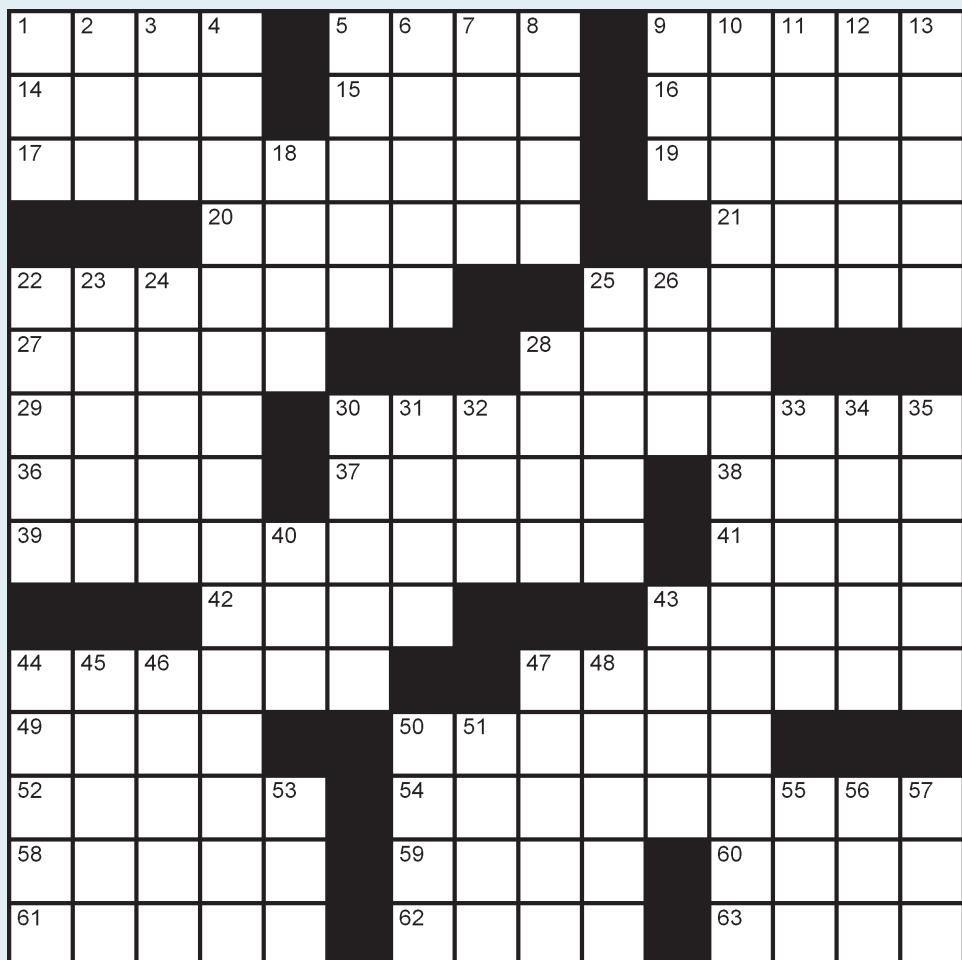


Taking Shape by Paul Coulter

Universal Crossword edited by David Steinberg



- ACROSS**
- 1 Like flexible adapters
 - 5 One of the Everly Brothers
 - 9 Hitching post?
 - 14 Bring up
 - 15 Went up
 - 16 Stop temporarily
 - 17 Return to the starting point, pictorially?
 - 19 "Como ___?"
 - 20 Dido's love
 - 21 Color variation
 - 22 Long locks of hair
 - 25 Maze-running rodent
 - 27 Dashes
 - 28 Andean land
 - 29 Unpleasant scent
 - 30 Freed from blame, pictorially?
 - 36 5,280 feet
 - 37 Not suitable
 - 38 ___ Scotia salmon
 - 39 Reptile that's toxic to eat, pictorially?
- DOWN**
- 1 ___ welder
 - 2 Boardroom VIP
 - 3 River barrier
- 41 Neighbor of Yemen
 - 42 Fateful date in ancient Rome
 - 43 Horror author hidden in "bloodthirstiness"
 - 44 Discarded
 - 47 Least fresh
 - 49 Still contending
 - 50 "Relax, and that's an order!"
 - 52 Italian city where "Otello" premiered
 - 54 Party snack pairing, pictorially?
 - 58 Budget, in brand names
 - 59 Locks in a stable?
 - 60 Early course
 - 61 Breaks from activity
 - 62 Flock females
 - 63 "Terrible" years for tots
- 4 With no pressing needs?
 - 5 Trim back
 - 6 Rabbits dig them
 - 7 Spanish bit of land that anagrams to "sail"
 - 8 Some summer births
 - 9 Copy
 - 10 Words before a grand finale
 - 11 Private teacher
 - 12 Yoga posture
 - 13 Change, as a trip meter
 - 18 Come clean, with "up"
 - 22 Defeat decisively
 - 23 Driver's news source
 - 24 Bacterium in bad lettuce
 - 25 Some turns
 - 26 Kennel sound
 - 28 Daddy
 - 30 Like composition paper
 - 31 "Hanna" star Mireille
 - 32 T, in Athens
 - 33 Bro
- 34 See 35-Down
 - 35 With 34-Down, 1988 and 1992 Olympic swimming champion
 - 40 Most common poem in crosswords
 - 43 What parents don't want to hear
 - 44 Kitchen counter?
 - 45 Chilling like champagne
 - 46 Barn adjuncts, perhaps
 - 47 Rive Gauche's river
 - 48 Records on cassette
 - 50 Topmost point
 - 51 Become friendlier
 - 53 Discouraging words
 - 55 "This instant!"
 - 56 Batman and Robin, e.g.
 - 57 FedEx alternative

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2022 Moon Favors Psychic Marmots



A prescient Pisces moon oversees the gathering at Gobler's Knob in Pennsylvania for the ceremonial appearance of Punxsutawney Phil, Seer of Seers, Sage of Sages, Prognosticator of Prognosticators and Weather Prophet Extraordinary. Whatever the marmot's prediction, you have the power to end your own personal winter.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll expand your circle of influence. You'll be especially charismatic in casual settings. Your manner is informal; you'll shine in this mode. People feel comfortable around you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Part of forwarding your interests is protecting them. You're a warrior with a keen sense about when to defend, attack or retreat. Stay flexible and alert. Keep your options open.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll concentrate on one thing until it's solved. It's a bit like your mind is a television show, and you don't want to change the channel until the end credits roll.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). To make a plan with someone and execute it builds the relationship yet not as much as the casual in-between moments of doing nothing together. It's the way you are when your guard is down that matters most.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your all-out efforts make life exciting. You wouldn't want to run at this intensity all the time, but it's working today. Better to do excess in moderation than to do moderation in excess.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're willing to take other people's feelings seriously if needed, but you're in no mood to take yourself seriously. You skate through tasks that used to be hard because you've upgraded your thoughts on the matter.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're full of ideas, many of them good, only one of them possible at a time. Be wary of adding new projects today because they will take over in unexpected ways. First, finish what you were already working on.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You think you're in the right, and you probably are. For now, keeping that to yourself will give you more options. You'll be able to observe the situation while others are unguarded.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Resources become available to you. You've only just scratched the surface of what you can do. Keep going. You can take this further than you dreamed.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Our solar system is composed of mostly empty space, but today you still don't have enough of it. Your time alone is precious and when you get some, you'll use it well, possibly doing nothing at all, a worthy enough pursuit.

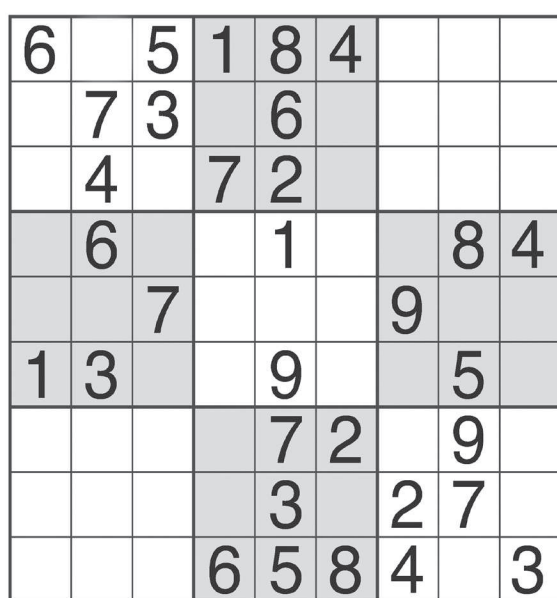
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Giving is tricky. There's a point when it's uncool or counterproductive to give too much. Make double sure you're getting an accurate read on the situation. Take your cues from those more established in it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Simple gestures are effective, especially when it comes to love and romance. Less is more. Too much talking can diminish what you've already accomplished with an intentional moment of eye contact.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 2). Here comes a heap of cosmic gifts. Make room by getting rid of something -- for instance, your tight hold on one idea of the future. Open your mind to options, then in drops a lovely February surprise. Spring sees the blossoming of your professional life with the mastery of a skill. Summer is synonymous with love. Cancer and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 1, 44, 49 and 17.

Universal SUDOKU

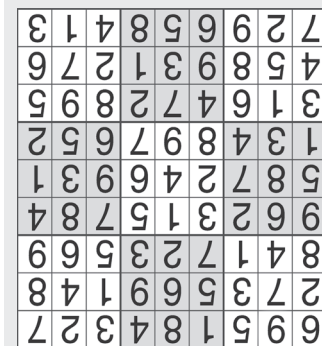
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

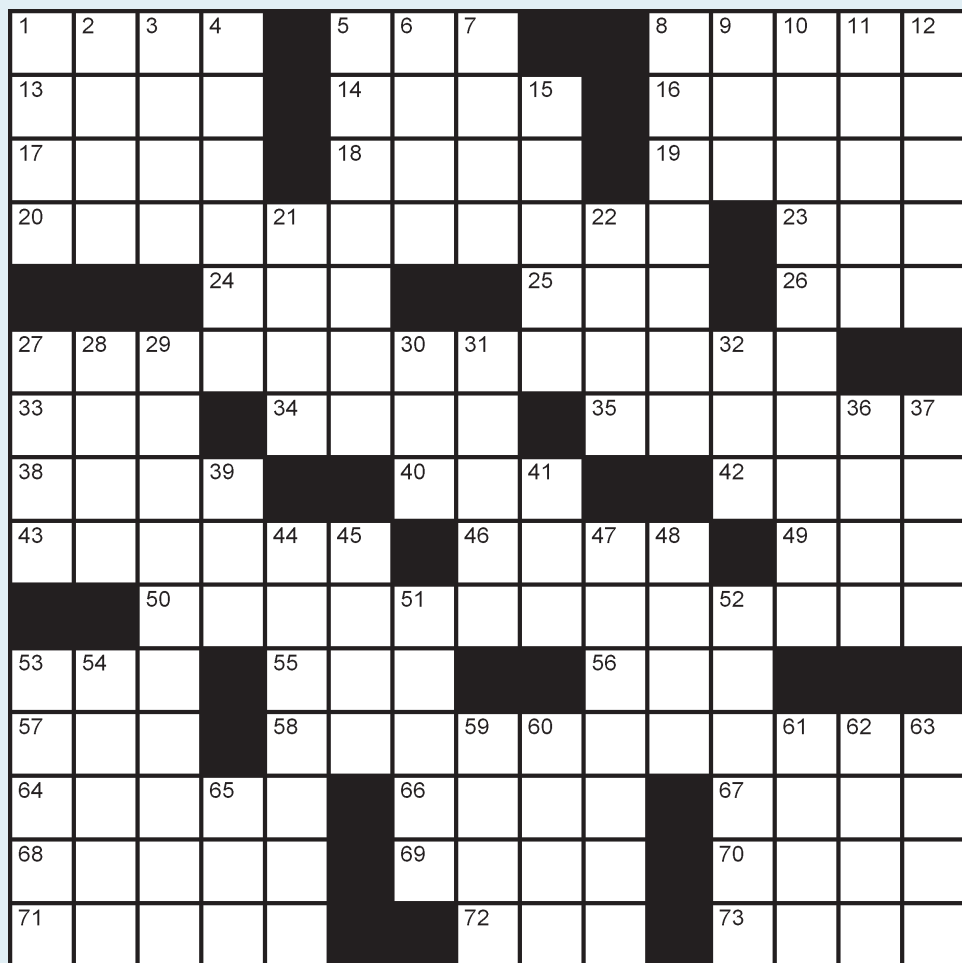


SOLUTIONS



Play Off Pictures by Karen Stock and Matthew Stock

Universal Crossword edited by Amanda Rafkin



- ACROSS**
- 1 Source of suds
 - 5 Like a burrito smothered in sauce
 - 8 They pull up to red carpets
 - 13 ___-Hoop
 - 14 Cosmetics brand
 - 16 Performance that might end on a high note?
 - 17 Plays a role
 - 18 Nevada gambling city
 - 19 Word before "bed" or "slide"
 - 20 Screenplay author for a 1990 Moore-Swayze film?
 - 23 Monopolize
 - 24 Spicy tuna roll fish
 - 25 French for "me"
 - 26 "What's the ___?"
 - 27 inematographers' accessories for a 1997 Jodie Foster film?
 - 33 Mined resource in Catan
 - 34 Swedish furniture store
- DOWN**
- 1 Thick rug type
 - 2 "That hurts!"
 - 3 Range above tenor
 - 4 Volkswagen model
 - 5 Singer Dionne
 - 6 Never have I ___
 - 7 "Jazz" author Morrison
 - 8 Like hip-hugging jeans
 - 9 Hoppy pint, briefly
 - 10 Biblical patriarch who lived to be 969
 - 11 Creme-filled cookies
 - 12 Military officer, informally
 - 15 "I'm innocent!"
 - 21 Tom kha kai cuisine
 - 22 Ages and ages
 - 27 What a snowman's eyes might be made of
 - 28 Black-and-white whale
 - 29 On a ___ basis
- 35 Really harsh
 - 38 Gets 100% on
 - 40 ___-Man (Marvel character)
 - 42 Balm ingredient
 - 43 "Well aren't you fancy!"
 - 46 "'Tis a shame!"
 - 49 Dial-up internet pioneer
 - 50 Gaffers' needs for a 2000 Benicio Del Toro film?
 - 53 Airport with a BART stop
 - 55 Test in a tube
 - 56 ___-you-can-eat
 - 57 "Adult" acorn
 - 58 Graphic designers for a 2018 "Star Wars" origin story?
 - 64 Forward thrust
 - 66 "Just a little off the top" haircut
 - 67 "Noise!" or "No ice!"
 - 68 How sardines are packed
 - 69 Rabbit relative
 - 70 Early cut of a song
 - 71 Sunrise times
- 30 Brewed beverage
 - 31 Hawaiian porch
 - 32 Model Marcille
 - 36 Cheer (for)
 - 37 Shocking things to find in the ocean, perhaps?
 - 39 Respectful address
 - 41 Pampering letters
 - 44 Empowered women in some stories
 - 45 Hairstyle for Erykah Badu, sometimes
 - 47 Startled
 - 48 River mouth buildup
 - 51 Grime
 - 52 "Popular" singer in "Wicked"
 - 53 Not liquid or gaseous
 - 54 Counterpart of flora
 - 59 Like some reports
 - 60 Runs on TV
 - 61 Noticed
 - 62 Domesticate
 - 63 Store away
 - 65 ___ rummy

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2022 End of the Mercury Retrograde



To take advantage of Mercury's newly direct status, create a system to make your life easier while simultaneously aiming you toward a favorable outcome. Goals will eat your energy. Better to organize your life into an arrangement that will ultimately make your work very easy. Planning and innovating pay off under these stars.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll tick five things off of your to-do list before you even get close to the part about your own enjoyment. Avoid future burnout by constructing these lists with more of an eye to pleasure.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Keep looking for that special something to add to your collection. It's out there for you. The search will be an adventure that makes your ultimate find all the more valuable.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You know what type of person you want to become, and you take action every day to move toward this glorious creature until you ultimately merge as one.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You're like a car dealer encouraging potential buyers to take a test drive of your offerings. Once people try the merchandise, they will be hooked!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're not afraid to rock the boat in the name of justice or even for lesser reasons, like your own amusement. How hard should you rock it? That depends on how much you care who tumbles out.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You feel somewhat dependent on the good opinion of others, which makes you human, but also keeps you tethered. To be free, you'll have to give up the notion that everyone should like what you're doing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You've struck on a method that works, and not just for you -- this will work for anyone. And though there will be clear benefits to all who do it your way, it's still important to recognize that this is not the only way. Stay open-minded.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The day invites comparison between A and B. Hint: Just because two things are next to each other doesn't mean there's a logical intrinsic relationship between them.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll solve the problem and get a surge of gleeful excitement. This kind of charge could get addictive. And who do you have to thank for it? The problem itself, without which none of this would be possible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When you think about it, most people throughout human history have believed incorrect things. What sets you apart as a leader and a forward-thinker is that you question and continually update your beliefs.

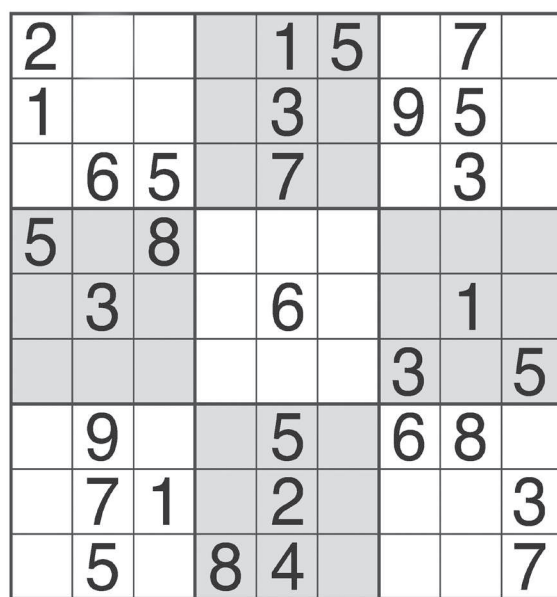
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Behavior tells you everything you need to know. Listen to what people do, not what they say. What they do is soundless and yet it rings out with the loudest truth.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). What's happening now is something you didn't choose, but you still have plenty of power in the situation, most notably, the power to call your trouble a teacher. Lift its heaviness and grow strong.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 3). It's a year of games. You're strategic, competitive and winning. You'll shine in a formal setting for key moments. Pictures will be taken. Even so, the most memorable events will be silly and strange interpersonal dynamics. You'll become even closer to your favorites. Good relationships are your pride and treasure. Cancer and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 15, 2, 28 and 39.

Universal SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆



SOLUTIONS

