HOW TO SOLVE A NONOGRAM PUZZLE

Step by step instructions

Here are the step by step instructions for solving the following puzzle. Any guesses what it might be yet?



To begin with all cells are unknown. I will mark a known black cell with a black square (no surprises there!) and any known white cells with a dot.

Complete lines

1. First find any solid lines. The 0 means there are no black cells in that row, so we mark every cell in the row with a dot (they are known white cells).

		<u> </u>	<u>2</u> 3		
	2	2	2	5	3
3					
5					
2					
2					
2					
2					
2					
0	•	•	•	•	•
2					
2					
	3522222022	2 3 5 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 3 5 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	2 3 2 2 3 5 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 4	2 2 5 2 2 2 5 3 5 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 <

2. The 5 means that every cell in the row is black, so we color them all in.



3. Next we can look for any lines that can only be filled one way (ie those with only one white cell between blocks). The 2/2 row will be a complete row. There is only one possible way of filling it in – a block of 2 black followed by one white and then another block of two black.

			3	2		
		2	2	3 2	F	2
		2	2	2	5	2
	3					
	5					
2	2			•		
	2					
	2					
	2					
	2					
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2					
	2					

4. After completing this row we can see that the first column has completed its block of two black. That means every other cell in this column must be white. So we can fill in the remaining cells with a dot. It's important to mark any known white cells as this helps as you continue the puzzle.



Overlaps

5. Now I will show you another very important tactic – overlaps. In the 3/2/2 column, I use temporary marks to show the uppermost this set of blocks could go.

			3	2		
			2	3		
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	•	/			
	5					
2	2			•		
	2	•				
	2	•	\mathbf{A}			
	2	•	\mathbf{A}			
	2	•				
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•	\			
	2	•	\			

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Then I start from the bottom to see the bottom-most these blocks can go.



Where the same blocks overlap, we know that must be a black cell, so we color those overlaps black.

			3	2		
			2	3		
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	•	\			
	5		χ			
2	2		χ	•		
	2	•	/			
	2	•	\mathbf{A}			
	2	•	χ			
	2	•	/			
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•	χ			
	2	•	χ			

6. We can use the overlap tactic again on the next column:



7. In the next column, we can use the overlap method again but the block of 5 must include the two black cells already known.



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Out of range

8. Now we're going to check for cells that are out of range. I have numbered the column with the block of 5 so you can see the furthest that the 5-block will extend.



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Any cells beyond that will be out of range of the 5-block. They must be white so we mark those cells with a dot.

			3	2		
			2	3		
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	•				
	5					
2	2			•	2	
	2	•			3	
	2	•			4	
	2	•			5	
	2	•			•	
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•			•	
	2				•	

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Can you guess what the picture is yet?

9. Use the out of range tactic for the last column.





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Repeat nonogram solving tactics

10. Use the overlap technique in the top row.





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			3 2	2 3		
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	·	1	χ	χ	/
	5					
2	2			•		
	2	•				
	2	•				•
	2					•
	2	•			•	•
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•			•	•
	2					•

11. Use the out of range technique on the 2-block row a bit further down:



The picture is really beginning to take shape now!

12. On the next row down, you can see that the 2-block is complete, so all the rest of the cells in this row will be white – so we'll put dots there.

			3	2		
			2	3		
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	•				
	5					
2	2			•		
	2	•	•			
	2	•	•			•
	2	•				•
	2	•			•	•
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•			•	•
	2	•			•	•

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13. And also the very next row has a complete block of 2, so fill in the rest of the row with dots:



14. As we keep going down, we can see there needs to be a block of 2 in the next row. There is only one place it can go:

			3	2		
			2	3		
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	•				
	5					
2	2			•		
	2	•	•			
	2	•	•			•
	2	•			•	•
	2	•			•	•
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•			•	•
	2	•			•	•

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Nearly there!

15. Look at the 2/3/2 column. The second block is a 3-block. So it is complete and there needs to be a space around it. So we should place a dot above that 3-block.



16. In the row where we just placed that dot, we can see that there is only one way to finish the block of 2.



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17. Looking at the column where we just placed the dot, we can see that the 3-block is complete, so we can place a dot above it.



18. And finally we can make that last remaining cell black to satisfy the 3-block across and also the verticle 3-block.

Ta da!

			3	2		
		_	2	5	_	
		2	2	2	5	3
	3	•				•
	5					
2	2			•		
	2	•	•	•		
	2	•	•			•
	2	•			•	•
	2	•			•	•
	0	•	•	•	•	•
	2	•			•	•
	2	•			•	•

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