SLIDE PUZZLE

HOW TO PLAY ?

Are you stuck on your slide puzzle? These brain teasers are a fun challenge, and they get a lot easier to do once you crack the best strategies to figure them out. Regardless of whether the grid is 3x3, 4x4, 5x5, or even larger, the same techniques work for solving your puzzle. Keep reading, and we’ll cover how to work your way through a sliding puzzle one row and column at a time.

Slide Puzzle Instructions

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1 Draw a grid showing the right order for the tiles.

* .To keep track of where the tiles should go when you’re finished, draw a grid on a separate sheet of paper. Mark each square of the grid with numbers reflecting the order that the tiles will be in when you have solved the puzzle. In most cases, you will need to put the tiles in numerical order, starting with no. 1 at the top-left corner, and moving down each row left-to-right.
* .Many slide puzzles already have numbered tiles, which makes it easier to know the order they belong in.
* .Slide puzzles with images may not have numbers on the tiles. In this case, assign numbers to the tiles. For example, if a tile has the top-left corner of a face, make that tile number 1 on your grid and continue numbering along the top row.

2 Move the first tile to the top-left corner.

* .Once you have numbered your tiles, your first move will be to place tile no. 1 in its proper space. Slide the tiles into the empty space on the board to move them around. Keep moving them until the no. 1 tile is at the top-right corner. Once it is there, keep it there for the remainder of the puzzle.[1]
* .When moving tiles, look ahead to how far your tile is from where you want it to be. This will help you strategize how to get to the destination in the fewest number of moves possible.
* .;For an easy way to get a tile to the right spot, move the empty space to where you want the tile to end up. Then, continue rotating the tiles around until the correct one is in position.

3 Arrange all but the 2 rightmost tiles of the top row on larger slide puzzles.

* .If you are solving a 3x3 puzzle, you may skip this step. For any larger puzzles, continue sliding the tiles around so the top row is nearly completed in the right order.[2]
* .For a 4x4 puzzle, move the no. 2 tile to the spot immediately to the right of the no. 1 tile.
* .For a 5x5 puzzle, move the no. 2 and no. 3 tiles to their respective positions on the top row.

4 Take the last tile out of the top row.

* . If the last tile is on the top row, it’s more difficult to place the tile immediately to its left. If your puzzle has the correct tile in the top-right corner, temporarily move it to a new spot so it’s out of the way.
* . On a 3x3 grid, the last tile is no. 3.
* .On a 4x4 grid, the last tile is no. 4.
* .On a 5x5 grid, the last tile is no. 5.

5 Move the next-to-last tile of the row into the top-right corner.

* .Slide the next-to-last tile into the top corner temporarily so it’s easier to place the last tile.[3]
* .On a 3x3 grid, the next-to-last tile is no. 2.
* .On a 4x4 grid, the next-to-last tile is no. 3.
* .On a 5x5 grid, the next-to-last tile is no. 4.

6 Move the last tile in the row directly below the top-right corner.

* .This sets up the puzzle so that you can easily move the final two tiles into the top row, in order.[4]

7 Slide the two last tiles into their positions.

* .Move tiles around until the empty space is immediately to the left of the top-right corner. Now bring the next-to-last tile into this space. Now that the top-right corner is open, move the last tile into this corner.[5]
* .Think of the tiles like a snake, where the first tile to move is the head and the second tile follows it into the correct position.
* .You’ve now solved the top row! Leave it untouched for the rest of the puzzle so it stays in the right order. If you are working with a 3x3 puzzle, you can skip to finishing the puzzle.