Spotlight on...

The Octo Puzzle

At first sight, the Octo puzzle (also known as **Disco Puzzle**) looks like a very colorful bracelet. It consists of eight (differently colored) "barrels" which are connected to each other with some smaller black parts. A closer inspection reveals a few cuts that enable two types of rotational movement. The first type splits the entire circle into two parts, while the second type separately rotates each individual "barrel". A "barrel" is made of four cell parts.

Although relatively easy to solve, it has
265,252,859,812,191,058,636,308,480,000,000 different combinations!!! The
calculation is done by keeping one cell element stabilised, and using seven
generators of order 4 and one of order 8 (note that this is my personal way for
calculating all possible combinations and may vary a bit from other methods -
but not too much).

Despite its attractive appearance and smooth movement, the Octo is an
extremely rare puzzle. It is light weight and pleasant to use, and it allows the
existence of many interesting challenges. The most obvious challenge is to
turn all cells of each "barrel" into the same color, while keeping the colors
into "rainbow order". That is, the colors should have the following order:
blue, **purple**, **magenta**, **red**, **orange**, **yellow**, **olive**, and **green**.

A correct (solved) and a scrambled configuration are shown below

Another way to solve it.

Yet another way to solve it!

The animation image below demonstrates the two types of movement for the Octo puzzle.

It is surprisingly easy to disassamble the Octo puzzle (but must be careful and pull the correct spots!). The pictures below show the (inside and outside) internal structure of this remarkable puzzle.

Two different packages of Octo. Both puzzles are identical and made in Indonesia.
(the left was released in the UK, while the right in Taiwan).

Finally, I must say, **the Octo puzzle is by far the CUTEST puzzle in my collection!** :-)

Please let me know of any comments or suggestions. Thanks! :-)

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