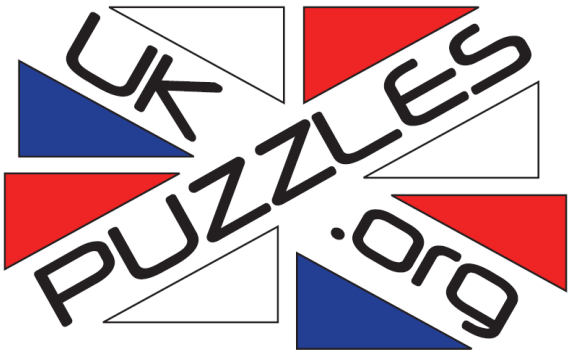


UK Puzzle Championship 2026

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET

Thursday 11th June - Monday 15th June, 2026

Competition Rules & General Information

Introduction

These are the instructions for the 2026 UK Puzzle Championship, hosted and organised by the UK Puzzle Association. This is an online Puzzle competition to be printed out and solved against the clock. Any questions related to these instructions should be raised and discussed in the competition discussion thread: https://forum.ukpuzzles.org/viewtopic.php?t=2838

UK Puzzle Championship

Competition Schedule

- The password protected puzzle booklets will be made available online at www.ukpuzzles.org/contests.php?contestid=77 for round 1 and www.ukpuzzles.org/contests.php?contestid=78 for round 2 on Wednesday 10th June. It is recommended that you download the password-protected pdfs before you start the competition, but ensure that you are opening the correct booklet for the relevant round.

- The competition will start at **12:00 BST (13:00 GMT) on Thursday 11th June** when the passwords for the pdfs will be made available. Upon retrieving the password for round 1 you will have 90 minutes to solve the puzzles and submit your answers via the entry page for that round. Upon retrieving the password for round 2 you will have the 90 minutes to solve the puzzles and submit your answers via the entry page for that round. You must ensure that you start each round with sufficient time left to be able to submit your entries within the time.

- The results will be publicly announced at http://www.ukpuzzles.org a few days after the contest. The highest scoring UK participant across round 1 and round 2 will be declared the 2026 UK Puzzle Champion.

Entering & Submitting Answers

To submit your answers for round 1 you will need to go to the answer submission page found via www.ukpuzzles.org/contests.php?contestid=77 and for round 2 you will need to go to the answer submission page found via www.ukpuzzles.org/contests.php?contestid=78, where you will be required to enter the relevant answer keys into the form on the page. The answer keys for each puzzle are defined as part of the instructions.

Upon hitting the submit button, your answers will be sent to the server. You may submit answers as many times as you like, but only the last received keys will be subject to scoring.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, multiple answer key parts must be entered in the solution box separated by a comma, with no spaces. Participation is anticipated to be very high and appeals will only be upheld in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you check that each answer key submitted is correct.

Urgent matters arising during the contest should be directed towards liane@ukpuzzles.org . In the event of the web hosting service failing during your participation, email your answer keys before your time is over. Answers submitted this way will only be accepted if a hosting failure, or equivalent, has occurred.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All participants are expected to solve the puzzles honestly and fairly. You are not permitted to use any external solving aids of any form, including online solving tools or receive assistance from any other individual.

It is strictly forbidden to discuss any details of the championship puzzles, or make their contents known to others, directly or implicitly, via any medium while the contest is live.

The championship organisers reserve the right to disqualify any participant judged to have acted with improper conduct. The decisions made by the organisers are final.

POINTS & BONUSES

Points will be awarded according to the table on the following page. No bonus points will be awarded for early completion. In the event of a tie the total time taken for both rounds will be used to determine the higher place. Late submissions will not be accepted (as in a WPC environment), so you are advised to submit answers as you solve them, rather than waiting until your time is running out.

N.B. – although the points allocated to a particular puzzle are a general indication of its difficulty and the time expected to solve it, it is possible that your individual experience may vary greatly. Please read the instructions fully and carefully!

Puzzle Examples

The remainder of this instruction booklet gives the instructions as they will appear in the competition booklets, with answer key descriptions, and examples of puzzle types used in the contest. Instructions will be repeated in the competition booklet, but not the examples.

The competition booklets will not have a cover page.

For answer keys that require the information from some rows/columns these should be entered rows from top to bottom followed by columns from left to right with a comma between each row/column.
For answer keys that require information about each row then these should be entered as a continuous string without separating commas.

PUZZLE AUTHORS

We are indebted to the following authors for designing and test solving the puzzles used in this contest:

Bram de Laat
Lennart Muijres
Tawan Sunathvanichkul
Mark Sweep

Thanks also to Alex Robinson and Chiel Beenhakker, for test solving.

The puzzle types and the points attached to them are detailed below.

Round 1		
Puzzle		Points
1.1	Skyscrapers (Ciphered)	15
1.2	Scrabble	18
1.3	Mastermind	10
1.4	Letter Weights	60
1.5	Battleships	19
1.6	Maxi Loop	37
1.7	Canal View	21
1.8	Slovak Sums	31
1.9	Heyawake (Domino)	33
1.10	Double Choco	37
1.11	Castle Wall	32
1.12	Compass	27
1.13	Statue Park	42
1.14	Tapa Like Loop	40
1.15	Doppelblock	28
	Total	**450**

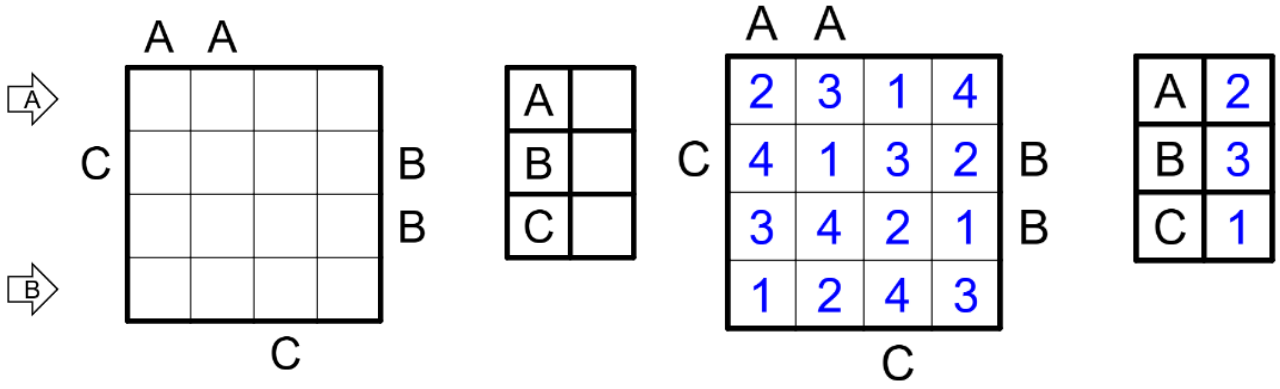
Round 2		
Puzzle		Points
2.1	Numberlink	15
2.2	Easy as ABC	39
2.3	Kropkuro	28
2.4	Star Battle	25
2.5	Trio Cut	36
2.6	Tapa Triomino	63
2.7	Chained Block	51
2.8	Kissing Polyominoes	14
2.9	All or One	27
2.10	Heteromino	36
2.11	Pento Words	50
2.12	Magic Box	41
2.13	Mintonette	20
2.14	Kurarin	35
	Total	**480**

Please note that the answer sheets will only have the puzzle number and not the round identifier.

Round 1

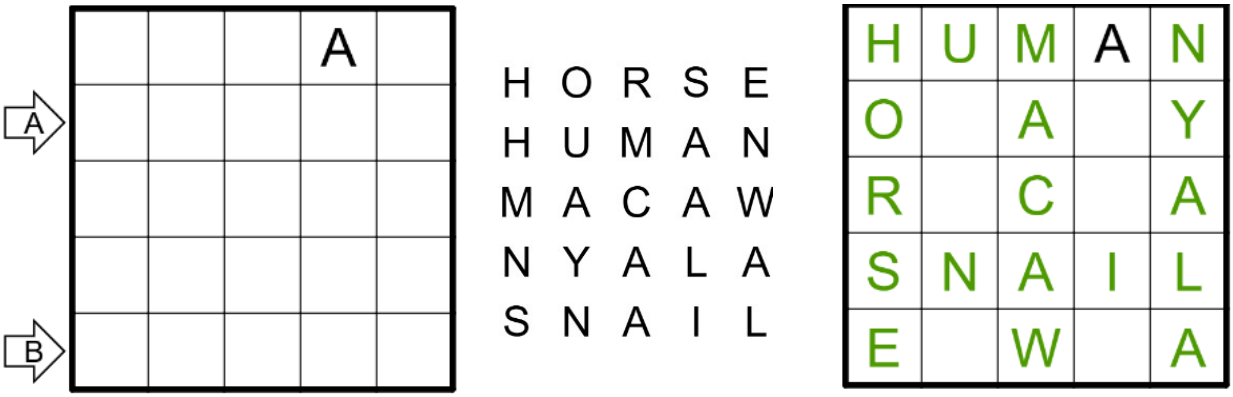
1.1 Skyscrapers (Ciphered) (15)

Place a number from 1 to 5 (1 to 4 in example) into each cell so that each row and column contains every number exactly once. Each number represents a skyscraper of that height. A clue outside the grid indicates how many numbers are visible from that side. Larger numbers block the view of smaller ones.
Additionally, numbers outside the grid are replaced by letters. The same letter represents the same number and different letters represent different numbers.
Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns
Example: 2314,1243



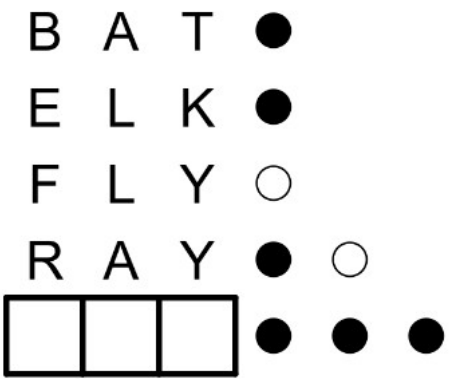
1.2 Scrabble (18)

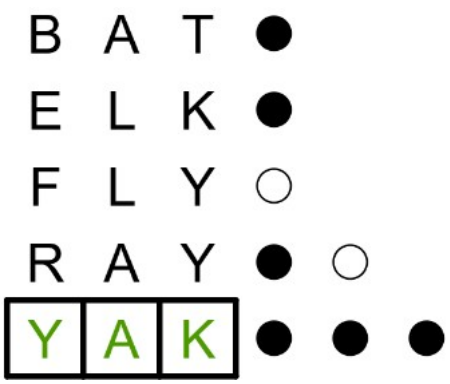
Place all the given words in the grid, one letter per cell. The given words can be read either left to right or top to bottom, Every word must appear in the grid exactly once and no other words may appear (even two letter words). All words must interconnect. Some letters may be given.
Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns ignoring spaces.
Example: OAY,EWA



1.3 Mastermind (10)

Identify the correct series of letters by using information from the earlier ‘guesses’. Each black circle identifies that a letter is in the solution and is placed in its correct location. Each white circle identifies that a letter is in the solution but is placed in the wrong location. The solution may or may not be a ‘real’ word.
Answer key: Enter the correct series of letters.
Example: YAK





1.4 Letter Weights (60)

Match the letters with the given set of numbers, so that the sum of all letters in each given word is equal to the corresponding number.
Answer key: Enter the values of the letters in alphabetical order, using the unit digit for two digit numbers.
Example: 9481236570

C	O	D	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	18
C	O	W	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	24
D	O	G	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	10
E	E	L	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	18
E	M	U	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	18
G	N	U	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	14
O	W	L	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	17

C	D	E	G	L	M	N	O	U	W

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

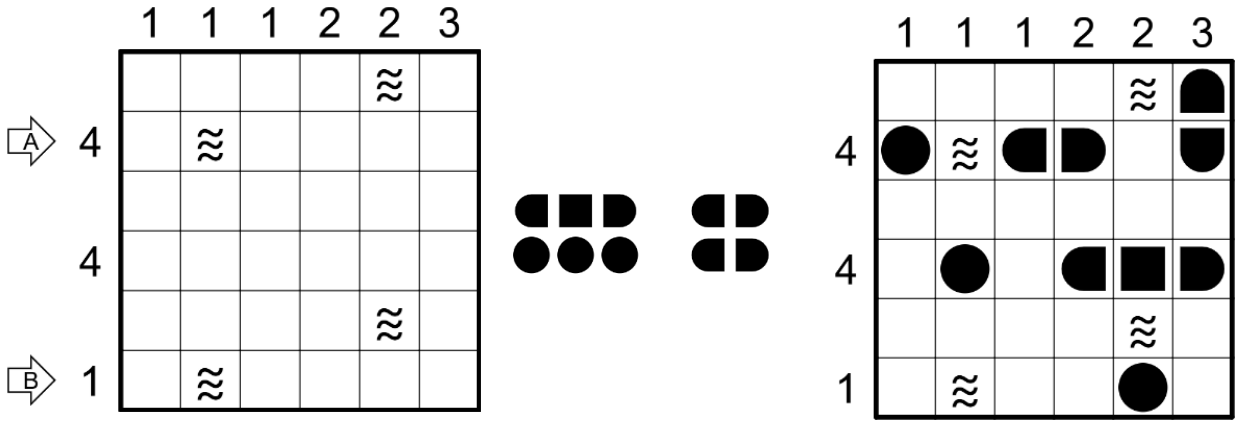
C	O	D	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	18
C	O	W	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	24
D	O	G	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	10
E	E	L	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	18
E	M	U	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	18
G	N	U	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	14
O	W	L	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	17

C	D	E	G	L	M	N	O	U	W
9	4	8	1	2	3	6	5	7	10

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
G	L	M	D	O	N	U	E	C	W

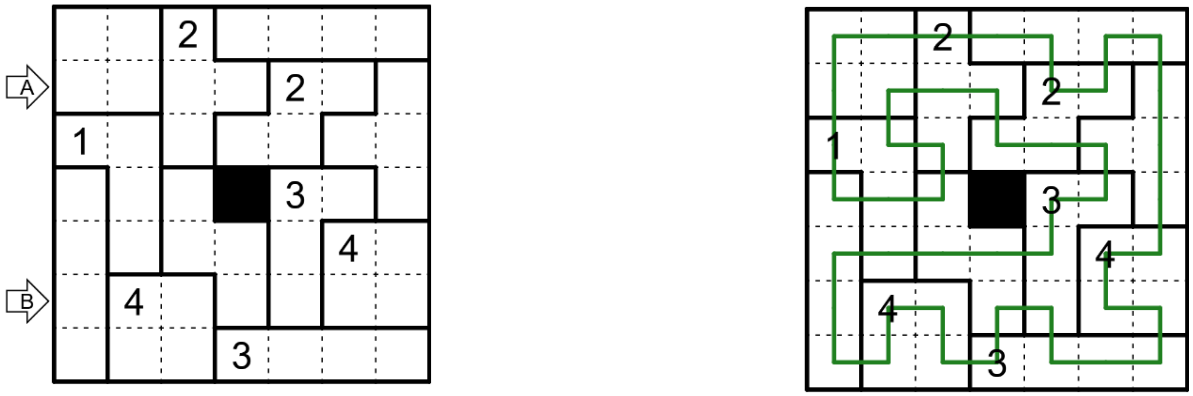
1.5 Battleships (19)

Place the given set of ships into the grid. Cells with ships in cannot touch each other, even at a point. Clues outside the grid show the number of occupied cells in the corresponding row or column. Ships cannot be placed in cells marked with waves.
Answer key: For the marked rows/columns enter either the size of the ship that has a segment in a cell or X for cells without ships.
Example: 1X22X2,XXXX1X



1.6 Maxi Loop (37)

Draw a single closed loop that travels through every cell exactly once by travelling horizontally and vertically connecting the centres of adjacent cells. The loop does not cross or overlap itself. The grid is divided into a number of regions. A number inside a region identifies the highest number of cells that the loop passes through consecutively in that region. This number must be achieved at least once. Black cells are not part of the loop.
Answer key: Enter the lengths of the separate loop segments in the marked rows/columns. Enter 0 if there are no segments in that direction.
Example: 21,111

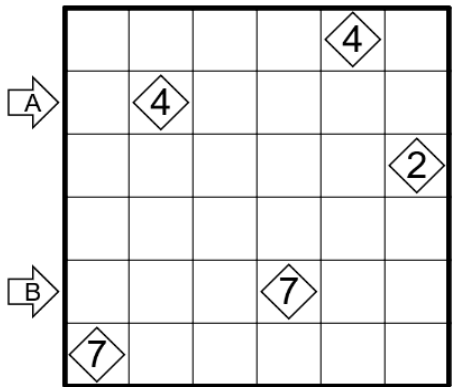


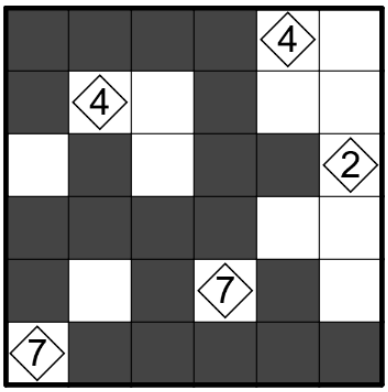
1.7 Canal View (21)

Shade some cells so that all shaded cells form one orthogonally connected area. Clues cannot be shaded and represent the number of shaded cells connected in a straight line horizontally or vertically to the clue. No 2x2 region may be entirely shaded.

Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells that are shaded and unshaded.

Example: 1212,111111



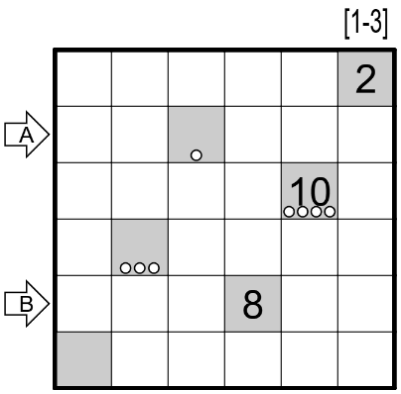


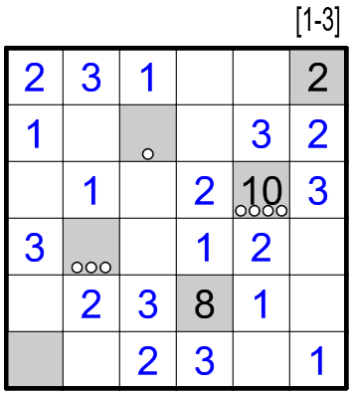
1.8 Slovak Sums (31)

Place numbers from the range given outside the grid into some empty cells so that each row and column contains each number exactly once (not counting clued cells). A clue cell may contain some quantity of circles, which represents how many of the orthogonally adjacent unclued cells contain a number; if a clue cell contains a number, then that is the sum of the numbers in orthogonally adjacent unclued cells.

Answer Key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns using X for empty or clue cells.

Example: 1XXX32,X23X1X

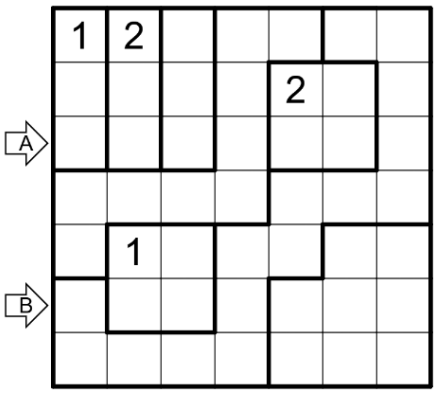


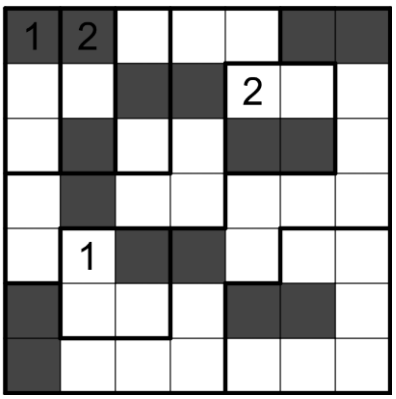


1.9 Heyawake (Domino) (33)

Shade some cells such to leave a single orthogonally connected unshaded area. The unshaded area cannot span over two consecutive bold boundaries in any row or column. Numbers within bold edged regions indicate the number of cells that must be shaded in that region. Every shaded cell shares an edge with exactly one other shaded cell.

Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells that are shaded and unshaded.
Example: 11221,1321

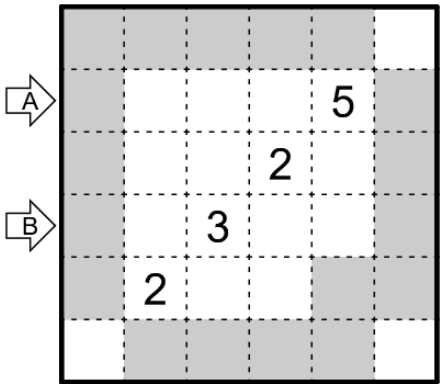


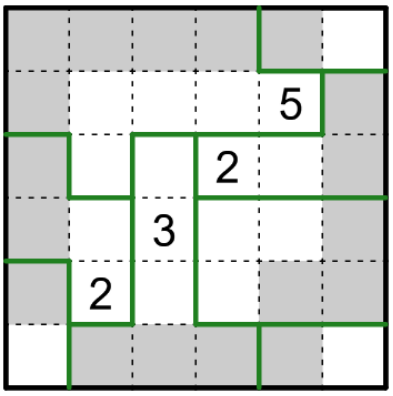


1.10 Double Choco (37)

Divide the grid into different regions along the grid lines. Each region must contain a pair of areas – one white cells and the other grey cells, each having the same size and shape. Reflections and/or rotations are considered the same. Numbers indicate the number of cells of that colour in the region (half the total area for the region). Any region may contain none, one or more of the given numbers (can have more than one number in the same colour).

Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells belonging to separate regions in the direction of the arrow. For double digit numbers use the unit digit.
Example: 51,213



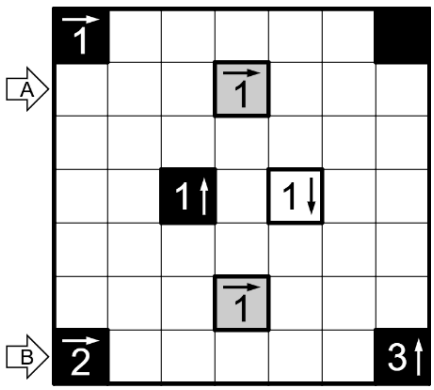


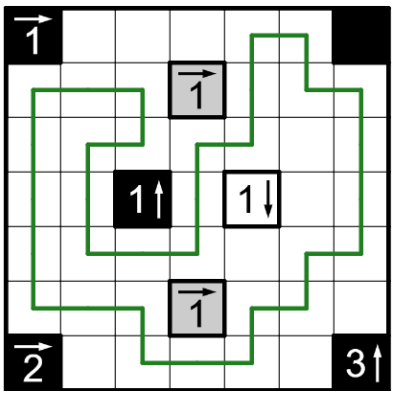
1.11 Castle Wall (32)

Draw a single closed loop through the grid. The loop travels horizontally and vertically and must not touch or cross itself. There may be black, white and grey clue cells in the grid. White clue cells must be inside the loop; black clue cells must be outside the loop and grey cells may be inside or outside the loop. Numbers in clue cells indicate the total length of the loop segments in the direction of the arrow. This can be thought of as the number of cell edges the loop crosses in that direction.

Answer key: Enter the length of the loop segments in the marked rows/columns. Use 0 if there are no segments in that direction. Use the unit digit for double digit numbers.

Example: 21,2



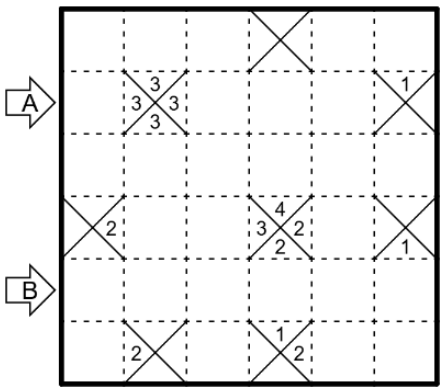


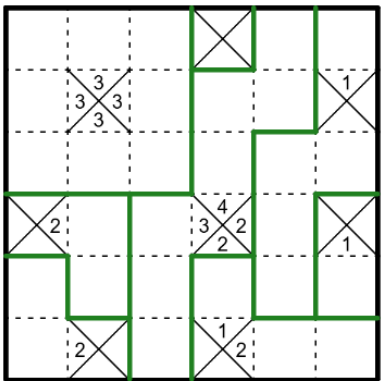
1.12 Compass (27)

Divide the grid along the dotted lines into regions (groups of cells that are connected orthogonally). Each cell must be in exactly one region, and each region must contain exactly one clue (an X like symbol that contains up to four numbers). For each clue, the number in the north part (north being at the top) indicates how many cells of that clue's region are located North of the clue cell (irrespective of their East/West location). Similarly, numbers in the west, east, and south part indicate how many cells of that region are located West, East, and South of the clue cell. If there is no number in a part, the number of cells in that direction is not given.

Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells belonging to separate regions in the direction of the arrow. For double digit numbers use the unit digit.

Example: 321,111111



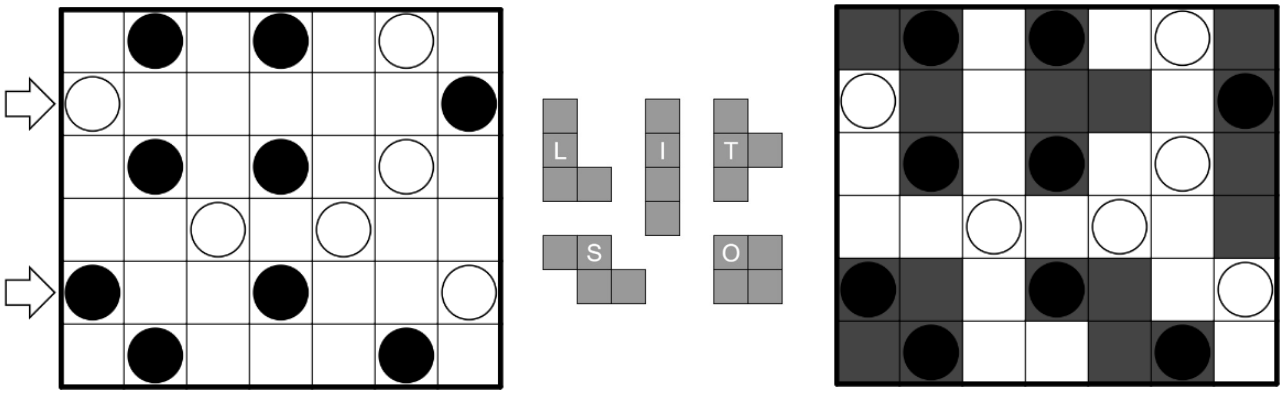


1.13 Statue Park (42)

Place each of the given shapes once into the grid. Shapes may be rotated and/or reflected. No two shapes may overlap or be orthogonally adjacent, they can touch at corners and all cells not occupied by shapes must be connected orthogonally. Black circles in the grid represent cells that must be contained in one of the shapes and white circles represent cells that must not be contained in a shape.

Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns using the shape identifier for cells containing the shapes and X for empty cells.

Example: XLXTTXI,OOXSSXX

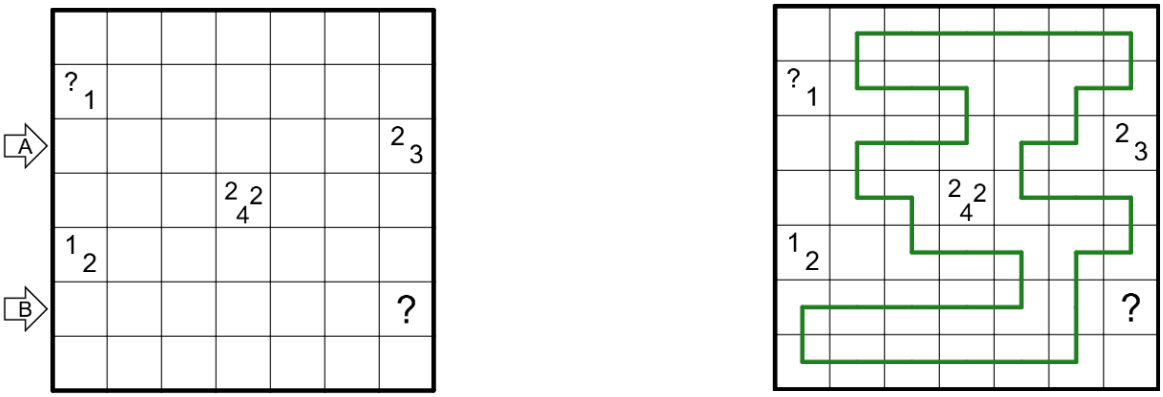


1.14 Tapa Like Loop (40)

Draw a single non-intersecting loop passing horizontally or vertically connecting the centres of some cells. Numbers inside cells represent the lengths of all loop segments within the "ring" of (up to) 8 cells touching that cell. As a special case, if the number given in a cell is zero (0) then none of the cells around that cell are part of the loop. Cells with numbers cannot be part of the loop. If there is more than one number in a cell, each number represents a separate loop segment. A question mark replaces any non-zero number. The numbers are given in no particular order.

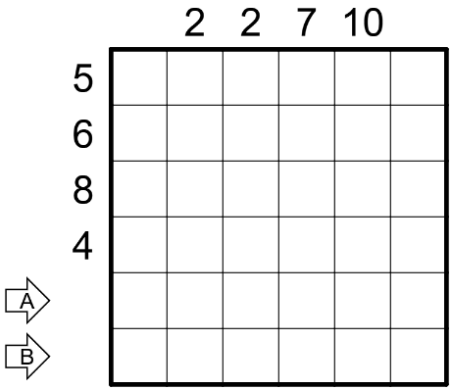
Answer key: Enter the length of the loop segments in the marked rows/columns. Use 0 if there are no segments in that direction. Use the unit digit for double digit numbers.

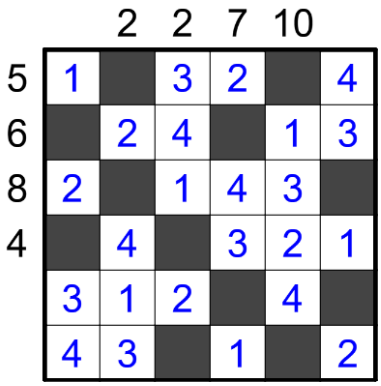
Example: 21,4



1.15 Doppelblock (28)

Shade two cells in every row and column. Place a number from 1 to 6 (1 to 4 in the example) in the remaining cells so that each row and column contains each number exactly once. A clue outside the grid indicates the sum of the digits that appear between the two shaded cells in the corresponding row or column.
Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns using X for shaded cells.
Example: 312X4X,43X1X2

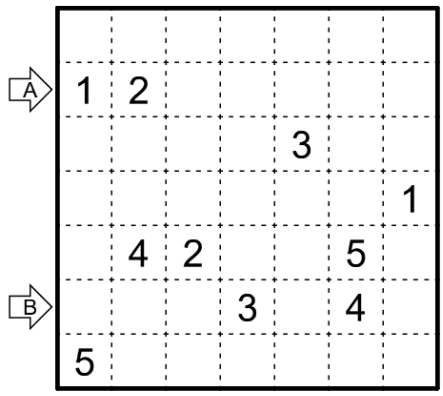


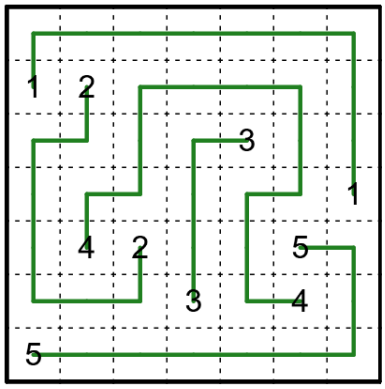


Round 2

2.1 Numberlink (15)

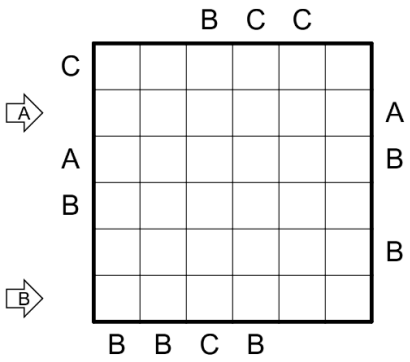
Connect each pair of identical numbers with a continuous line that passes horizontally or vertically between the centres of cells. Paths may not cross each other or travel through numbers.
Answer key: Enter the number of the line that passes through each cell in the marked rows/columns. For two digit numbers enter the unit digit.
Example: 1244441,2223445

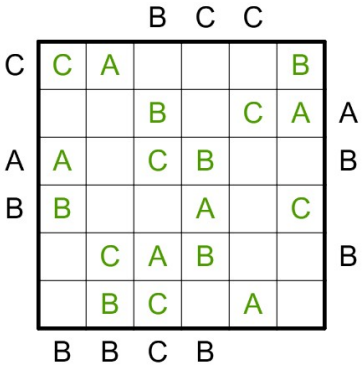




2.2 Easy as ABC (39)

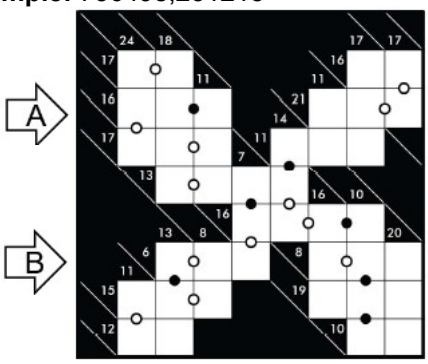
Place the letters A to C in the grid so that each row and column contains each letter exactly once. Letters outside the grid show the first letter that is visible from that direction.
Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns using X for empty cells.
Example: XXBXCA,XBCXAX

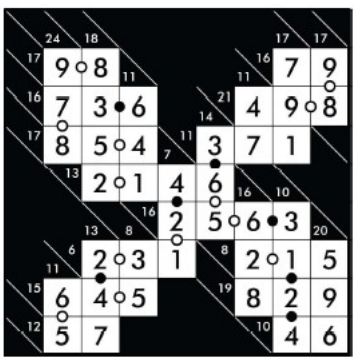




2.3 Kropkuro (28)

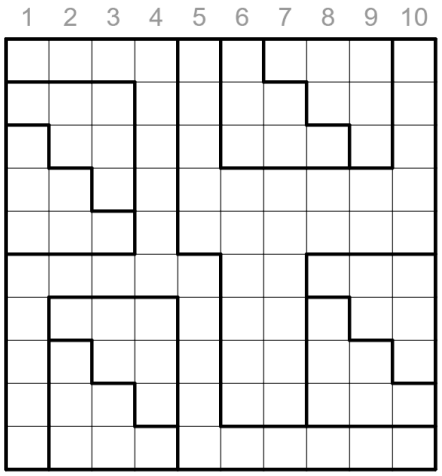
Fill all empty cells with numbers from1 to 9 such that the sum of each horizontal block equals the clue on its left, and the sum of each vertical block equals the clue on its top. In addition, no number may be used in the same block more than once. **Additionally,** a white dot separates two numbers that are consecutive, a black dot separates two numbers where one is twice the other. Therefore, 1 and 2 could be separated by either a white or black dot. All dots are given.
Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns.
Example: 736498,231215

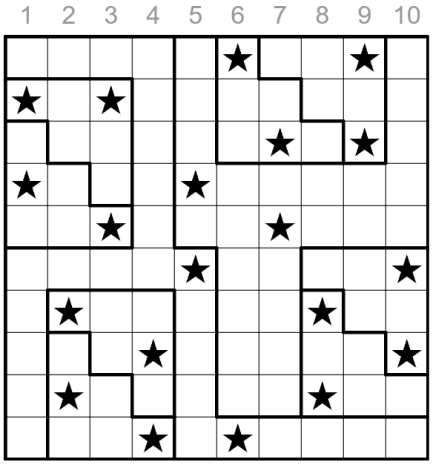




2.4 Star Battle (25)

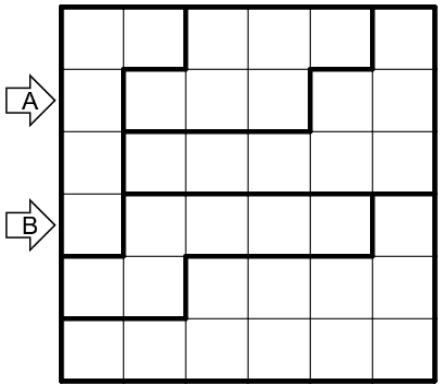
Place two stars in every row, column and region. Cells with stars in are not allowed to touch each other, even at a point. Grey numbers above the grid are only for identifying the answer key.
Answer key: Enter the column number of the 2nd star in each row. For two digit numbers enter the unit digit only.
Example: 9395708086

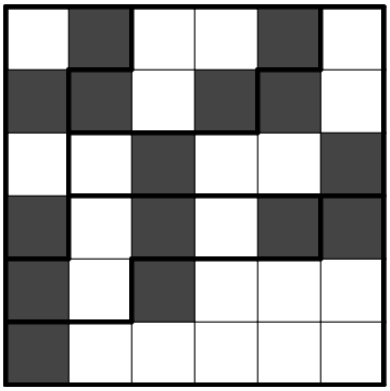




2.5 Trio Cut (36)

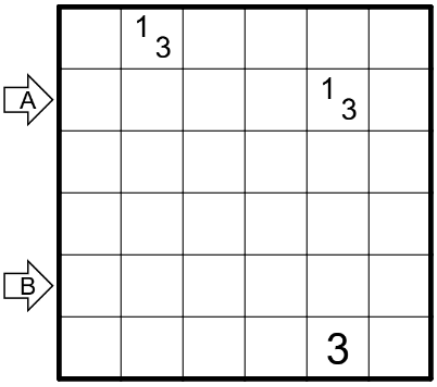
Shade some cells to form triominoes. Each triomino must cross two region borders.. Different triominoes may not touch each other orthogonally. Each region must contain three shaded cells.
Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells that are shaded and unshaded.
Example: 2121,11112

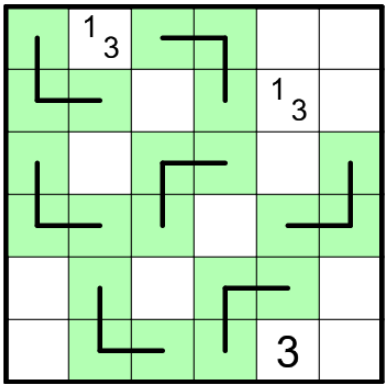




2.6 Tapa Triomino (63)

Shade some cells to create a continuous wall. Numbers in a cell indicate the length of shaded cell blocks in its neighbouring cells. If there is more than one number in a cell, there must be at least one unshaded cell between the shaded cell blocks. No 2x2 area can be completely shaded. There are no wall segments on cells containing numbers. The shaded cells must also be able to be divided into L shaped triominoes.
Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells that are shaded and unshaded.
Example: 2112,11121



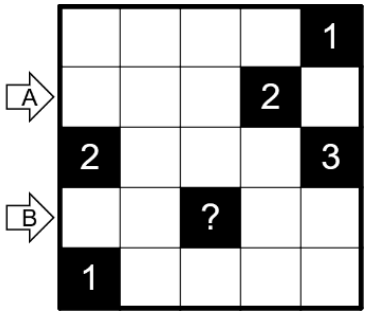


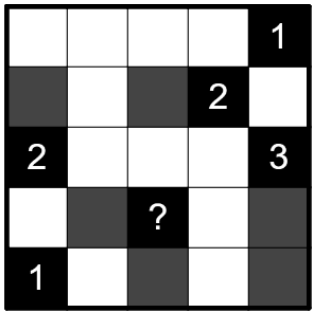
2.7 Chained Block (51)

Shade some cells such that each connected group of shaded cells contains exactly one clue. Clues indicate the size of their shaded group. Each group of shaded cells must be connected by a corner to at least one other, forming networks. Two shaded groups in the same network cannot have the same shape and size as each other (counting rotations and reflections as the same).

Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells that are shaded and unshaded.

Example: 1121,1211



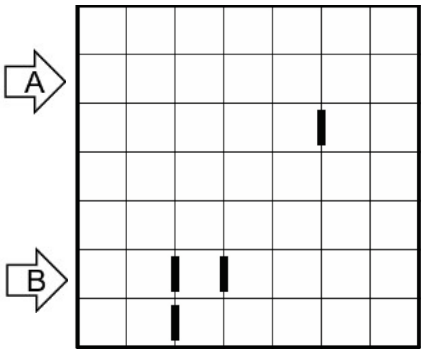


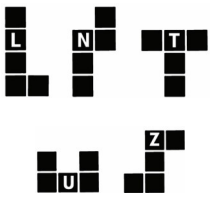
2.8 Kissing Polyominoes (14)

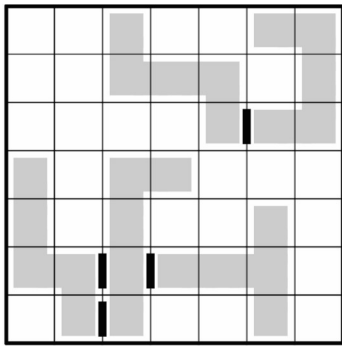
Locate the given set of shapes in the grid. Shapes can be rotated or reflected. If an edge is marked with a bar, then two shapes touch along that edge. If an edge is not marked with a bar, then two shapes do not touch along that edge.

Answer key: Enter the identifier for each shape that is on the marked rows/columns.

Example: ZU,NLT





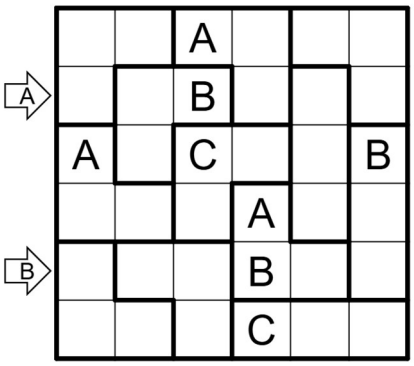


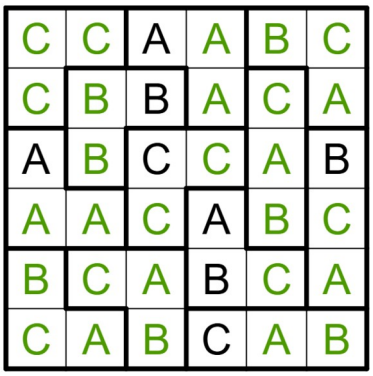
2.9 All or One (27)

Place an A, B, or C into every cell. Each region must either contain each letter once or one letter three times. The same letter cannot touch orthogonally across region boundaries. Some letters may be given.

Answer key: Enter the contents of the marked rows/columns.

Example: CBBACA,BCABCA



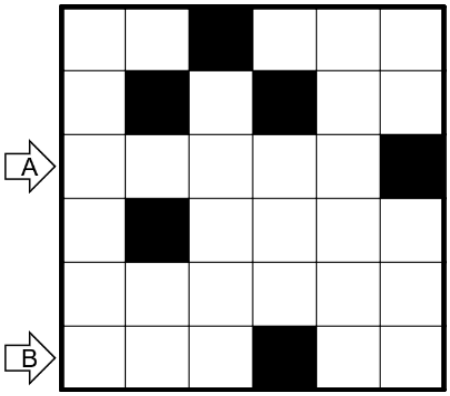


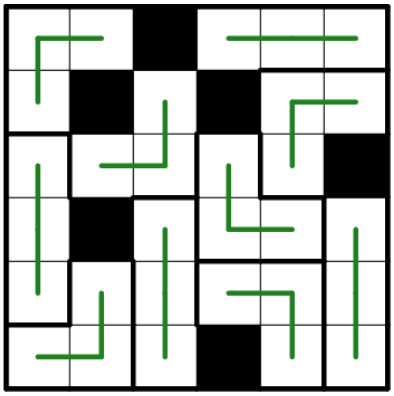
2.10 Heteromino (36)

Divide the grid into triominoes along the grid lines. Black cells are not part of any triomino. Triominoes of both the same shape and orientation are not allowed to touch by a side.

Answer key: For each marked row/column enter the number of consecutive cells belonging to separate regions in the direction of the arrow. Use X for shaded cells.

Example: 1211X,21X11



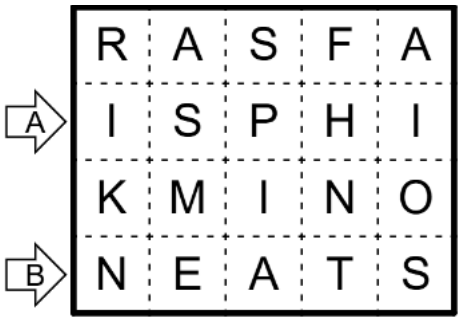


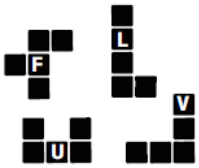
2.11 Pento Words (50)

Locate the given set of pentominoes in the grid so that each pentomino contains the letters of one of the listed words. Each word is used exactly once. Pentominoes may be rotated and/or reflected. Some cells may remain unused.

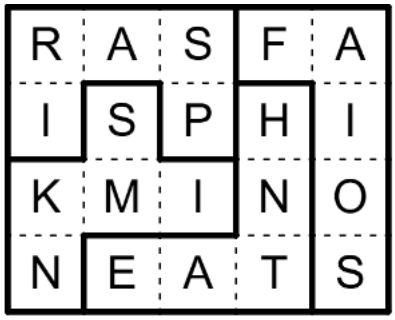
Answer key: Enter the pentomino letter associated with each cell in the marked rows/columns.

Example: UFUVL,FVVVL



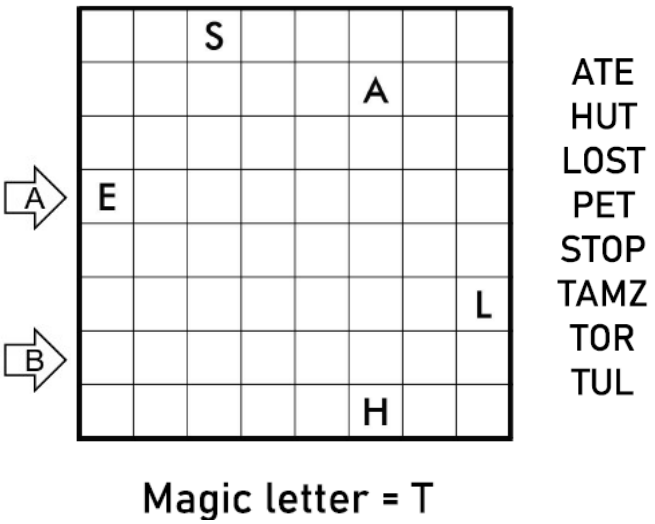


ATHEN
MINSK
PARIS
SOFIA



2.12 Magic Box (41)

Place the listed words in the grid so that each word is read from left to right or top to bottom. Words may not touch each other, not even diagonally. The magic letter must appear exactly once in each row and column. Some letters have already been given.
Answer key: Enter the letters that are found in the marked rows/columns (ignoring blank spaces).
Example: EOTAMZ,STOP



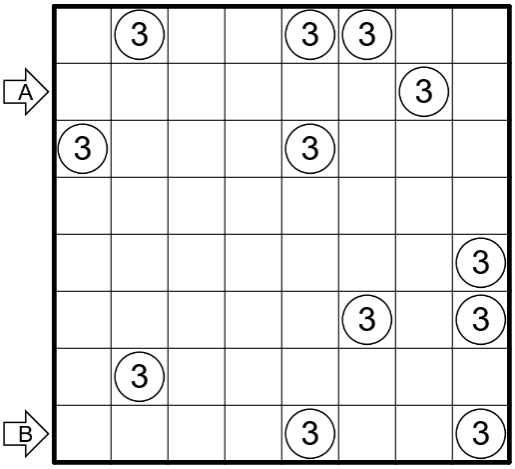
ATE
HUT
LOST
PET
STOP
TAMZ
TOR
TUL

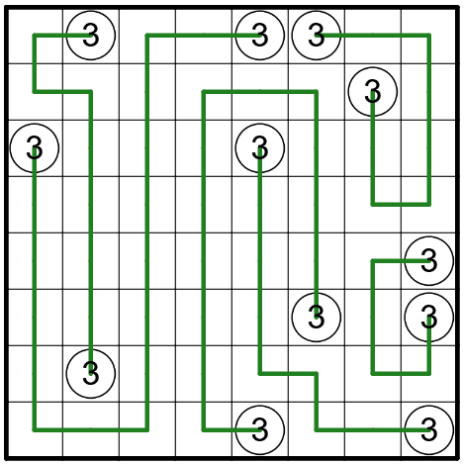


Magic letter = T

2.13 Mintonette (20)

Connect circles in pairs by drawing a line that goes horizontally and vertically through the centres of cells. The line makes exactly three turns between two circles. Lines can't touch or cross themselves or each other. Each cell must be used by one line and each circle must be connected to one other circle.
Answer key: Enter the length of the loop segments in the marked rows/columns. Use 0 if there are no segments in that direction. Use the unit digit for double digit numbers.
Example: 12,212





2.14 Kurarin (35)

Shade some cells and draw a non-intersecting loop through the centres of all remaining cells. A black dot must touch more shaded cells than unshaded ones. A white dot must touch more unshaded cells than shaded ones. A grey dot must touch an equal amount of each.
Example from D Altizio (djmathman).
Answer key: Enter the length of the loop segments in the marked rows/columns. Use 0 if there are no segments in that direction. Use the unit digit for double digit numbers.
Example: 2,11

