Dad's Puzzler

a.k.a. Dad's Puzzle, Moving Puzzle, Tit-Bits Teaser No. 1, Pennant Puzzle, Box of Nine, Nine Block Puzzle

Patents and copyrights include L. W. Hardy 1909, J. W. Hayward 1926, Frederic E. Aaron 1927, and C. O. Luce 1953, these two are not dated.

(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches; presented on pages 78-79 and plate 6 of Hordern's book)

Slide the 2x2 piece from the upper left to the lower left (without picking up pieces); the positions of the other pieces don't matter:

Perhaps the most produced mechanical puzzle of the first half of the 20th century, after the Fifteen puzzle. Many were made with the same 4 x 3.25 x 1/2 inch box, the same size and shaped pieces (sometimes plastic in later years), but with additional text or different cover art to promote products (laundry detergent, glue, etc.). See also the Humdinger version.

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# A Typical Dads Puzzler Solution Sheet

This diagram corresponds with the diagram on the puzzle box cover, except that this one is divided into 20 lettered squares.

**Plan of Working**

First move \(IJ\) to \(KL\), means moving the two small blocks from the squares marked \(I\) and \(J\) to squares \(K\) and \(L\).

Second move, \(ABEF\) to \(EFIJ\) means move the large block straight down.

If directions have been correctly followed the large block has been moved from Corner \(A\) to Corner \(C\) and the puzzle is solved.

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**Solution to Dad’s Puzzler**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABCD</td>
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<td>EFGH</td>
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<td>IJKL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- \(IJ\) to \(KL\)
- \(ABEF\) to \(EFIJ\)
- \(CD\) to \(AB\)
- \(GH\) to \(CD\)
- \(IK\) to \(GH\)
- \(LM\) to \(IJ\)
- \(MR\) to \(MQ\)
- \(ST\) to \(RS\)
- \(OP\) to \(NO\)
- \(HT\) to \(PT\)
- \(FG\) to \(GH\)
- \(EI\) to \(FJ\)
- \(MQ\) to \(EI\)
- \(NO\) to \(MN\)
- \(P\) to \(O\)
- \(T\) to \(P\)
- \(RS\) to \(ST\)
- \(MN\) to \(QR\)
- \(OP\) to \(MN\)

- \(GHKL\) to \(KLOP\)
- \(CD\) to \(GH\)
- \(AB\) to \(CD\)
- \(FJ\) to \(BF\)
- \(EI\) to \(A\)
- \(MN\) to \(IJ\)
- \(QR\) to \(MN\)
- \(ST\) to \(QR\)
- \(KLOP\) to \(OPST\)
- \(IJ\) to \(KL\)
- \(AE\) to \(EI\)
- \(BF\) to \(FJ\)
- \(CD\) to \(AB\)
- \(GH\) to \(CD\)
- \(KL\) to \(GH\)
- \(OPST\) to \(KLOP\)
- \(QR\) to \(ST\)
- \(MN\) to \(QR\)
- \(EI\) to \(I\)
- \(FJ\) to \(J\)

- \(AB\) to \(EF\)
- \(CD\) to \(AB\)
- \(G\) to \(C\)
- \(A\) to \(B\)
- \(E\) to \(F\)
- \(I\) to \(A\)
- \(J\) to \(I\)
- \(KLOP\) to \(JKNO\)
- \(DH\) to \(LP\)
- \(BC\) to \(CD\)
- \(FG\) to \(G\)
- \(AE\) to \(BF\)
- \(IM\) to \(AE\)
- \(JKNO\) to \(IJMN\)
- \(P\) to \(O\)
- \(ST\) to \(OP\)
- \(QR\) to \(ST\)
- \(IJMN\) to \(MNQR\)

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A Minimal Move Dad's Puzzler Solution

Here is a solution of 62 straight-line moves; it can be converted to 59 rectilinear moves by combining steps 6/7, 27/28, and 58/59:

(One move = sliding one piece any number of units in one direction)
Dad's Puzzler Diagonal

The diagonal version of Dad's Puzzler is to move the 2x2 piece diagonally to the lower right corner; it is described on page 5 of the 1942 Filipiak book (which gives a solution of 59 moves).

One might think that it would be harder to move the 2x2 piece diagonally to the lower right corner since it is farther away than the lower left. However, here is a solution of only 31 straight-line moves; it can be converted to 29 rectilinear moves by combining steps 6/7 and 18/19:

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(one move = sliding one piece any number of units in one direction)

Note: For harder versions of Dad's Puzzler where there are additional constraints on the final position, see Dad's Puzzler Exchange.

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Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler

Pennant Puzzle, circa 1910.
(cardboard box, 9 cardboard pieces, 4.1 by 3.3 by 1/4 inches)

Often credited as the first version made of Dad's puzzler. A slightly different manufacture of this puzzle has the same box top except at the bottom it says "PATENT ALLOWED DIRECTIONS ON BOTTOM OF BOX" and does not credit Hardy 1909, the same directions except the address for O. K. Novelty of Chicago is listed as "225 North Sangamon St.", and the same baseball teams on the pieces, which are more of an off-white color.

Copyright J. A. Storer
Tit-Bits Teaser, George Newnes, London, Made in the U.S.A., 1927. (cardboard box, 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches; page 78 of Hordern's Book list this as "Tit-Bits Teaser No. 1, 1927")
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Moving Puzzle, Copyright Frederick E. Aaron 1927.
(cardboard box, 9 wood pieces, and solution sheet, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches; left: blank near the bottom where promotion text usually goes; right: vendor sample version)

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Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Eskimo Pie Co., "ELGIN ICE CREAM", circa 1940's?
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches; directions on inside of box top and solution sheet included; different versions different Ice Cream distributor on the box top)

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Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Copyright J. W. Hayward 1926,
manufactured by the Standard Trailer Company, Cambridge Springs, PA,
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches)

Here are the top / bottom (left below) and left / right (right below) box edges:

Here are the directions:

Copyright J. A. Storer
Copyright Standard Trailer Co. 1953,
(cardboard box and 9 plastic pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Cross Publishing, Copyright 1957.
(cardboard box and 9 plastic pieces, 3.25 by 4 by 5/16 inches)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

C. O. Luce 1953, purchased by J.A. Storer as a child circa 1962. (cardboard box and 10 plastic pieces, 4 x 3.25 x 1/2 inches)
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

(metal tray and lid with nine metal pieces, 3.8" x 3.1" x 5/16";
came with blank metal cover, and photo of the puzzle has been glued to it;
*Dads Puzzler Diagonal* is first presented, and then the standard puzzle,
where the solutions allow one to push two or three blocks together)

*Copyright J. A. Storer*
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Adams Company, circa 1940's.
(heavy metal tray and lid with nine metal pieces, 4 x 3.25 x 1/4 inches,
pieces slide well with a nice fit;
directions on the box bottom, solution sheet included;
these two versions the same except for blue vs. black color case;
the next page shows a newer version that is shown on page 62 of the Adams Co. History book)
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Adams Company, circa 1950's.
(heavy metal tray and lid with nine plastic pieces and solution sheet, 4 x 3.25 x 1/4 inches;
solution taped into inside of top cover;
shown on page 62 of the Adams Co. History book)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

(metal tray and nine plastic pieces, 3.75 x 3 x 5/16 inches; shown on page 108 of the Adams Co. History book)

Came with solutions to both Dad's Puzzler and Dads Puzzler Diagonal:

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Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

MOVE A BLOCK PUZZLE

Start with blocks in the following locations:
Yellow in upper left corner,
Two reds, lower left corner vertical position.
Two greens, upper right corner, horizontal position.
Two blacks right center, horizontal position.
Two greens lower right corner, horizontal position.

OBJECT

By continuous moving of blocks - Yellow blocks to lower left corner and red blocks to upper left corner.

RULES

Always keep red blocks in vertical position and greens in horizontal position.

SOLUTION

Move yellow down, green to left, other green up, left black up and to right, yellow right, red up, other red left, both greens left, both blacks down, yellow right, red right, other red up, upper green left, top black left, bottom black up, bottom green right, upper green down, both blacks left, green up, other green right, left black down and right, red down, and other red left, both blacks up, red right, other red down, lower black left and up, both reds up, green left other green down, yellow down, both blocks right, green down, other green left, left black up and right, both greens right, left red up, other red left, yellow left, both blacks down, both greens right, red right, other red up, yellow left, lower black left and up, green up, other green right, yellow down. - LOOK -

Dads Move A Block, unknown date.
(5.5 by 4 by 1.125 inch high wood box with wood pieces)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Aangeboden door:
N. V. Sigareniabriek
GEBRs. GARVELINK
EINDHOVEN

"Offered by:
N. V. Sigareniabriek
GEBRs. GARVELINK
EINDHOVEN"

Leg de blokjes zooals op de bovenstaande fig. is aangegeven in de doos.
Breng nu uitsluitend door schuiven het grote blok AIDA op de plaats van de blokjes B. en C.

"Place the cubes just as the fig. above indicated in the box.
Now apply exclusively large sliding cabin block AIDA on the position of the blocks B and C."

N. V. Sigareniabriek, Eindhoven, the Netherlands, circa 1940's?
(wood box with 9 wood pieces, 4.1" x 3.32" x 5/8")
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

-Central Specialty Co., Hutchinson, Kansas, unknown age.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4.1" x 3.3" x 7/16"; directions inside of box top)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Leech Products Co., Hutchinson, Kansas, unknown age.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 3.5" x 2.8" x 5/16"; directions inside of box top)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

*Piedmont Premium Beer*, undated.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 9/16 inches)

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*Piedmont Premium Beer*, undated.

*..*
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

*Frigidaire Jumble Puzzle, undated.*

(cardboard box and 9 cardboard pieces, 3 by 2.5 by 5/16 inches)

*Copyright J. A. Storer*
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

*Dad's Puzzle, Drueke Blue Chip Game Company, circa 1970's.*
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 5+7/8" x 4+7/8" x 5/8";
box bottom has a plastic insert that helps the pieces slide nicely.)

*Copyright J. A. Storer*
Other Versions of Dad's Puzzler, Continued

Magnetic Square Puzzle,
(plastic pieces with magnetic backs in cardboard box with metal bottom,
7.8 by 7.8 by 5/8 inches)

Kasko Puzzler, "REG US PAT OFF".
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions Of The Moving Puzzle, Continued

Crane Packing Co., Chicago, Copyright J. W. Hayward 1926.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches)

Copyright J. A. Storer
**Other Versions Of The Moving Puzzle, Continued**

*Hostess Puzzle*

Hand one to each guest, announcing that first to solve it may keep it.

Place blocks in box as shown. The puzzle is to move the big square block from “A” to “B” without jumping or raising any block from the bottom of the box or turning any piece.

**Difficult But Possible**

(solution inside)

Made by

*Nevers Crafts Shop*

*Ossipee, N. H.*

*Nevers Crafts Shop*, *Ossipee, N. H.*, 1950's?

(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 5+5/16" x 4+5/16" x 1/2")

*Copyright J. A. Storer*
Other Versions Of The Moving Puzzle, Continued

Moving Puzzle, Copyright Frederick E. Aaron 1941,
"Hasley Bros. MOVING AND STORAGE", Pittsburgh, PA.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4" x 3.25" x 1/2"; directions inside box top)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions Of The Moving Puzzle, Continued

Moving Puzzle, Copyright Frederick E. Aaron 1927, "GREYVAN STORAGE, INC. 1665 Main St., Buffalo 8, N.Y.". (cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, with solution sheet, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions Of Dad's Puzzler With Promotional Cover Art, Continued

Motor Grinding Co., copyright J. W. Hayward 1926.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches; directions on inside of the box top)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions Of Dad's Puzzler With Promotional Cover Art, Continued

F. C. Bellis Independent Oil, patent applied for, copyright J. W. Hayward 1926.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 1/2 inches;
2x2 piece has paper label; directions on inside of the box top)

Copyright J. A. Storer
Other Versions Of Dad's Puzzler With Promotional Cover Art, Continued

Ohio Table Pad Co., copyright J. W. Hayward 1926.
(cardboard box and 9 wood pieces, 4 by 3.25 by 7/16 inches)

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More Versions Of Dad's Puzzler

Copyright J. A. Storer
More Versions Of Dad's Puzzler, Continued
Further reading:

*Hardy Patent*, from: www.uspto.gov - patent no. 1,017,752
  Filed Dec. 14, 1907; granted Feb. 20, 1912.
  Shows as its preferred embodiment (Figure 1) a 4x4 tray with ten pieces (one 2x2, three 1x2, two 2x1, and four 1x1). Claims 8 and 9 addresses a general class of sliding block puzzles with three sizes of pieces, and Claim 10 addresses puzzles with one 2x2 piece, some number of 1x2 and 2x1 pieces, and some number of 1x1 pieces.

*Kuczynski Patent, from*: www.uspto.gov - patent no. 6,039,318
  Figures show Dad's Puzzler and specifications describe a frame for holding it.