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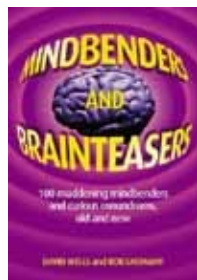
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May 2003

Reviews

## 'Mindbenders and Brainteasers'

reviewed by Helen Joyce



### Mindbenders and Brainteasers

Many people, when they look back, can pinpoint the precise moment when their interest in mathematics was awakened – it was when they found a puzzle that intrigued them. Perhaps they now realise the puzzle was trivial or insignificant, but at the time something about it captured their imagination and started them on a path that may have led very far – perhaps even into fundamental mathematical research. The playfulness and sense of humour inherent in a good puzzle can stay with mathematicians throughout their lives, acting as an inspiration and guide in their work.

So a puzzle is not just a puzzle, and solving "mindbenders and brainteasers" is both a lot of fun and a very good way to get a feeling for what maths is all about. By no means all the puzzles in this book are overtly mathematical – and, as the authors say in the introduction, many can be solved "after only a few moments thought" – but all are fun, and many have surprising short cuts or unexpected twists.

There are 100 puzzles, all with solutions, and a few harder ones are starred to indicate that pen and paper will probably be needed. For a taster, look at this issue's puzzle [Rolling with money](#).

No mathematical training is necessary to enjoy this book – just a playful enquiring mind. It would be a great present for an enthusiastic 11 year old, but even quite sophisticated adults will find something to entertain them. And teachers needing inspiration for activities need look no further.

#### **Book details:**

*Mindbenders and Brainteasers*

## 'Mindbenders and Brainteasers'

David Wells and Rob Eastaway  
paperback – 224 pages (2003)  
Robson Books  
ISBN: 1861055625

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