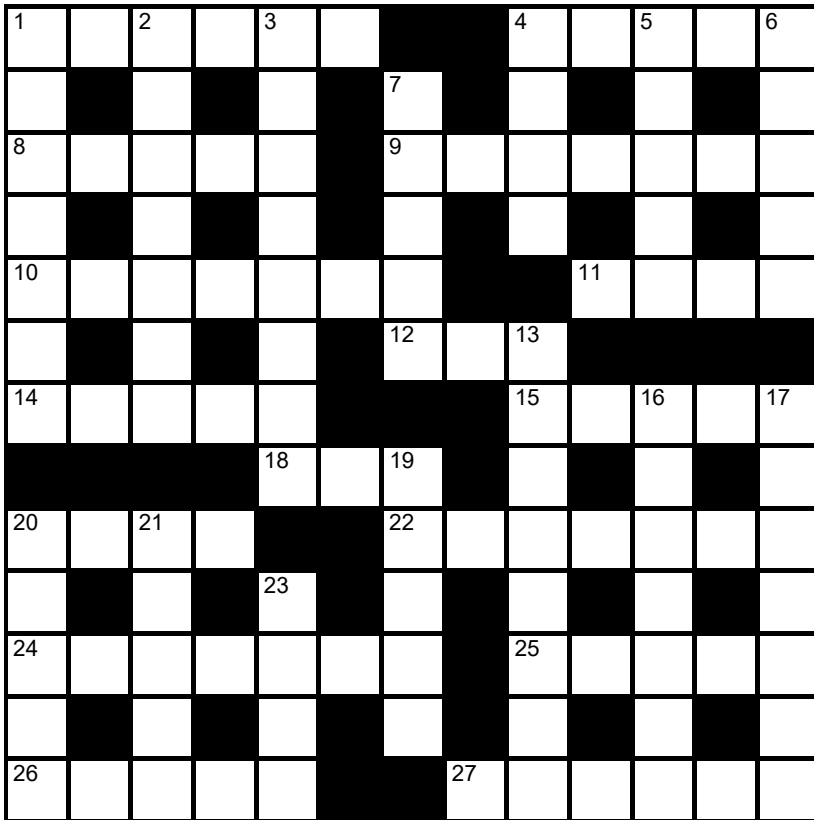
Lexica Easy No 7401

Hard No 7402



Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

times2 Crossword No 9527



Across

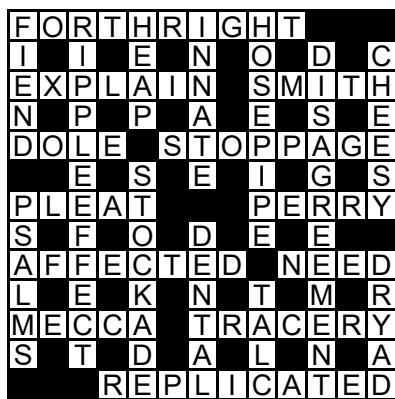
- 1 Towards the top of a slope (6)
- 4 17th-century diarist (5)
- 8 Poisonous substance (5)
- 9 One jeering a performer (7)
- 10 Course of diet and fitness (7)
- 11 Spring, leap (4)
- 12 Grammatical conjunction (3)
- 14 US-style eatery (5)
- 15 Sing in the alpine manner (5)

- 18 Doze, nap (3)
- 20 Beer flavouring (4)
- 22 Learn a new profession (7)
- 24 Common waterbird (7)
- 25 School student (5)
- 26 Perspiration (5)
- 27 Bitter compound in tea (6)

Down

- 1 Spoken, articulated (7)
- 2 Six-sided shape (7)
- 3 Prominent building or natural feature (8)
- 4 Group of wolves (4)
- 5 Rice seasoned with spices (5)
- 6 Band securing a watch, eg (5)
- 7 West African country (5)
- 13 Land where all is bad (8)
- 16 Showing no emotion (7)
- 17 Fat extracted from wool (7)
- 19 Dried plum (5)
- 20 Organic matter in soil (5)
- 21 Non-poetic language (5)
- 23 Closed (4)

Solution to Crossword 9526



Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

KenKen Difficult No 6203

6	30×			10+	
12×	15+				
	3-	10+	20×		1
			6×		3-
3-	3-		2÷		
		1-		2-	

All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

© 2010 KENKEN PUZZLE & TIM NEXTOY, DIST. BY UPS, INC. WWW.KENKEN.COM

Futoshiki No 4751

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	∨				
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	∧	∧			
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	3
		∧			∧
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 3710

			17	23				13	35	7
	6	16	8		23		14	20		
19							21			
24						4	15			
	16	38	16				7			4
28					8			7		
13			14		16		13			
		14				23				
	12			28					8	6
27				4						
					18					
19					17					
10						16				

Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

© PUZZLER MEDIA

Quintagram®

Solve all five cryptic clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Exaggerated style not exactly used by politician (4)

2 Hairstyle one might be angling for? (6)

3 Girl in denial evidently backtracking (6)

4 Eighth exotic article for light meal (4,3)

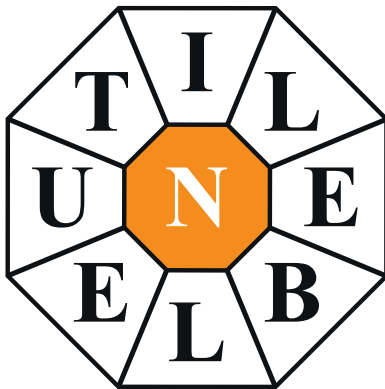
5 Batting partnership capable of making challenge (5,2,2)

A	A	A	A	C	D	E	E
E	E	G	H	H	I	I	L
L	L	M	M	N	N	O	P
P	S	T	T	T	T	U	U

Brain Trainer

EASY	14	+ 9	x 2	+ 5	$\frac{2}{3}$ OF IT	- 12	50% OF IT	+ 9	70% OF IT	- 11	ANSWER	
MEDIUM	108	+ 27	$+\frac{1}{5}$ OF IT	x 3	- 46	40% OF IT	+ 54	$+\frac{2}{5}$ OF IT	x 2	- 76	ANSWER	
HARDER	125	x 7	$+\frac{1}{5}$ OF IT	x 4	+ 788	75% OF IT	x 2	$+\frac{1}{3}$ OF IT	- 888	$\frac{11}{16}$ OF IT	ANSWER	

Polygon



From these letters, make words of **four** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives.
How you rate 15 words, average; 20, good; 24, very good; 29, excellent

Yesterday's answers
 ammo, among, anomy, gammon, gammy, gamy, mango, mangy, many, mayo, moan, momo, mongo, mono, **monogamy**, moon, moony, myna, ogam, oogamy

Cell Blocks No 5094

		6		
			2	
12			2	
			2	4
4				
4			6	
2		5		

Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Set Square No 3713

	x 4	+		= 9
x		+		
	+	÷		= 2
x		x	+	
3	x	x		= 216
=	=	=		
30	88	16		

Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Killer Moderate No 9460

22		14		4	12	7	14	
		8	19					13
4	13			17	3	26		
								7
23		13		14		3		
	5		4	11	9	15		15
12	16							
	9		12			16		
7		22		12		4		

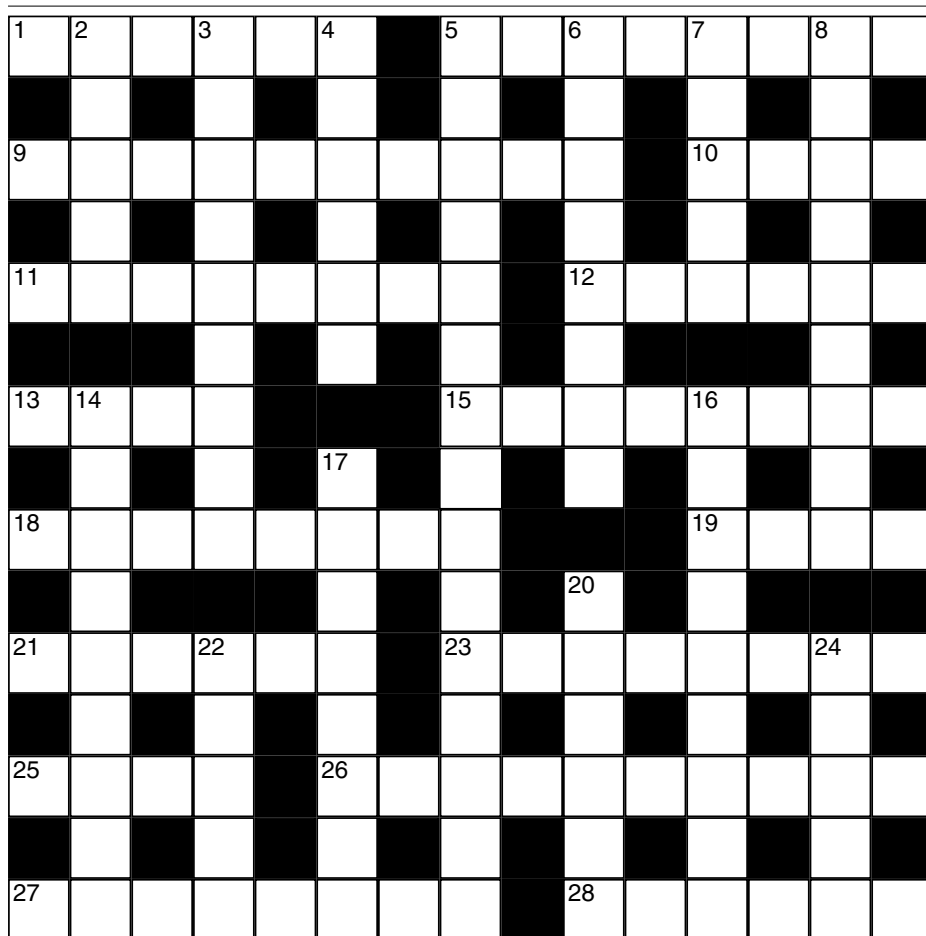
Killer Deadly No 9461

19		26	17	7			26	22
				15				
22			15		12			
						10		
11		21				16		23
	22	14	20					
							21	
16		9	10				14	
				17				

As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Times Crossword 28,913



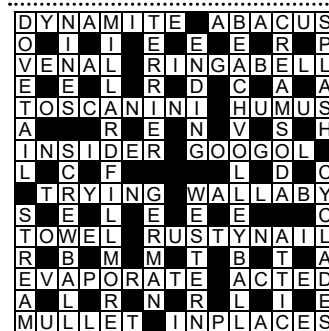
ACROSS

- 1 Foreign priest admitted by junior vaccinator? (6)
- 5 Old writer's son leaving the navy with little speech (8)
- 9 Organ playing after the epistle is novel (5,5)
- 10 Old trousers that go round on the carousel (4)
- 11 Cooperate with others in summons to table (3,5)
- 12 Force one's way to the end of American thoroughfare (6)
- 13 Articles far removed from armed conflict (4)
- 15 A very tiny bit of excellent cheese (3,5)
- 18 Book pilgrimage, to return before motorway opens (8)
- 19 Republican tease traps back stabber (4)
- 21 Rough up apprentice coming in for employment (6)
- 23 Hospitality worker with first-rate hair (8)
- 25 Mediaeval work suffered damage, lots missing (4)
- 26 Commit to keep going forever, ready initially for university (10)
- 27 At home opening wine, a pipe (8)
- 28 Autocrat's clear skin? (6)

DOWN

- 2 Neckcloth wanted — I freeze (5)
- 3 Upset then abuse Highlanders (9)
- 4 Argument after a number of cars get bigger again (6)
- 5 Rated bottom of class, feared catastrophe (7,3,5)
- 6 The cap on? Whipped off, perhaps, here (8)
- 7 Murphy maybe, who rides the underground? (5)
- 8 Doctor sticking point right in the behind (9)
- 14 Pretentious, admitting one's turning up with affected voice (9)
- 16 Prepared to fight: where did I put the deodorant? (5,4)
- 17 Penalises wordplay long drawn out (8)
- 20 Engine part, the cracking choice of some Lilliputians (3,3)
- 22 One's driving into the sun: a lift could be the alternative (5)
- 24 Apply oneself in fierce contest (3,2)

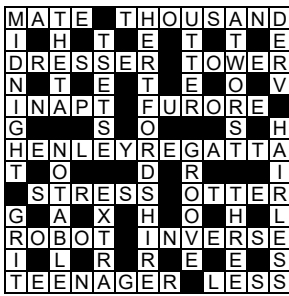
Yesterday's solution 28,912



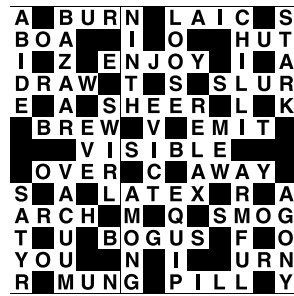
Check today's answers by ringing 0905 757 0141 by midnight. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390.

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 2671



Codeword 5210



Kakuro 3709

1	3	5	3	1	2	7	5
9	7	3	1	2	4	9	7
8	9	7	6	3	1	9	6
6	8	9	5	7	7	8	9
		1	9	8	3	6	
		8	2	7	9	1	
9	8	7	8	6	9	6	8
8	6	9	1	3	6	7	8
7	9	2	1	3	5	9	7
5	7	4	2	1	3	7	5

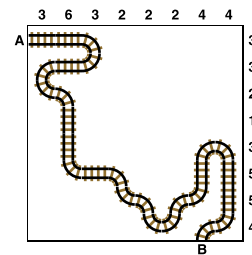
Sudoku 14,898

9	8	3	6	7	4	1	2	5
4	6	2	9	5	1	7	3	8
5	1	7	2	8	3	9	4	6
3	9	1	7	2	6	8	5	4
6	4	5	1	3	8	2	7	9
2	7	8	5	4	9	3	6	1
1	3	9	4	6	7	5	8	2
8	2	6	3	1	5	4	9	7
7	5	4	8	9	2	6	1	3

Tetonor 464

68	31	250	36
4 + 64	5 + 26	50 x 5	6 x 6
41	130	40	204
5 + 36	26 x 5	34 + 6	6 x 34
180	55	264	12
5 x 36	50 + 5	24 x 11	6 + 6
49	294	35	256
7 + 42	42 x 7	24 + 11	4 x 64

Train Tracks 2240



Sudoku 14,899

7	1	4	2	3	9	6	8	5
9	8	5	6	7	4	2	3	1
2	6	3	5	8	1	7	9	4
1	3	9	8	5	6	4	2	7
8	7	6	4	2	3	1	5	9
4	5	2	9	1	7	8	6	3
6	2	1	7	9	5	3	4	8
5	4	7	3	6	8	9	1	2
3	9	8	1	4	2	5	7	6

Cell Blocks 5093

		4		3
		2	2	
		12		
6				5
6			4	
		3	2	

Set Square 3712

9	x	4	+	3
x	o	-	o	x
8	÷	2	x	1
÷	o	+	o	x
6	-	5	+	7

Lexica 7399

O	G				
F	I	E	R	C	E
F		N			O
		I	R	O	N
F	L	U		W	
	S			L	

Sudoku 14,900

5	1	9	6	2	3	4	7	8
2	6	7	4	8	9	1	3	5
8	4	3	1	5	7	2	9	6
9	3	4	7	6	5	8	2	1
7	5	2	8	1	4	9	6	3
6	8	1	3	9	2	5	4	7
1	7	6	9	4	8	3	5	2
3	9	5	2	7	1	6	8	4
4	2	8	5	3	6	7	1	9

Futoshiki 4750

5	3	1	2	4			
			∨				
4	>	2	5	1	3		
			∨				
1	5	4	>	3	>	2	
			∧				
3	4	2	5	1			
			>	1	3	4	5

KenKen 6202

5	2	1	4	3	6
6	5	2	3	1	4
2	3	4	6	5	1
1	6	3	2	4	5
3	4	5	1	6	2
4	1	6	5	2	3

Lexica 7400

O					T
F	E	M	A	L	E
T			L		N
E	N	J	O	Y	
N			N		
S	P	E	L	L	

Today's solutions

Killer 9458

8	6	4	9	3	1	2	7	5
2	5	3	4	7	8	9	6	1
9	7	1	5	2	6	3	8	4
6	2	9	3	5	7	4	1	8
4	1	7	8	6	2	5	3	9
5	3	8	1	9	4	6	2	7
1	4	2	6	8	9	7	5	3
3	8	6	7	4	5	1	9	2
7	9	5	2	1	3	8	4	6

Killer 9459

8	6	7	9	5	2	3	4	1
1	9	3	4	8	6	7	5	2
4	2	5	7	3	1	6	9	8
6	4	2	1	9	3	8	7	5
9	5	8	6	2	7	4	1	3
3	7	1	5	4	8	9	2	6
7	3	4	8	1	5	2	6	9
2	1	6	3	7	9	5	8	4
5	8	9	2	6	4	1	3	7

Cryptic Quintagram

- 1 Camp
- 2 Mullet
- 3 Elaine
- 4 High tea
- 5 Stand up to

Suko 4112

9	7	8
22	18	
5	1	2
16	12	
4	6	3

Brain Trainer

- Easy 3
- Medium 568
- Harder 6,248

Word watch

- Mezzaluna** (b) A type of kitchen chopper (*Collins*)
- Kibe** (b) A chilblain on the heel (*Chambers*)
- Choragium** (b) A dancing ground (*OED*)

Chess – Winning Move

- White moves along the branch with 1 Rd8+! Rxd8
- 2 Qxd8+ Kg7 3 Qxg8+! Kxg8
- 4 Nf6+ Kf8 5 Nxe4 and emerges with an extra piece.