

Lesson 6

Solo Patterns

Once you've fine-tuned your puzzle by removing all naked-pair combinations, it may be useful to look for various number patterns in your pencil marks. These patterns have to do with the placement of individual numbers that allow you to eliminate those numbers elsewhere. Let's take a simple example.

Using the image on the right, take a look at now the pencil marks for 1 are placed. You'll notice that in the bottom box, the 1 pencil marks appear only in the right hand column. Since a 1 *must* appear in the bottom box, we know that it will be in the right hand column. Carried further, this means that neither of the other two boxes may have a 1 in the right hand column, so the two squares in the center box (right hand column) can be eliminated.

Patterns like this can be crucial solving harder puzzles. Sudoku OTW also helps you out here.

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

The Solo Mode

The Solo mode was designed to allow you to easily recognize these types of patterns. The Solo Mode allows you to focus on the possible locations for one specific

number. To enter the Solo mode, make sure that either the red or the black cursor is on a square with a value assigned, then tap on the SOLO button. When in solo mode, any squares that are not possibilities for the number are shaded, allowing you to easily see patterns like this. The image on the left looks at the same situation we saw above, focusing on the number 1. In it, you can easily see that the only column the bottom box can use for a 1 is the right hand column, which allows you to eliminate the rest of the right hand column. With Auto Pencil Marks on, you can eliminate those pencil marks by tapping on the square and then tapping on the button for the Pencil Mark 1 (just like when you're not in Solo mode). Solo

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

mode adjusts automatically as you assign squares or eliminate pencil marks. When in Solo mode, the number in yellow on the control panel is the Solo Number. You can change the solo number by tapping another number on the control panel or tapping on a square with an assigned value.

There are many patterns to look for (too numerous to list here), but are easy to identify if you think about it. For example, say you're solo number is 9, and that the highlighted boxes for column C are all in box 1. This tells you that in box 1, the square with number 9 must be in column C, eliminating all 9s in columns A or B of box 1.

Solo mode also helps you easily see when a number appears only once in a row, column, or box.

The next lesson covers **Grid Patterns**.