

Killer Sudoku: Full Guide, Rules, Tips & Online Play (2025)

Killer sudoku mixes traditional sudoku with math-based cage sums, making it one of the most strategic puzzle types. Players must fill the 9×9 grid using digits 1–9 without repetition in any row, column, or 3×3 box. What sets killer sudoku apart is the addition of “cages” – outlined areas with a total sum that must be matched with the numbers placed inside. This twist adds layers of logic, planning, and arithmetic.

What Is Killer Sudoku? Killer sudoku is a hybrid logic puzzle combining sudoku rules with kakuro-style sums. Each cage displays a target number, and all digits inside must add up to that total without duplicates. Unlike classic sudoku, killer sudoku often begins with an empty grid, meaning solvers rely entirely on cage math and deduction.

Key Rules:

- Use digits 1–9 with no repetition in any row, column, or 3×3 box.
- Each cage must add up to the printed sum.
- No repeating digits inside a cage.
- Logical deduction is required; guessing is discouraged.

Why It's So Popular in the USA Killer sudoku has grown rapidly in the USA due to its blend of logic and light arithmetic. It provides a deeper mental workout than standard sudoku and is popular among puzzle enthusiasts who enjoy challenging variations.

Strategies to Master Killer Sudoku:

1. Start with small cages — 3, 4, 16, and 17 often have limited combinations.
2. Use known killer sudoku number pairs and triples.
3. Consider both sudoku logic and cage logic together.
4. Look for intersections between cages and classic sudoku constraints.
5. Keep track of possible combinations using pencil marks.

Recommended Online Links:

- Web Solver: <https://www.killersudokuonline.com>
- Play Free Killer Sudoku: https://www.sudokuwiki.org/killer_sudoku

This guide helps beginners and advanced solvers alike understand and master killer sudoku while improving their logic and number skills.