

# SudokuCon Boston 2025

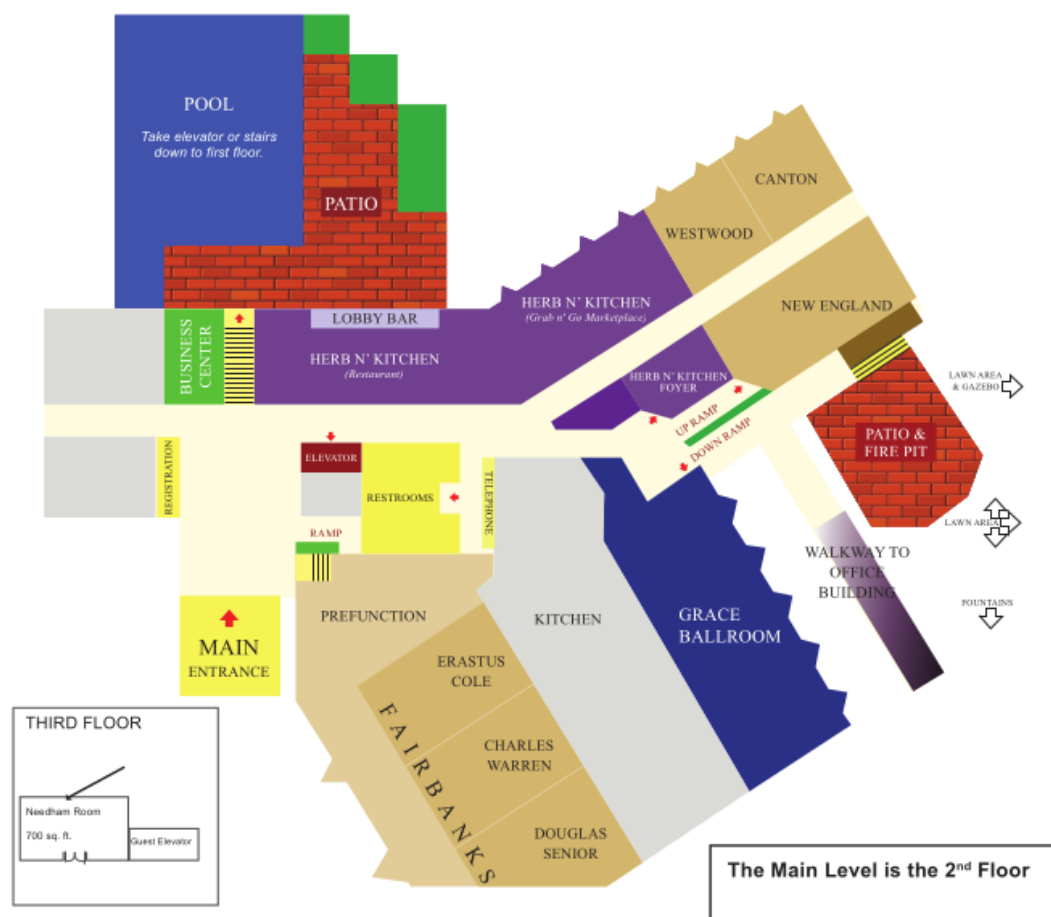
Hilton Boston/Dedham — 3–6 April 2025

Official conference program and schedule of events

Map of the meeting space. All sessions Friday through Sunday are in the Fairbanks Ballroom on the main (second) floor. The Needham Room on the third floor (one flight up) is available for collaborative work. The Thursday evening opening social event is in the New England Room, also on the main floor. Restrooms are just outside the meeting space.



## FUNCTION SPACE DIAGRAM & SPECIFICATIONS



## Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our sponsors:

Artisanal Sudoku

Fit For Puzzle

Smart Hobbies

DiMono's Adventure Hunts

Nikoli Publishing

Sven's SudokuPad

And special credit to **rockratzero** for creating our logo.

Thanks also to the team at the Hilton Boston/Dedham, to the session leaders and presenters, to the setters who have contributed puzzles, to the volunteers helping with check-in and set-up, to everyone who's joined discussion on our Discord server, and especially to all the members of the sudoku community who donated to our fund-raising livestreams.

The core planning group for SudokuCon 2025 is:

clover

MrDon

Gliperal

ProfMeow

James Sinclair

SvenCodes

The remaining voting members of the SudokuCon team are:

carabet

Philip Newman

FullDeck

Rangsk

Math Pesto

rockratzero

Missing a Few Cards

whirlpion



## Things You Need to Know

The check-in table is at the front of the Fairbanks Ballroom, on the main (second) floor of the hotel. Pick up your nametag and an outline of the program.

SudokuCon nametags are required for access to all sessions. Feel free to write your preferred pronouns on your name tag. You can also add an interaction sticker:

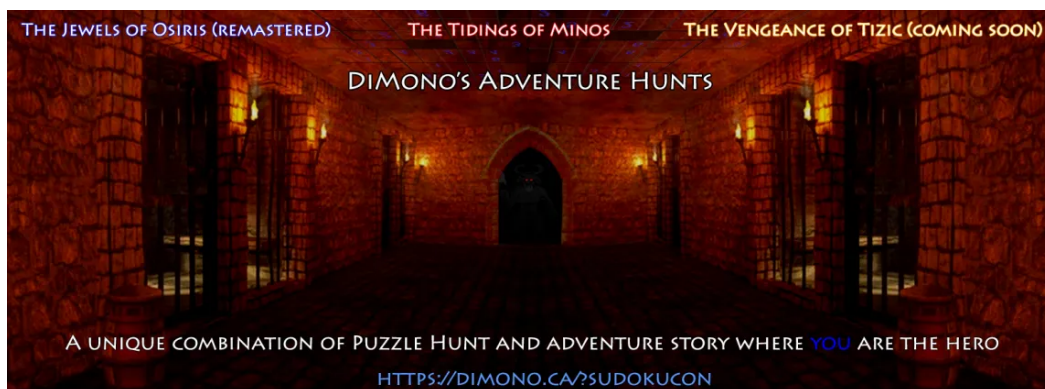
- ★ **green:** I'm gregarious! Come say hello.
- ★ **yellow:** I'm friendly but reserved.
- ★ **red:** I'm introverted or easily overwhelmed. Please give me space.

SudokuCon planning committee members and volunteers (clover, Gliperal, ProfMeow, James Sinclair, Dream Librarian, rockratzero) will be wearing badges labelled “staff,” with distinctive stickers. Find us with any questions or problems.

Lunch Friday and Saturday is included in your registration, if you bought a ticket before 25 March. Sandwiches will be served in the “pre-function space” or foyer outside the Fairbanks Ballroom. Lunch is not guaranteed for attendees who registered late.

For dinner Saturday we have organized an optional gathering with pizza. You can buy your ticket for that when you check in: \$20 per person, payable with various apps or in cash.

Don't forget to pick up your SudokuCon souvenir logo pencil, also at check-in.



# Schedule of Activities

## *Throughout the Con*

Work on the giant **Quilt of Puzzles**, hanging on the wall in the Fairbanks Ballroom. The creation is a collaboration, organized by James Sinclair and including some two dozen different setters. The solve is also meant to be a collaboration!

Hunt for the **Tree of Life**, a puzzle hunt by Juggler in which you must first hunt for the puzzles. There are 18 of them scattered around the Fairbanks Ballroom, and determining the best order to solve them is part of the challenge. You're encouraged to work together.

If  $9 \times 9$  puzzles seem too normal, join in the **Place a Digit and Leave** puzzles by Cane\_Puzzles. These are a trio of  $16 \times 16$  puzzles (including a classic) and you're invited to study a grid for a few minutes, place a few digits, and leave. There are hundreds of digits available!

Look around for other puzzles contributed in advance or created during the Con.

Thursday 3 April

**5:00 PM – 7:00 PM** Casual social meetup, New England Room

Come hang out before the convention! Grab your badge, enjoy open activity tables — puzzles to solve collaboratively, jigsaw puzzle, etc. Enjoy light snacks.

**7:00 PM** Dinner on your own

Friday 4 April

**9:30 AM – 9:45 AM** Official welcome from the SudokuCon Planning Team

**10:00 AM – 11:30 AM** Create Your Own Sudoku Variant Workshop, with Glum Hippo

Learn about creating a new Sudoku variants! In this workshop, you'll think of your own new variants and figure out how to use them.

**11:45 AM – 12:45 PM** The Story of Shikaku, with Yoshi Anpuku, president of Nikoli

Hear about this pencil puzzle type from its inventor.

**1:00 PM – 2:00 PM** Lunch

Sandwiches will be provided in the Fairbanks Ballroom foyer; please leave the vegetarian meals for those who need them.

**2:00 PM – 3:30 PM** Just One Cell Sudoku, with Thomas Snyder and Clover

Like chess puzzles compared to full games of chess, Just One Cell Sudoku are short, bite-sized snacks of Sudoku logic where each grid has just one cell where a logical placement can be made. The “winning move” can be anything from a basic single to a more advanced chain of logical steps that finally unlocks the answer. We've created a playful set of these puzzles as a contest for everyone to enjoy.

**3:45 PM – 5:15 PM** Puzzle Visuals, with Palfly Kampling and Juggler

An interactive workshop on how to make puzzles that look amazing, from tools of the trade, to clue design, to visual accessibility, to effective puzzle theming. Includes a SudokuMaker “superuser” demo, and a break-out session where small groups will get to design new puzzle visuals. Bring your computer or phone.

**5:30 PM – 7:00 PM** Real-Life Puzzle Streaming, with Lucian's Rule, ChattyKathy, and Nell Gwyn

Watch our streamers collaboratively solve a puzzle in front of our in-person audience — basically like Twitch or YouTube streaming, but in real life! If there's time after, we'll open the floor afterwards for Q&A about puzzle streaming/video creation.

**7:00 PM** Dinner on your own

Saturday 5 April

**9:30 AM – 11:00 AM** Creating and using computer sudoku solvers, with Rangsk, sirxemic, and Sven  
Makers of well-known setting and solving tools will pull back the curtain on their work.

**11:15 AM – 12:45 PM** Mathematics of Pencil Puzzles, with Zetamath

Learn about some graph theory and how it leads to some of the really non-trivial results like spooky impossible Yin-Yang puzzles and Heyawake penalty theory, as well as some of the simpler stuff that is very often relevant in weird sudoku puzzles.

**1:00 PM – 2:00 PM** Lunch

Sandwiches will be provided in the Fairbanks Ballroom foyer; please leave the vegetarian meals for those who need them.

**2:00 PM – 3:30 PM** One Sudoku, 81 Solvers, with Gliperal

Collaborate with 80 other people to solve a sudoku... one cell at a time.

**3:45 PM – 5:15 PM** How To Create Irresistible Puzzle Packs, with Timberlake (SmartHobbies)

Join Timberlake from Smart Hobbies for this interactive, hands-on workshop where you'll help design a brand-new Sudoku puzzle pack from scratch! You'll vote on the theme, puzzle selection, names, cover image, solving strategies, and how to link the puzzles into a cohesive set. Along the way, you'll learn key do's and don'ts of puzzle pack creation, based on insights from producing dozens of monthly packs. Avoid common pitfalls, discover what makes puzzles truly engaging, and gain practical tips to elevate your own designs. At the end, attendees will receive an exclusive code to download a customizable puzzle pack template. Don't miss this chance to create, collaborate, and level up your puzzle-making skills!

**5:15 PM – 5:30 PM** Announcements including winners of the Just One Cell contest

**5:45 PM – 7:15 PM** How to Solve Sudoku Like a World Champion, with Thomas Snyder

Thomas Snyder, aka Dr. Sudoku, won three world sudoku championships ('07, '08, '11) in the early years of the Sudoku craze. Come hear stories from many years of competing, including what different sudoku championships entail, how to identify your strengths and weaknesses in solving sudoku, and ultimately train to get faster at solving under pressure. From tales of catching a sudoku cheater to the origins of Snyder's own solving notation, this talk will take you deep inside the world of speed-solving and how top competitors think.

**7:15 PM – 10:00 PM** Communal dinner, optional

Share pizza with the group, in the Fairbanks Ballroom foyer. Tickets available when you check in (\$20).

Sunday 6 April

**9:30 AM – 11:00 AM** Technical developments in classic sudoku, with Philip Newman and Mitchell Lee  
Mitchell Lee (setter of the original "Miracle Sudoku") discusses his research into Fractional Sudoku, a sudoku variant which provides surprising insight into the difficulty of classic sudoku puzzles and the techniques used to solve them. Philip Newman presents other advances in the world of sudoku research, including the search for the "world's hardest sudoku" (and why that is such a nebulous concept), as well as the impact of new solving techniques on measures of difficulty.

**11:15 AM – 12:45 PM** Snackdoku Setting Party with FullDeck, Missingafewcards, and Scojo

Learn how to set your own 4×4 Snackdoku! Whether you're new to Sudoku and want to learn how to set your own puzzles, or an experienced setter who just wants to hang out and set some snacks, all are welcome here!

**1:00 PM** Adjournment



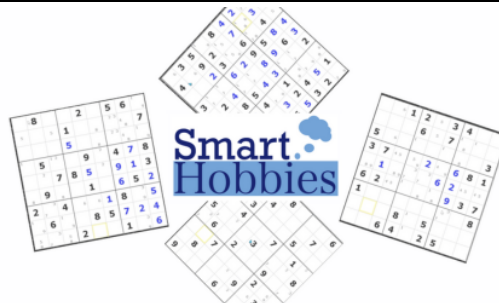
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"Fit For Puzzle" features a variety of logic-based pencil puzzles and a fitness logbook with 24 simple and quick exercises. These exercises require no equipment or floor space, ensuring a full-body workout in just 10-30 minutes a day. Discover a new way to nurture your body and mind with "Fit For Puzzle."



<https://www.youtube.com/@SmartHobbies>

**ARTISANALSUDOKU.com**  
 by James Sinclair



Hand-crafted puzzles, made fresh weekly.  
 100% cage-free.\*

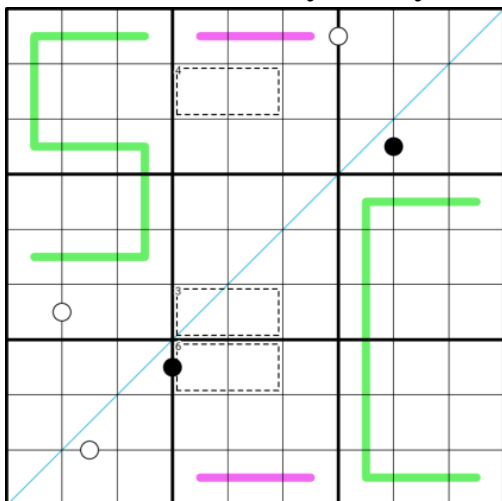
\*Not technically true. In fact, there are a lot of cages.



*Sven's SudokuPad*

## Puzzles!

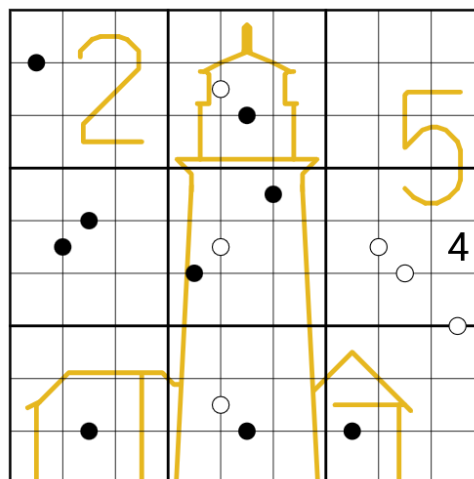
### SudokuCon 2025 by Matt y Ddraig



Solve in [SudokuPad](#)

Normal Sudoku rules apply, and all clues are standard: diagonal, German whispers, renban, killer, and kropki.

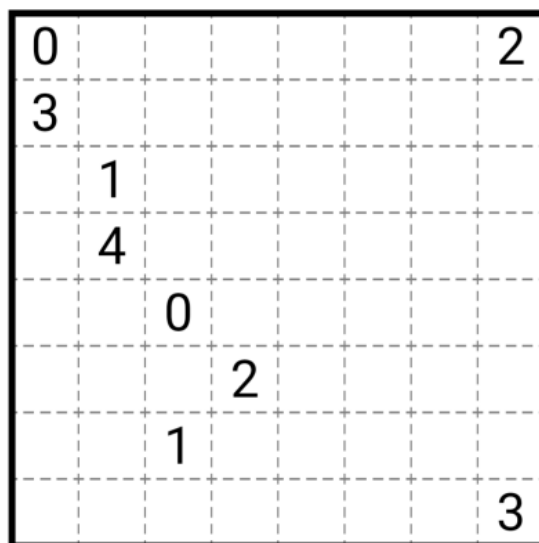
### Boston Light by rockratzero



Solve in [SudokuPad](#)

Normal Sudoku rules apply, and all clues are standard: Dutch whispers and kropki.

### La Paz by Matt y Ddraig



Solve in [PuzzLink](#)

Shade some cells on the board, and divide the rest into regions of 2 cells.

1. No two shaded cells are horizontally or vertically adjacent.
2. Numbers must be contained in a  $1 \times 2$  region. It's possible for a region to have multiple numbers.
3. A clue in a horizontal region indicates the amount of shaded cells in the same row as the clue. Likewise, a clue in a vertical region indicates the amount of shaded cells in the same column.