

Sudoku Difficult No 15,255

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

Fiendish No 15,256 **Super fiendish No 15,257**

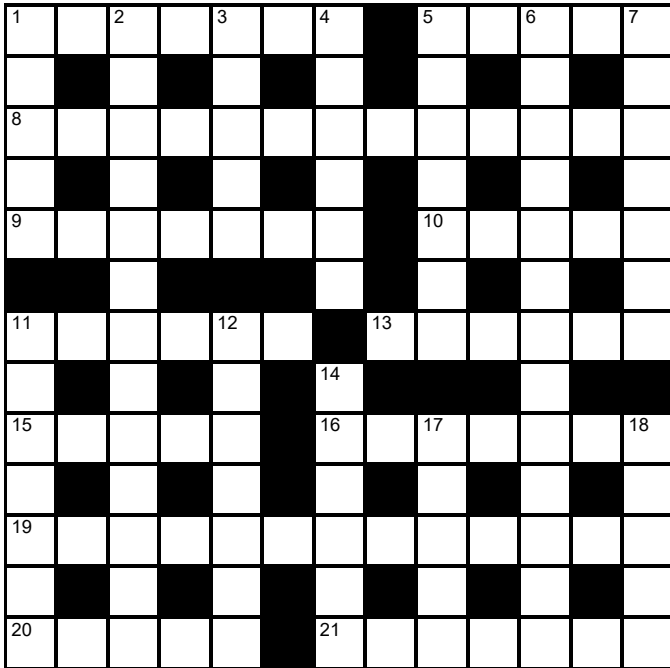
		9	1				8	
3					8			
6	5	8						9
	4				5	2		1
					6			
	9				7	6		3
5	6	4						7
7					1			
		2	7					5

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

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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 2790 by Teazel



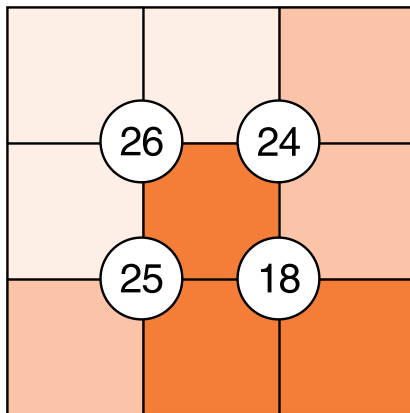
Across

- 1 Shrub is a little dear, but useful (7)
- 5 Popular friend is about to blossom (2,3)
- 8 Peremptorily announce one's retirement as solicitor? (3,4,3,3)
- 9 Play area is mine, after polish (7)
- 10 Charm for short period (5)
- 11 Varying in quality, like a much-mended garment (6)
- 13 Steamship's touring lake in sequence (6)
- 15 Mistakenly hears these can't get off the ground (5)
- 16 Live, dressed as monk? (7)
- 19 With which striker bestows congratulations? (4,2,3,4)
- 20 Shame about the end of reverence and devoutness (5)
- 21 Deputy is not quite upright (5-2)

Down

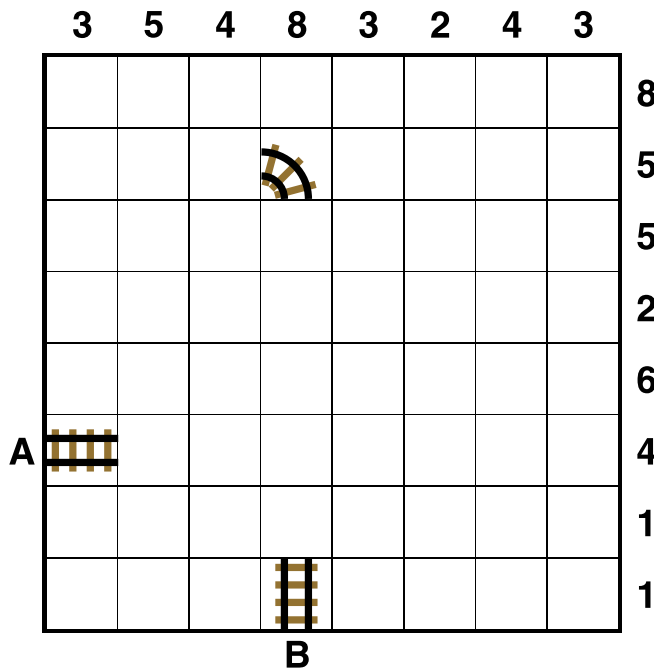
- 1 Geography book finally abridged (5)
- 2 Unacceptable apart from white? (6,3,4)
- 3 Unproductive time up for body of soldiers (5)
- 4 Reason fool blocks authority (6)
- 5 Quickly I recollect Athens (2,5)
- 6 Here notices why table is splintered? (8,5)
- 7 Takes one's time getting wife into awkward saddle (7)
- 11 Make coffee and drink: cheers! (5,2)
- 12 All present for this subject? On the contrary (7)
- 14 Grimace as citrus stews (6)
- 17 Scavenger's longing to be in hot area (5)
- 18 Among a number, approve memento (5)

Suko No 4230



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 2356



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

Forslack

- a An exclamation of dismay
- b A curl of hair hanging over the brow
- c To be neglectful

Malic

- a Harmful, injurious
- b A putty-like resin
- c Obtained from apple juice

Jollop

- a The wattle of a turkey
- b A slice of meat
- c Nonsense, hogwash

Poker Byron Jacobs

Changing gear

Poker is a game that rewards patience. And when you have been patient for a long time you may find you have to be patient all over again. In live events you can wait literally hours for a playable hand. Suddenly you get something decent and get involved in a pot rather than being an innocent bystander. The sudden excitement can lead to an adrenalin rush and you must ensure this doesn't cloud your judgment. Sometimes, frustratingly, it doesn't work out and the best approach is to back off.

You often have to dial down the aggression because a hand that initially looked promising has become devalued, often because a third flush card has arrived. For example, you are dealt Q♣-J♣, a nice hand with plenty of possibilities to develop well. You bet, get called by one other player and the flop is K♥-J♦-4♦. You have middle pair with a good kicker – hardly amazing but decent enough. You bet, Villain calls and the turn is K♥-J♦-4♦-6♦. Ugh. The third diamond is ugly. Many now reason that Villain will only rarely have the flush so charging on with a further bet is justified. This is wrong. You must check and fold if Villain bets (unless the bet is tiny).

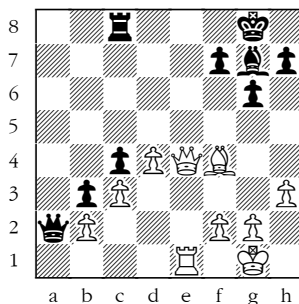
The problem is that the turn card has horribly devalued your hand. If Villain has two diamonds you are already dead but if they have a K-x holding (which beats your pair of jacks) they aren't

likely to fold. If you bet the turn they will generally call with hands that beat you and fold hands that don't. By betting you are, in a sense, forcing them to play well.

Another one. A decent player opens from early position (and so has a strong range) You call with 10♥-9♥ and the flop is J♣-8♥-3♣. You have an open-ended straight draw that will be completed by any queen or seven. The promising aspect of this set-up is that when you do hit your hand, you can get paid off well. Villain bets, you call and the turn is J♣-8♥-3♣-K♣. Villain bets and, yep, now you must be disciplined, grit your teeth and fold. The main problem is that even if you hit your straight you are not 100 per cent guaranteed to have the winning hand as Villain can have a flush.

However, you must stay objective and clue into situations where aggression remains justified. You open with 7♣-7♠, one other player calls and the flop is 10♣-9♥-6♥. This is not great as 10-x and 9-x beat you. You bet, Villain calls and the turn is 10♣-9♥-6♥-A♥. This is a terrible card for your actual hand but it is a great card for your range. You opened and are marked with a lot of A-x. You should definitely consider betting and betting big (even overbetting the pot) as such aggression will make it difficult for Villain to continue with modest hands that either beat you (10-x, 9-x) or have decent equity (straight draws or any hand with a heart).

Winning Move



White to play. This position is from Pakleza-Loay, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2024.

Almost every manoeuvre in chess will have good points and bad points. The trick is to find ideas where the good outweigh the bad. Here the black queen has ventured down to a2 to threaten the b2-pawn (good). However, the queen is now away from the centre and kingside (bad). How did White continue?

Codeword No 5329

17	6	17	6	10		12	13	3	2	20	9	8
6		10		2		10		25		24		6
2	21	9	11	26	21	13		2	9	10	25	7
22		24		24				21				21
3	25	25	3	25	7	2		9	10	2	24	13
17		14				16		3		17		20
	5	21	10	14	13	24	25	25	3	10	9	
7		9		3		14				1		18
10	22	10	2	2		24	19	20	13	24	22	24
4				24				13		25		20
21	22	12	13	10		15	13	10	21	7	26	20
22		6		2		10		2		24		9
11	13	6	23	24	17	20		26	6	13	2	24

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	S								A			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

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).

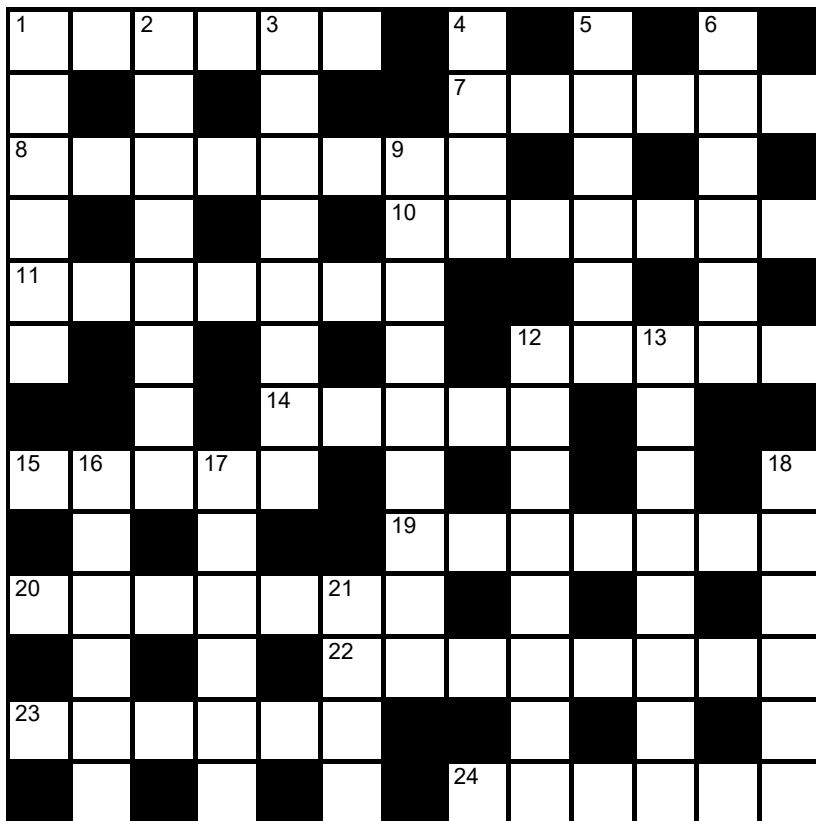
Lexica Easy No 7677

Hard No 7678

...	M	●	A	A	T	K	:	...	R	E	O	K	L	Y	:	...
●								A	U							C
...	L							...	...						...	O
...	X							...	...						...	T
...	E							...	...						...	S
...	T							...	...						...	S
...	Y							...	...						...	E
...
...	N	E	S	V	I	●	:	...	B	A	D	M	●	O	:	...

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 9645



Across

- 1 Widespread, prevalent (6)
- 7 Warm waterproof jacket (6)
- 8 Coated in Teflon, eg (8)
- 10 Bring back to good condition (7)
- 11 Fall into ill health again (7)
- 12 Smell followed by a pursuer (5)
- 14 Display (confidence, eg) (5)

- 15 Baking ingredient (5)
- 19 Set apart from others (7)
- 20 Most uncanny or creepy (7)
- 22 Epitomised (8)
- 23 Sheen (6)
- 24 DIY tool; athletics event (6)

Down

- 1 Songbird kept as a pet (6)
- 2 Painting by Leonardo (4,4)
- 3 One of eight born at the same time (8)
- 4 Create, produce (4)
- 5 Of the body's main artery (6)
- 6 Backstreet regularly used to avoid congestion (3,3)
- 9 Unwarranted inclination to believe (9)
- 12 Pudding grains (8)
- 13 Distraction from reality (8)
- 16 Long gaze (6)
- 17 Japanese religion (6)
- 18 Editorial article; chief (6)
- 21 Hotpot, eg (4)

Solution to Crossword 9644

C	H	A	R	D		C	O	M	E	S	U	P	
H	T	E		I	O	T		O					
A	N	T	I	M	I	C	R	O	B	I	A	L	
M	H	O	E	D		P		Y					
O	V	E	R	L	O	R	D		T	E	M	P	
I		C		I		O		U		N			
S	P	O	U	S	E		O	N	E	D	G	E	
	A		H		E		S					M	
H	I	L	T		N	I	G	H	T	C	A	P	
A		F	O		G		A		L		A		
S	P	A	N	I	S	H		V	A	U	N	T	
T		C		L		T		E		B		H	
E		L	E	G	Y		H	O	N	E	S	T	Y

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 Medium No 6321

40×		3÷		3÷	
3		2-		10+	
3÷	14+		1-		
	120×		2÷		
4-				1-	2-
	5-		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.

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Futoshiki No 4869

□	□	□	□	□
		∇		∇
□	□	□	□	□
∇			∇	
□	□	>	□	□
		∇		
□	□	<	□	□
∧				
□	<	□	□	<

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 3828

		8	7	17	13			4	37	
	17					26	11	12		
45										19
4					17			13		
			18	17					5	
	29	21	9		21			11		
35							18			
16				29						
			7	23						
11						11			8	4
14			15						3	
			16			5	12	9		
	45									
		8								
					13					

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.

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Quintagram®

Solve all five cryptic clues using each letter underneath once only

1 The French kings frolic (4)

— — — —

2 Seat is cold – it's uncomfortable! (5)

— — — — —

3 Flight from outer parts of enormous promontory (6)

— — — — — —

4 Fish obtained by waterside area (7)

— — — — — — —

5 Grim pro playing bridge? (10)

—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
A	A	A	B	C	C	C	C
D	D	D	D	E	E	F	G
H	H	I	I	K	K	L	N
O	O	O	P	R	R	S	U

Brain Trainer

EASY	47	$\times 2$	$- 6$	75% OF IT	$+ 6$	$\frac{1}{3}$ OF IT	$+ 9$	$\times 2$	$+ 6$	$\div 12$	ANSWER	
MEDIUM	19	SQUARE IT	$+ 87$	$+ \frac{1}{2}$ OF IT	75% OF IT	$- 38$	50% OF IT	$+ 61$	$+ \frac{1}{2}$ OF IT	$- 79$	ANSWER	
HARDER	155	$+ 578$	$\times 4$	50% OF IT	$+ 668$	$\times 3$	$+ \frac{1}{2}$ OF IT	$- 778$	$\frac{4}{5}$ OF IT	$- 879$	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 13 words, average; 18, good; 23, very good; 29, excellent

Yesterday's answers
 east, easy, est, eyas, its, sate, sati, **satiety**, say, sea, seat, sei, set, seta, sett, sit, site, stat, state, stay, stet, sty, stye, tase, taste, tasty, test, testa, testy, yeast, yes

Cell Blocks No 5212

			4	4	
2	2				
		6			4
	8			2	
			4		
2	7	4			

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 3831

	$+ 3$	\times		$= 5$
$-$		\times		$+ 104$
$+$		\times		\times
6	$-$		$+$	$= 4$
$= 4$	$= 189$	$= 45$		

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 Tricky No 9696

8		23		19			5
23			7		22		
		29		11	21		14
7							
15		10		13	22	23	
7	9		8				
					6	20	19
11	13	8		9			
		23					

Killer Deadly No 9697

10	8		20		23			12
	24			21	23			
					26			
7		19				21		
11								19
14		26						
8				21				42
15	7		20					
				8				

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.

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Times Crossword 29,031

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9									10					
11						12								
					13									
14		15							16					
17			18		19				20					
21								22			23			
							24							
25					26									
27									28					

ACROSS

- 1 Probe deep mental impression (5)
- 4 Inexperienced hack receives key preliminary report (9)
- 9 Romance relies on this go-between (9)
- 10 Stock ending for rude joke (5)
- 11 Do well dividing four-fifths of one plus two by four (6)
- 12 Fox to live a more feral life (8)
- 14 Doctor is averse initially to making bold claims (9)
- 16 Piece for example about unpleasant material (5)
- 17 Insist sports must involve cycling (5)
- 19 What puts off cleaner using Hoover finally for good? (9)
- 21 Certified examination having had daughter take it (8)
- 22 Start of appeal proceedings affecting particular chambers (6)
- 25 Unspecified number subtracted from lower number (5)
- 26 Charge of French writer diminished Italian poet (9)
- 27 Respect to cast is only shown under exceptional circumstances (3-6)
- 28 Polish author overwhelmed by death (5)

DOWN

- 1 We recalled published, unused books lacking complete clarity (15)
- 2 Subject to EU articles (5)
- 3 Take away something vital, say (7)
- 4 Insensitive note carefully hiding doubtful statement (4)
- 5 Shrink still regularly used other material (10)
- 6 Cast admitting exhausted ensemble is a sensation (7)
- 7 Exuberant quality of a social event providing cake? (9)
- 8 Struggled to find inspiration and livened the party up (15)
- 13 Psychic underground worker filled with sense of foreboding (4-6)
- 15 Was set terribly hard work here? (9)
- 18 Book somewhere to watch big game perhaps (7)
- 20 Train elite unit erecting climbing frames (7)
- 23 Senseless way in which space and time end (5)
- 24 Stick helpful pieces of advice up (4)

Yesterday's solution 29,030

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

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.

Samurai difficult

Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

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

Futoshiki

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.

□	□	□	□	<	□
	∨				∧
□	□	□	□		□
□	□	>	□		□
		∨			
□	□	□	5		□
∧					∨
3	□	□	<	□	□

Train Tracks

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.

	3	5	4	3	3	1	4	4	
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	3
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	4
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	5
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	5
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	4
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	3
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	2
	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	1

B

Sudoku easy

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

Killer gentle

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.

4	12		9		17		7	
	12		13	13		15		
15	5	8		17		8	12	
				8				17
21		11				7	13	
12		4	12	11	23			5
							12	
17			7		8			11
12		14		3		10		

Suko

12	19	
16	23	

17	12	16
----	----	----

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

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, 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.

17	7	7	25	17	7	19	24		3	6	17	23	
5		4		9		1		5		20		14	
1	3	8	6	19		26	22	9	8	6	9	4	
10		18		26		26		1		19		9	
10	22	9	2		12	6	E	8	19	9	11	9	22
		23		26		25		26				22	
21	6	8	23	9	24		24	1	16	5	8	11	
9				19		23		3		7			
18	22	1	24	12	1	3	16		8	19	7	8	
15		3		7		7		22		1		11	
26	19	6	20	V	1	6	17		4	3	13	1	26
7		26		22		6		25		7		6	
8	4	8	4		9	25	21	7	1	3	6	25	

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	E	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	R	V	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Mini Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

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

Solutions in tomorrow's Times2

THE  TIMES

MindGames Wednesday September 25 2024
Brain boost puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

SAMURAI

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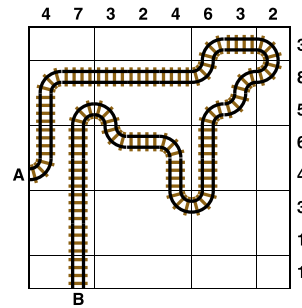
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MINI SUDOKU

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

TRAIN TRACKS



FUTOSHIKI

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SUDOKU

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KILLER

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CODEWORD

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