

Cryptic Crossword Secrets

*Where EVERY Answer is FULLY
Explained*

*How to Solve Cryptic
Crosswords*

Free E-Book

By Barbara Gettinby



WELCOME

CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS

The dictionary meaning of cryptic is 'veiled in obscurity' or 'of mysterious meaning' and this is how cryptics appear at first. This book serves as an introduction to these enigmatic puzzles.

It is useful to have a dictionary and a thesaurus. There are some good electronic hand-helds on the market which will even allow you to put in a question mark for the letters that you don't know. Some of these gadgets will do anagrams - a great relief when absolutely stuck.

So...we are in a mind game with words and usually each clue is in two parts. The 'key' or simple definition as in a normal crossword, and 'other describing words' which point the way to a solution.

One example of a cryptic clue would be:

Remainder will take a breather (4)

In this case '**remainder**' is the 'key' word and '**will take a breather**' are the other describing words.

The answer is REST.

'**Remainder**' is the rest, and '**will take a breather**' is a rest. This is an example of a Double Dealing clue and we will look at these clues in detail later.

Most of the words in a clue have a purpose - except the small joining words such as: is, but, with, as and the.

There are many subtle strategies used by cryptic compilers. These will be explained under the headings listed below.

Use this Free E-Book to help you solve the puzzles in my *Cryptic Crossword Secrets* E-books available at www.CrypticCrosswordSecrets.com.

Good luck,

Barb Gettinby

CLUE TYPES

- Double Dealings
- Hide and Seek
- Initials Only
- Omissions
- Sounds the Same
- Back Flips
- Jumbled Letters
- Every Second Counts
- Similar Substitutes
- Abbreviations
- Commonly Used Short Words
- Devilish and Dastardly Decoys

STRAIGHT CROSSWORDS AND CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS

Straight crossword puzzles are like mind games with words.

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The puzzles in this volume are designed as 'entry level' cryptics, however I have thrown in a few that are slightly more challenging.

STRAIGHT CLUES

The task is to substitute a different but similar meaning word for that which is suggested in the clue.

Example

Clue Conceal (4) [numeral indicates the number of letters]
Answer Hide

CRYPTIC CLUES

Similar to straight clues but usually in two parts. One part proves the other.

Example

Clue Conceal the skin (4)
Answer Hide

To conceal is to **'hide'** and a skin is a **'hide'**

Often there is a 'key' word or phrase at the beginning or end of the clue. It is a straight definition as in a straight crossword.

The 'secondary' part of the clue will be one or more describing words. Clever and devious means are used to hide the answer within these words.

When tackling these crosswords don't overtax yourself. Start by reading all the clues through and see if any answers 'jump out' at you.

With a cryptic crossword, it would be a very good result to solve three clues on the first try. Bear in mind that when cryptics are published in newspapers you are not expected to solve the complete crossword. They want you to buy the next edition to find the answers.

DOUBLE DEALINGS

With this type of clue there are two definitions, each giving the same answer.

Example 1

Clue Carries the animals (5)
Answer BEARS

Carries (**bears**) the animals (**bears**)

Example 2

Clue Consumes the birds (8)
Answer SWALLOWS

Consumes (**swallows**) the birds (**swallows**)

Example 3

Clue Heads for the bullocks (6)
Answer STEERS

Heads for is **steers** and bullocks are **steers**

Example 4

Clue Educates groups of fish (7)
Answer SCHOOLS

Educates (**schools**) groups of fish (**schools**)

HIDE AND SEEK

This type of clue uses indicators such as 'hiding' or 'holding' to suggest that the answer is hiding in the clue.

Example 1

Clue Not dressed in homespun cladding (6)
Answer UNCLAD

'Not dressed' is the key definition
'In' is the hidden indicator
Homespun **cladding** is where the answer is hiding

Example 2

Clue Masked abuser - vile and obsequious (7)
Answer SERVILE

'Obsequious' is the key definition
'Masked' is the hidden indicator
Abuser **vile** is where the answer is hiding

Example 3

Clue Isle is covered in garlands (4)
Answer LEIS

'Garlands' is the key definition
'Covered in' is the hidden indicator
Isle is, is where the answer is hiding

Here are some indicators of hidden words:

- Enfolding
- Embracing
- Secret
- Retaining
- Possessing
- Clenched
- Found
- In
- Containing
- Holding
- Shrouded
- Masked
- Internal
- Interior
- Screen
- Covered
- Veiled
- Hidden
- Concealed
- Buried
- Inside
- Obscured

INITIALS ONLY

This type of clue uses words such as 'initial' or 'start' to indicate that only the initial letters of words are used. Usually only very short answers are employed for this type of clue - otherwise the clue would be too long.

Example 1

Clue Start laying a wonderful new turf (4)
Answer LAWN

'Turf' is the key definition
'Start' is the initial indicator
Start laying **a** wonderful **n**ew turf

Example 2

Clue Stern beginning gives really interesting meaning (4)
Answer GRIM

'Stern' is the key definition
'Beginning' is the initial indicator
Stern beginning **g**ives really interesting **m**eaning

Here are some common 'initial' indicators:

- Begin
- Capital
- Captain
- Chief
- Commence
- First
- First of all
- Head
- Headline
- Initial
- Leading
- Major
- Opening
- Prime
- Starting
- To begin With
- To start with
- Top

OMISSIONS

This type of clue uses words such as 'not started' or 'not finished' or 'short' to indicate that some letters should be dropped from a word to help find the answer.

Example 1

Clue Endlessly loathe a solemn promise (4)
Answer OATH

'A solemn promise' is the key definition
'Endlessly' is the omission indicator
Loathe is where the 'endings' are omitted

Example 2

Clue Be a headless olive (4)
Answer LIVE

'Be' is the key definition (To be is to **live**)
'Headless' is the omission indicator
Olive is where the 'head' is omitted

Where letters have been deleted there are some common 'omission' indicators:

- Beheaded
- Bob
- Cut
- Delete
- Dock
- Don't start
- Endlessly
- Finish off
- First off
- Half
- Headless
- Last off
- Leave off
- Lopped
- No
- Shorten
- Sliced
- Trimmed
- Unopened

Where words have their inside letters 'omitted' some of the indicators would be:

- Empty
- Gutless
- Heartless
- Hollow
- No centre
- No middle

SOUNDS THE SAME (Homophones)

Homophones are words that sound like each other but are often spelled differently. The compiler uses words such as 'sounds like' to indicate a homophone.

Example 1

Clue Dripping with reports on the Hellenic republic (6)
Answer GREECE

'Hellenic republic' is the key definition
'Reports' is the homophone indicator
Grease (dripping) sounds like **Greece** (Hellenic republic)

Example 2

Clue Mount with a loud gravelly voice (5)
Answer HORSE

'Mount' is the key definition
'Loud' is the homophone indicator
Horse (mount) sounds like **hoarse** (gravelly voice)

Example 3

Clue Ceremonial act is utterly correct (4)
Answer RITE

'Ceremonial act' is the key definition
'Utterly' is the homophone indicator
Rite (ceremonial act) sounds like **right** (correct)

Here are some examples of homophone indicators:

- Articulated
- Ask for
- Audible
- Broadcast
- Ear
- Hear
- Heard
- Listen
- Loudly
- Mentioned
- Noise
- Oral
- Reportedly
- Sounds like
- Speak
- Story
- Tale
- Tell
- Utter
- Verbalise
- You'd say

Back flips

This type of clue uses words such as 'reverse' or 'return' as an indicator for letters used backwards.

Example 1

Clue Damon will return with the wanderer (5)
Answer NOMAD

'Wanderer' is the key definition
'Return' is the reversal indicator
Reverse '**Damon**' and you will get '**nomad**'

Example 2

Clue Flower David Turner designed (4)
Answer DREW

'Designed' is the key indicator
'Turner' is the reversal indicator
Reverse '**Flower David**' and you will get '**drew**'

Example 3

Clue Upend rats to find a heavenly body (4)
Answer STAR

'Heavenly body' is the key indicator
'Upend' is the reversal indicator
Reverse '**rats**' and you will get '**star**'

Some words commonly used to indicate reversal:

- About
- About face
- Around
- Back
- Backflip
- Backslide
- Comeback
- Counter
- Endwise
- Getting up
- Raised
- Retire
- Retreats
- Return
- Reversal
- Revert
- Rotate
- Tail first
- Turn aside
- Turner
- Turning
- Up
- Upend
- Upset
- Upturned

JUMBLER LETTERS (Anagrams)

An anagram is when letters in one or more words are jumbled to form a completely new word such as **tone** for **note**.

The compiler uses words such as 'jumbled' to indicate an anagram.

There are hundreds of words which can be used to indicate an anagram.

Here are some of the most common:

- altered
- arranged
- badly
- broken
- changed
- confused
- cooking
- corrupt
- crazy
- crumpled
- crushed
- damaged
- danced
- designed
- disordered
- distressed
- foggy
- funny
- injured
- loose
- lost
- mad
- mess
- mixed up
- new
- oddly
- off
- organised
- perhaps
- rocky
- roughly
- rudely
- ruined
- shifted
- shredded
- sick
- silly
- spoiled
- stewed
- stirred
- strangely
- stupidly
- unusually
- upset
- wandering
- wild

Example 1

Clue Keen for a new joint (4)

Answer KNEE

'Joint' is the key indicator

'New' is the anagram indicator

Keen is the word to be jumbled to make **knee**

Example 2

Clue Air a funny opera song (4)

Answer ARIA

'Opera song' is the key indicator

'Funny' is the anagram indicator

Air a are the words to be jumbled to make **aria**

When you see a word like 'funny' which could indicate an anagram it is a good idea to count the letters nearby to see if they add up to the length of the answer. In this case 4 letters.

When tackling an anagram write the letters in a circle and the answer will often become obvious.

EVERY SECOND COUNTS (Use of alternate letters)

This type of clue uses words such as 'odd' or 'even' to indicate that alternate letters are used to form part of the answer.

Example 1

Clue Laundry basin wears the thumbs out unevenly (7)
Answer WASHTUB

'Laundry basin' is the key indicator
'Unevenly' is the alternate indicator
Wears the thumbs is where the 'uneven' letters are

Example 2

Clue Four hallelujahs intermittently spoken (4)
Answer ORAL

'Spoken' is the key indicator
'Intermittently' is the alternate indicator
Four hallelujahs is where the 'intermittent' letters are

Bear in mind that a word such as 'uneven' could indicate an anagram. It could suggest that the letters are jumbled or 'uneven'.

Words commonly used to indicate use of alternate letters:

- Alternate
- Asymmetric
- Even
- Every second
- Inconsistent
- Irregular
- Not even
- Odd
- Uneven
- Variable

SIMILAR SUBSTITUTES

(Words formed from synonyms)

Synonyms are words which are similar in meaning such as 'mates' and 'friends'. Sometimes the compiler uses one or more synonyms to create a new word.

Example 1

Clue Companionship at mates' joint (10)
Answer FRIENDSHIP

'Companionship' is the key definition
Mates are **friends** and a joint is a **hip**

Example 2

Clue Store guardian is a retailer (10)
Answer SHOPKEEPER

'Retailer' is the key definition
A store is a **shop** and a guardian is a **keeper**

Example 3

Clue Occasional fashionable haunt (10)
Answer INFREQUENT

'Occasional' is the key definition
Fashionable is **in** and to haunt is to **frequent**

There are no indicators of a 'similar substitute' or synonym clue but the answer is often a longer word to allow for the word-play.

ABBREVIATIONS

Hundreds of common abbreviations are used regularly by cryptic compilers. These will become familiar over time but most will be listed here for use as a reference.

Roman numerals:

I(1) **LX**(60)
IV(4) **XC**(90)
V(5) **C**(100)
VI(6) **CD**(400)
IX(9) **D**(500)
X(10) **DC**(600)
XL(40) **CM**(900)
L(50) **M**(1,000)
LI(51) etc

Foreign words:

Le, La, Les (The French)
Der, Die, Das (The German)
il (The Italian)
El (The Spanish)
Te (The Maori)
Or (French for gold)

Musical notes:

a b c d e f g

Musical:

Soft/Quiet: **p**,
Loud: **f**

Initials:

Compilers feel free to use only the initial from almost any word
Black **B** White **W** Cold **C** Hot **H**
Energy **E** Year **Y** etc

Chemical elements as symbols:

Copper **cu** Gold **au** Iodine **i** Iron **fe**
Silver **ag** etc.

Month:

jan feb mar apr may jun jul aug sep
oct nov dec

Specialist/Specialty:

ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist)

Companion **ch** (order of knighthood)

Ring/Love/Duck/Nothing/Nil/Zero/Circle/Egg **o**

Soldier **gi re** (Royal Engineers)

ta (Territorial Army)

Penny **d** Pound **L lb** Shilling **s sh**

Football **ru** (Rugby Union) **fa** (football association)

Book **nt** (new testament) **ot** (old testament)

Church **ch ce** (Church of England) **rc** (Roman Catholic)

Governor **gg** (governor general)

Doctor/Medico **dr mo mb**

Lawyer **da** (district attorney)

Priest/Theologian **dd** (doctor of divinity)

Student/Learner/Cadet/Beginner/Novice/Pupil **L**

States:

California **cal** Virginia **va** Western Australia **wa**
etc

MORE ABBREVIATIONS

About	re
Account	ac
Alien	et
Artist	ra
Bar	T
Bend	s
Bone	t
Bridge players	n s e w
British Rail	br
Business	co
Car	RR (Rolls Royce)
Companion	ch
Concerning	re
Councillor	cr
Credit	cr
Cross	x
Current	ac dc
Debit/Debtor	dr
Distress call	sos
Eastern	e
Eliot	TS (author)
Excellent	A1 (A one)
Exercise	pt pe
Firm	co
For each	per
Former	ex
Graduate	ba ma
Horse	gg nag
Kiss	x
Large	os
Magistrate	jp
Manuscript	ms
Measure	em en ell

Model	T (Ford)
Notice	ad
Now	ad
Nurse	en
Odour	bo
Old	ex
Non-drinker	tt
Officer	Lt co
Opponent	v
Painter	ra
Politician	mp
Priest	fr
Princess	Di
Queen	er
Railway	ry
Record	Ep Lp
Saint	st
Service	rn ran raf raaf
Ship	ss
Smell	bo
Square	T
Stand	tee
States	us usa
String	g
Sun god	ra
Ten	io x
Teetotal	tt
Thanks	ta
That is	ie
University	uni
Victory	v ve
Way	st
Why	y

COMMONLY USED SHORT WORDS

Actor	Ham	Last word	Amen
Actress	Cher	Lettuce	Cos
Against	Con	Little devil	Imp
At home	In	Live	Be/is
Big	Os	Mae	West
Bird	Tit/Tern	Manage	Run
Business	Co/firm	Member	Arm/Leg
Boss	Stud/Head	Mother	Mum/Dam/Ma
Bounder/Jumper	Roo	Nail	Brad
Boy	Son/Lad	Notice	Ad
Butter	Goat/Ram	Newspaper	Press/Age/Sun
Cathedral city	Ely	Old convict	Lag/Con
Communist	Red	Old city	Ur
Conservative	Tory	Old you	Ye/Thou/Thee
Convenience	Loo/WC	Otherwise	Or/Else
Copy	Ape	Pass	Col
Crooner	Bing	Party	Do/Lib
Dash	Elan	Pose	Sit
Debts	ious	Quiet	Mum/Sh
Designer	Dior	Revolutionary	Che
Drill	Awl		(Che Guevara)
Egg	Ova	River	Po/Dee/Tay/Ure
Everyone	All	Saint	St
Firm	Co/Set	See	Lo/Eye/Spy
First Man	Adam	Spoil	Mar
First Woman	Eve	Study	Con/Den
Friend	Ally/Mate/Pal/	Tea	Cha/Char
	Ami	Thanks	Ta
Father	Dad/Pa/Pop/	Therefore	So/Ergo
	Sire/Da	Tree/Wood	Ash/Oak/
Fashionable	In		Elm/Fir
Fish	Eel/Ling/	Uncle Sam	US/USA
	Cod/Gar	Underworld	Dis/Hell
Fool	Ass	Unfashionable	Out
For	Pro	Vase	Urn
Good man/woman	St/Saint	Vessel	Urn/Pot/Pan/
Grannie/Grandmother	Nan		SS/Ark
Greeting	Ave/Hi	Way	Road/Rd/St
Gun	Sten/Gat	Wood/Timber	Ash/Oak/
Head/Headland	Ness		Elm/Fir
Head	Stud/Boss	Work	Op/Opus
Hell	Dis	Worker	Ant/Bee
Hope	Bob	Working	On/Go
John	Loo	Writer	Pen
Journalist	Press/Ed		

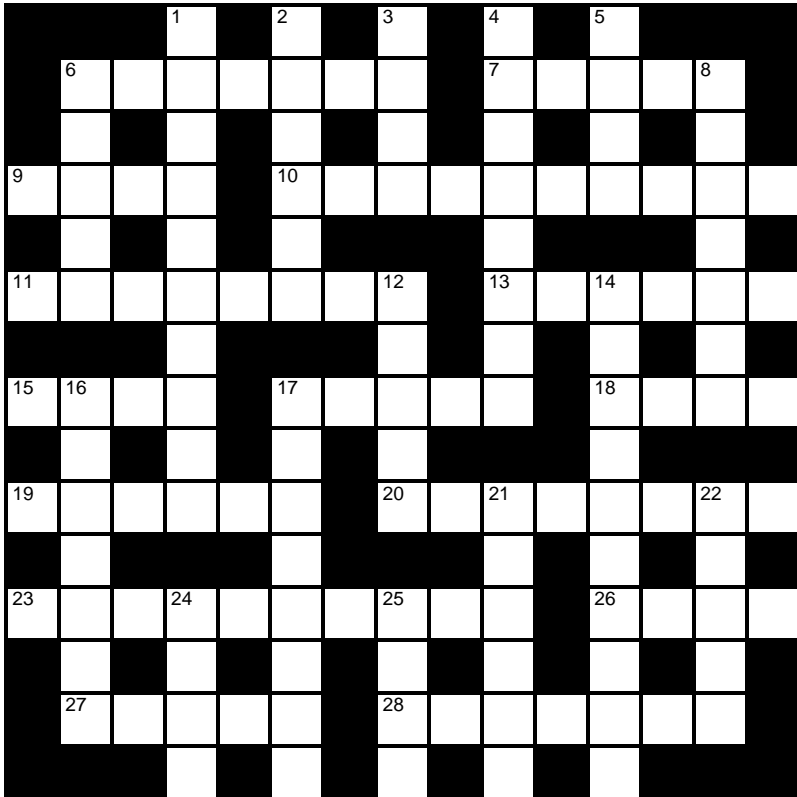
DEVILISH AND DASTARDLY DECOYS

You'll never see the English language in the same light again. Here are some of the different ways to look at words.

About	A bout (a fight)	Lionheart	io (heart of lion)
Airport	Nostril/Nose	Low	Moo
Amidships	Amid ships (s.....s) (ss for ship or ships)	Midday	a (mid day)
Atom	A to M (first half of the alphabet)	Morse code	Tap/Tapping/ Tap dancing
Anaesthetic	Number (number)	Mouth	Speaker
Around	A round (A bullet)	Never Never	HP (Hire purchase)
Banker	River	Noon	No on (remove on)
Boast/Brag	I am (iam)	Oversight	Eyebrow
Bounder	Roo/Grasshopper/ Cricket/Frog	Peas	pp
Bower	Violinist/Fiddler	Pitman	Miner
Butter	Goat/Ram	Ranger	Cowboy/Chef
Cagey	k g	Revolutionary	Wheel
Cattle	Lowers	Runner	River
Clipper	Barber	Scope	A - Z
Cocktail	K (Cock tail)	Seas	cc
Crossword	Argument (cross word)	Sewer	Dressmaker/Tailor /Farmer
Cutback	T u c	Singer	Toaster (Singe er)
Cutie	q t	Spinner	Spider
Decrease	Iron/press	Summer	Adder/Calculator
Distress	Scalp (Dis tress)	Thames	London banker
Drain	Dra in (put dra in)	Third month	n (Third letter of month)
Drawer	Dentist/Artist/Tug	Turnkey	yek (key returned)
Ease	ee (ees)	Undivided	One
Education	rrr (three R's)	Union man	Groom
Empty bag	bg	Unconscious	Out
Erased	Erase d (remove d)	Unwilling	Intestate(no will)
Evening	Ironing/smoothing	Victim	Abel
Fiancée	Ringer	Warder	Nurse
Fisherman	Hooker/angler	Waver	Hairdresser
Flower	River (flow er)	Weaver	Spider
Glasses	oo (spectacles)	Webster	Spider
Greenies	Thumbs (green thumbs)	Web designer	Spider
Heartless	Remove middle of a word	Wheel	Revolver
Indeed	In de.....ed	Wicked	Candle
Inside	In si.....de	Wise	yy
Italian banker	Po (Italian river)	Within	With in (Something to go with in)
Jumper	Roo etc	Without	With out
Last	z	Won	Ist
Leaves	Tea	Yale	Key/lo

Cryptic Crossword Secrets

Sample Grid, clues and solutions



Cryptic Clues

Across

- 6 Move effortlessly Al, near the sea (7)
- 7 Permitted to be spoken audibly (5)
- 9 Throw the actors (4)
- 10 Albert Hess, agitated and puffing (10)
- 11 Yellow hens (8)
- 13 Salad green for the space vehicle (6)
- 15 Coral doesn't start by mouth (4)
- 17 Carries the animals (5)
- 18 Cracked almonds (4)
- 19 Sets off, then jumps back (6)
- 20 Stretched tightly and filtered (8)
- 23 Rate friends as schoolfellows (10)
- 26 Wicked? Reflect and live (4)
- 27 Attracted and pulled along (5)
- 28 Fit for nothing? Don't employ so many (7)

Down

- 1 Fussy detail (10)
- 2 Where the ostler works is unchanging (6)
- 3 Colour of down (4)
- 4 Blueprints for the boy with the sea birds (8)
- 5 Loop around the pond (4)
- 6 Train a vehicle to carry people (5)
- 8 Downward trend of French perfume (7)
- 12 Waterproofs the marine mammals (5)
- 14 Thought over creeds Odin altered (10)
- 16 Flustered rodent with the casual shirt was in front (7)
- 17 Ten beams changed the cellar (8)
- 21 Hurries with the marsh plants (6)
- 22 Leaves change to exist (5)
- 24 Notices call for large areas of water (4)
- 25 Genuine time to regret (4)

Straight Clues

Across

- 6 Near the sea (7)
- 7 Audibly (5)
- 9 Throw (4)
- 10 Puffing (10)
- 11 Hens (8)
- 13 Space vehicle (6)
- 15 By mouth (4)
- 17 Carries (5)
- 18 Cracked (4)
- 19 Sets off (6)
- 20 Filtered (8)
- 23 Schoolfellows (10)
- 26 Wicked (4)
- 27 Attracted (5)
- 28 Fit for nothing (7)

Down

- 1 Fussy (10)
- 2 Unchanging (6)
- 3 Colour (4)
- 4 Blueprints (8)
- 5 Pond (4)
- 6 Train (5)
- 8 Downward trend (7)
- 12 Waterproofs (5)
- 14 Thought over (10)
- 16 Flustered (7)
- 17 Cellar (8)
- 21 Hurries (6)
- 22 Leaves (5)
- 24 Large areas of water (4)
- 25 Genuine (4)

Solutions

<p>6 COASTAL: Move effortlessly (coast) Al, near the sea (coastal)</p> <p>7 ALOUD: Permitted (allowed) to be spoken (homophone indicator) audibly (aloud)</p> <p>9 CAST: Throw (to cast) the actors (the cast)</p> <p>10 BREATHLESS: Albert Hess, agitated (anagram indicator) and puffing (key)</p> <p>11 CHICKENS: Yellow (chickens out - cowardly behaviour) hens (chickens)</p> <p>13 ROCKET: Salad green (rocket) for the space vehicle (rocket)</p> <p>15 ORAL: Coral doesn't start (omission indicator) by mouth (oral)</p> <p>17 BEARS: Carries (bears) the animals (bears)</p> <p>18 NUTS: Cracked (is nuts) almonds (nuts)</p> <p>19 STARTS: Sets off (starts), then jumps back (starts)</p> <p>20 STRAINED: Stretched tightly (strained) and filtered (strained)</p> <p>23 CLASSMATES: Rate (to class) friends (mates) as schoolfellows (key)</p> <p>26 EVIL: Wicked (evil)? Reflect (reversal indicator) and live (evil)</p> <p>27 DRAWN: Attracted (drawn to) and pulled along (drawn)</p> <p>28 USELESS: Fit for nothing (useless)? Don't employ so many (use less)</p>	<p>1 PARTICULAR: Fussy (particular) detail (particular)</p> <p>2 STABLE: Where the ostler works (a stable) is unchanging (stable)</p> <p>3 BLUE: Colour (blue) of down (blue - feeling depressed)</p> <p>4 PATTERNS: Blueprints (patterns) for the boy (Pat) with the sea birds (terns)</p> <p>5 POOL: Loop around (reversal indicator) the pond (pool)</p> <p>6 COACH: Train (to coach) a vehicle to carry people (a coach)</p> <p>8 DESCENT: Downward trend (descent) of French (de) perfume (scent)</p> <p>12 SEALS: Waterproofs (seals) the marine mammals (seals)</p> <p>14 CONSIDERED: Thought over (key) creeds Odin altered (anagram indicator)</p> <p>16 RATTLED: Flustered (rattled) rodent (rat) with the casual shirt (t-shirt) was in front (led)</p> <p>17 BASEMENT: Ten beams changed (anagram indicator) the cellar (key)</p> <p>21 RUSHES: Hurries (rushes) with the marsh plants (rushes)</p> <p>22 EXITS: Leaves (exits) change to (anagram indicator) exist</p> <p>24 SEAS: Notices (sees) call for (homophone indicator) large areas of water (seas)</p> <p>25 TRUE: Genuine (true) time to regret (rue)</p>
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