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## Celebrity crossword printable

Photo: Pixabay (Pexels)For some reason, lots of people believe that the ability to solve crossword puzzles is a talent doled out at birth to a select few. This couldn't be farther from the truth. Crosswords aren't an immutable test of your vocabulary or intelligence—they're a learnable skill that anyone can develop.Learning new skills is one of the best ways to make yourself both marketable and happy, but...Read moreNo other word game or puzzle asks quite as much of your brain as a crossword. Experienced puzzlers consider not just the literal meaning of each clue, but also similar ones they've seen before, frequently repeated answers, syntax quirks, puns, cultural references—and, of course, the puzzle's theme. Unfortunately, this means that crosswords can be downright unwelcoming to newcomers. Everyone starts somewhere, and no matter what your capabilities look like now, here are four general strategies to help you improve.Do Puzzles Every DayThe only way to improve at crosswords is to do lots of them, and the best way to do that is to work them into your daily routine. For me, that means tackling a few puzzles from an ancient book of 365 Will Shortz crosswords before bed every night. My mom prints out Washington Post crosswords and chips away at them over breakfast; my friends who commute by bus or train are diehard New York Times crossword app fans. New York Times puzzles are most folks' crossword gateway drug for a reason: they're easy to find and have a built-in difficulty grading. Mondays are the easiest, Saturdays are the hardest, and the puzzles in between ramp up day by day, so you can pick and choose the ones that work for you. That said, the New York Times is far from the only publisher out there. The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and Merriam-Webster also publish daily American-style crosswords; if cryptic crosswords are your jam, try The Guardian. Some organizations, like Queer Crosswords and Puzzles for Progress, will even send you original themed puzzles as a reward for nonprofit donations. Just remember that each publication has its own style—mastering the tricky clue phrasing in a Saturday New York Times puzzle won't necessarily translate to one from the Post, and vice versa.Use an AppIf you really want to up your crossword game, subscribing to an app, like this one from the New York Times, is a great idea. As much as I love them, paper puzzles just can't touch the user-friendly features you get with an app. You can easily check your work or reveal answers letter by letter, rather than accidentally peeking at the entire solution. This demystifies clues just enough to make them feasible, which is exactly what you want. Also, most apps time your work, which makes it easy to measure your progress. But really, the biggest advantage is accessibility: carrying around thousands of digital puzzles in your pocket makes it easy to do a lot of puzzles.Know When—and How—to CheatCheating is a sensitive topic among crossword enthusiasts, but there's no denying it has its place. Crosswords should be fun, and repeatedly banging my head against the same wall, praying for a different result, isn't my idea of fun. Besides, frustration is a lousy teacher; unless you have serious competitive puzzle aspirations, stubbornly refusing to look up answers or check your work will get you nowhere.A lot of games require a big time investment—at least, if you want to have the best gear, the...Read moreObviously, you should solve every clue you possibly can without help, but you can't improve without a challenge. A bit of strategic cheating can guide you through even the toughest puzzles. Apps make this super easy: just check or reveal letters one at a time until you can solve a particularly nasty clue. This gives you just enough information to (mostly) hack it on your own, which in turn makes the answer more likely to stick in your memory. Paper puzzles make strategic cheating a little tougher, but thanks to the Internet, not by much. If you're stuck on a print crossword, Google the whole clue in quotes. Framing your search around the clue rather than, say, how many letters you have to work with will help you understand what the clue wanted from you. Over time, you'll find yourself needing less and less help to solve puzzles that previously would've been real stumpers. Study UpIf you're serious about crossword mastery, the Internet is full of likeminded people who would love to help. A blog like Rex Parker's is a great place to start. He solves the New York Times puzzle each day, compares the difficulty to other puzzles from that day of the week, and breaks down key clue/answer pairs in a short post. Between the posts and the comments, you'll get a more complete picture of the solution than if you'd just looked up the answers.You can also specialize even further and brush up on your crosswordese—words that appear frequently in crosswords but almost never in conversation. The New York Times has a quiz that tests your crosswordese knowledge, and there's a more general guide from Dictionary.com. Perhaps predictably, there's also a whole website devoted to crosswordese, with a new word featured every day and an extensive archive.If a statistical approach is more your speed, there are crossword answer databases out there. Data scientist Noah Veltman analyzed a set of New York Times crossword clues and answers from 1996-2012, then arranged them by "crosswordiness" and how frequently they appeared. You can filter the lists by the minimum number of appearances or word length, and see details about any given answer. Similarly, Xwordinfo.com will show you the most popular answers and clues for Times puzzles by year or word length. Hell, you could really go all-out and code yourself some training programs like this guy did, though it's unclear whether his approach is more effective than just doing a whole bunch of crosswords. This is not to say that you must build a robot or memorize clues to solve crosswords more efficiently; the best "training strategy" is the one that makes you happy. It doesn't matter how many puzzles you solve, or how fast you can solve them—just that you keep at it. If you can do that, you'll never stop improving. RD.COM Knowledge Brain GamesWe've collected a number of the crossword puzzles that Reader's Digest runs in their large print edition every month for the past few years. Give these printable crossword puzzles a try and then come back to see how many answers you got correct. Bonus, they help keep your brain sharp! Snap/ShutterstockWe've used the names of Snow White's diminutive friends as clues in this crossword. How they are defined is up to you to determine. Here's a tip: If you whistle while you work, solving will go faster.Download the printable crossword © 2017 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Joe Seer/ShutterstockA bit of wisdom is threaded through this puzzle, expressed by a multitalented performer with seven Emmys. Can you deduce the identity of this role model, as well as her smart observation?Download the printable crossword © 2017 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Maria Ivanushkina/ShutterstockAfghan can refer to a cozy blanket, a native of a certain Asian country, or a silky-haired hunting hound. In this puzzle, we feature five more dog breeds that do double duty.Download the printable crossword © 2017 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. LightField Studios/ShutterstockEvery year, the James E. Sullivan Award is presented to the nation's most outstanding amateur athlete. The first honoree was golfer Bobby Jones, in 1930. Can you deduce the identities of five other winners with just the year and the sport as clues?Download the printable crossword © 2017 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Hanasaki/ShutterstockThis puzzle features phrases that begin with the word short. But to make these answers even briefer, we've omitted the short. So, for example, in response to the clue "Finalists," you'd write "list" in the grid ("short list").Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Maren Winter/ShutterstockIs there a doctor in the house? This puzzle offers up a healthy dose of physicians and academics from literature, film, and television who use the title "Dr."Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Kenneth Keifer/ShutterstockMartha Washington became America's first "first lady" in 1789, but the title wasn't widely used to refer to the president's wife until the late 1800s. We feature the names of five other first ladies in this puzzle.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Berke/ShutterstockThe Scripps National Spelling Bee takes place every May. We're featuring seven winning words from past bees. Can you guess these tricky terms from just the definition and the year? Are you smart enough to solve these tricky detective riddles?Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. chris melville/ShutterstockThe board game Clue has been part of pop culture for nearly 70 years. It originated in Britain, where it's called Cluedo. And who can forget the 1985 big screen adaptation, with three different endings? Get ready to play word detective as you ferret out the names of two suspects and three weapons from the original game.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Bigone/ShutterstockThere are seven themed answers in this puzzle—but what is our theme? You'll need to figure out the first six boldface clues to identify what they have in common. If you like these printable crossword puzzles, you'll also want to try these hard riddles that will test your smarts.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. kathayut kongmanee/ShutterstockAlfred Hitchcock once said, "Puns are the highest form of literature." We hope you agree because this puzzle features six of them. The subject is sea life, so if you're feeling particularly confident, use a pen ... just for the halibut.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. AgriTech/ShutterstockA glass of beer has a head. So does a corporation, a table, a class, and a drum. This puzzle features five answers that use anatomical parts in different contexts. The task is not as tough as nails; in fact, even a solving tenderfoot can tackle it, especially if an experienced solver lends a hand.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Mundus/ShutterstockThis puzzle focuses on fabrics, twisting familiar phrases into punny new ones. Weave your way through the six themed clues, and see what you think of our material.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. WilliamHarris97/ShutterstockThis puzzle features mash-ups of famous monikers. (For example, rock singer Axl + former president George = ROSEBUSH.) All the themed answers have one additional thing in common, which you'll discover as you solve. These brain games will boost your brain power.Download the printable crossword © 2018 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Robsonphoto/ShutterstockThis puzzle features clues containing winter itself. Though the weather outside might be frightful, we hope solving this puzzle is delightful.Download the printable crossword © 2019 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. pongpinun traisrisilp/ShutterstockWill this puzzle leave you beaming? We certainly hope so. Each of our five themed clues contains a different light source. So when you get a bright idea, place the correct letters in the grid.Download the printable crossword © 2019 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. son Photo/ShutterstockEvery decade seems to bring a new batch of resourceful detectives to the small screen. We've loaded this puzzle with a septet of shrewd mystery solvers. Can you ferret them out?Download the printable crossword © 2019 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Hafiez Razali/ShutterstockThe five themed entries in this puzzle are as different as can be, but they have one thing in common. Can you catch it? Here's a clue: The trait is in the words themselves, not their meanings. If these printable crossword puzzles aren't enough of a challenge for you, try these word puzzles that will leave you stumped.Download the printable crossword © 2019 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Rodrigo S Coelho/ShutterstockAre you ready to hit the books? In this puzzle, we've abridged the names of five literary classics. For example, you might encounter a Dickens novel about working out, Great Pecc, or that Fitzgerald classic about group therapy, The Great Gab. (Note that no letters are rearranged—only removed.)Download the printable crossword © 2019 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Nick Beer/ShutterstockThe six themed clues in this puzzle are common expressions, and the answers have one additional thing in common: Where they fall in the grid provides an extra hint.Download the printable crossword © 2019 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Rob Latour/Shutterstock This month's puzzle features a piquant quote from comedian and actor Lily Tomlin, split into four answers. Can you fill in her witty remark? Download the printable crossword © 2019 BY TRUSTED MEDIA BRANDS, INC. Universal/Kobal/ShutterstockMany celebrities and fictional characters share their names with U.S. states—think playwright Tennessee William's and Scarface's Tony Montana, for example. This month's puzzle highlights five more notable namesakes.Download the printable crossword © 2019 BY TRUSTED MEDIA BRANDS, INC. Rawpixel.com/ShutterstockDid you know that only male turkeys gobble? Or that George H.W. Bush was the first POTUS to formally pardon a turkey? Or that the first Thanksgiving was actually a three-day celebration? Our puzzle features five more Turkey Day tidbits.Download the printable crossword © 2019 BY TRUSTED MEDIA BRANDS, INC. fzkcs/ShutterstockThis month's crossword includes seven clever coinages from writer Bill Boufford. Here are just one of his dictionary wannabes: A "ceffish" is someone who talks on the phone and ignores in-person companions. Can you figure out the rest?Download the printable crossword © 2017 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. © 2020 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. © 2020 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. © 2020 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Also, try to solve these logic puzzles that will keep you guessing. Radachynskyj/Getty ImagesThe idea of separation figures prominently in some popular phrases—"trial separation," "the great divide," "absence makes the heart grow fonder," and so on. This month's puzzle features five phrases riffing on the concept. Give yourself a little space. Use your writing tool of choice, and proceed to solve.Download the printable crossword © 2020 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Roman Valiev/Getty ImagesYou've probably seen your fair share of action-packed blockbusters in the warmer months, but summer movies can also be family comedies, coming-of-age stories, or nostalgic films. So grab some popcorn (plus your pencil) and find the four famous summertime flicks in this month's puzzle.Download the printable crossword © 2020 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Dan MacMedan/Getty ImagesOnly a small number of actors have won the thespian equivalent of the Triple Crown—an Emmy, a Tony, and an Oscar. This group includes Viola Davis, Jessica Lange, and Jeremy Irons, to name a few. You'll find five more members of this select society in our puzzle—and you get one title for each as a hint.Download the printable crossword © 2020 by Trusted Media Brands, Inc. Now that you're a master of words after solving these printable crossword puzzles, see how good your artistic eye is and try to spot the difference in these pictures. Subscribe to the large print edition of Reader's Digest to enjoy a new crossword in the magazine every month. Originally Published: September 08, 2020

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