

# Mini Letter Sudoku Puzzles

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## What's the explanation?

Sudokus (pronounced *soo DOH kooz*) are a popular puzzle and an excellent brain training activity. Usually, sudoku puzzles are number puzzles. However, they can also be letter puzzles or even symbol puzzles. Sudoku puzzles primarily exercise executive functioning, including sustained attention, working memory, and deductive reasoning. However, it is often difficult for people to learn how to do the typical 9 X 9 sudoku puzzles that have become so ubiquitous in recent years. (You can find them everywhere—in newspapers, at the grocery store checkout counter, and even in those in-flight magazines on airplanes.)

For those who find the 9 X 9 puzzle too challenging, we have had excellent success starting people with smaller 4 X 4 sudoku puzzles and then switching to 6 X 6 puzzles. When the person has mastered those, we switch to easier 9 X 9 sudoku puzzles and progressively harder 9 X 9 puzzles. This technique allows people to have success, which likely increases self-efficacy and motivates them to do more.

The rules for completing a **letter** sudoku is the same as for a number sudoku. To solve a 4 X 4 letter sudoku puzzle, make sure that every horizontal row, every vertical column, and every 2 X 2 sub-square contains the letters A, B, C, and D. The same general principle applies to 6 X 6 puzzles and the typical 9 X 9 puzzles.

Here is an example of a mini letter sudoku puzzle:

C		D	
	A		C
B	C		
A			B

C	B	D	A
D	A	B	C
B	C	A	D
A	D	C	B