

About Sudoku

Sudoku is a popular logic game invented in 1979 that has swept the world during the last couple years to become a fixture in daily newspapers alongside crossword puzzles.

Conventional Sudoku is played on a 9 by 9 grid divided into nine 3 by 3 regions. I developed this smaller faster version of Sudoku to introduce kids to Sudoku. Although the grid is smaller, the problem solving challenges are the same as in conventional Sudoku.

Sudoku is a great game for developing logical thinking skills. Sudoku also helps develop spatial thinking, and pattern recognition skills.

Tips for mastering Sudoku

- **Don't guess!** Think logically. There's always at least one place where you can figure out that only one number will work.
- **Be sure of each move.** Each challenge has just one solution, and if you get off track it can be hard to get back on.
- **Play with a friend.** Compete to see who can fill in the most numbers (use two colors). Or cooperate and solve it together.
- **Develop strategies.** Notice the techniques you use for finding the next move. Give your strategies names so you can remember them, and try explaining your strategies to someone else.
- **Play Sudoku in the newspaper.** Sudoku appears daily in many papers and online.
- **Make your own.** Draw a blank 5 by 5 grid, divide it into five regions, each with five square, then fill in numbers until you have a solution. Remove as many numbers as you can so there is still only one solution. Show your puzzle to someone else and see if they can solve it.

Answers

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

1

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

2

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

3

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

4

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

5

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

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

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

8

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

9

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

10

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

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

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The value of math games

We read to our kids as a way of nurturing a love of reading. We can create the same warm feelings around math by playing math games with our kids.

Most familiar games abound with math. Card games are filled with numbers. Board games like Monopoly are rich with calculation and probability. Strategy games like chess require sharp logical reasoning.

Puzzles like Sudoku hone mathematical problem solving skills. It is no coincidence that most scientists and engineers love puzzles. For more thoughts about puzzles and math education, see my web site <http://scottkim.com>. You can email me at scott@shufflebrain.com.