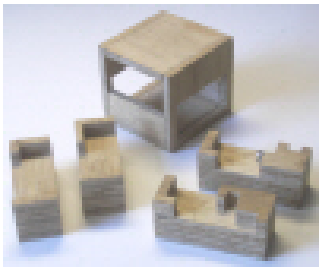
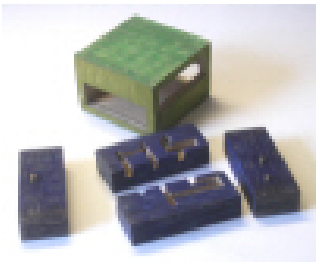
The Shield

A rather plain, metallic looking box, with an embossed shield on the top, without any visible moving parts. Yet this is another 'sliding panel' puzzle box. The shield itself has to be manipulated in order to get the lid off. The only moving parts are in the lid.
This is quite a precise little puzzle to make, and there are only nine moves to get the lid off. However, it's quite tricky to get off, because the shield seems to jam up now and again. That's because the shield is in three parts, and the inside layers are interlocked. The box measures 3" x 3" x 4": the lid is made of 1/8" plywood: the box made of 3/16" ply, with bevelled corners.



Brown Slidey

The main box is 2½" square and 2¼" deep. The four blocks are 1" square by 2½" long.
The top layer of the bottom blocks slide into the bottom layer of the top blocks. By moving all the blocks around, they can eventually be removed. Difficult to get the blocks out.
A lot **harder** to put them back in.
Fairly easy to make using ¼" and 9 mm plywood.



Green Slidey

The green box is 2½" square and 1½" deep. There are four blue blocks, each is 1" x ½" x 2½". These blocks slide in and out of the green box. The idea is to remove them all, and they are interlocked with pins and grooves. But they can be removed!
Fairly easy to make, all ¼" plywood.
Difficult to get the blocks out.
A lot **harder** to put them back in.

Put Me Together

"Made by the hundreds. Solved by no one."

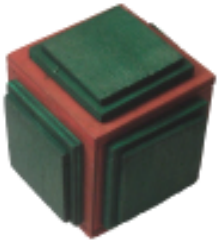
Twenty-seven cubes, glued together in various ways to form five pieces. Simply take them apart, then re-assemble! Very tricky.
This is not my design, comes from a book called "Puzzle Craft" by Stewart T. Coffin.
Very easy to make-needs only a tenon or mitre saw, and glue.

Take Me Apart

Actually two puzzles in one-the smaller box is really inside the bigger box. Simple idea, just remove the sides, to reveal the inner box, then take that apart as well. Easy.
Now just put them back together.
Do the same with the smaller box.
But it's not so easy when they are in bits, when the edge of one piece can fit eight different ways to the edge of another piece, which can also go eight different ways!
Very easy to make, using ½" and ¼" MDF or plywood.
No special tools needed. Fairly hard to solve.

Black Nightmare

A 3" cube, with a panel on each side. On two sides, this panel is split in two, both pieces moving independently.
Whatever moves you do on this side, you must also do on the other side. By moving these four half-panels in unison, you can move the other sides, and eventually remove them altogether.
Not too hard to make, using 4mm plywood.
Very difficult to solve. Minimum 13 moves.

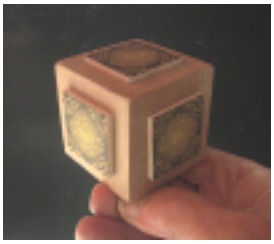


Chinese Torture

The red box is 2 ½" square, with two green panels on each side. Every outer panel can move, but none of the inner panels can move ***at first***. By moving all of these pairs of panels, you can eventually remove one pair of panels, opening the box.
There is no obvious starting point, and if you move the wrong panels first, the box will lock. Even if you find the correct panels first, ***you can still lock the box***, but you won't know this, because everything seems to be working! 13 moves to open, i***f you know how.*** **Extremely difficult to solve!**
Cutting: easy. Assembly: tricky. Made of ¼" and ⅛" plywood.

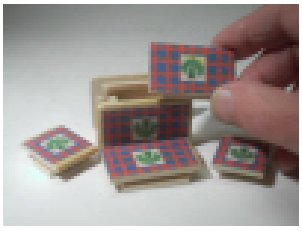
Cubey

The smallest and simplest of the puzzle boxes-the box is only 2" x 2" x 2", with a little sliding panel on each side. Only one panel will move, simply find this, then another panel will move, and so on, like "follow my leader", until one side can be removed. But halfway through, you discover that more than one panel can be moved. What do I do now? Panic?
Easy to make, using ⅛" plywood. The little panels are covered with a Celtic pattern; these are included in the plans.
Easy to open, takes only seven moves.



Cubey 2

Same size as Cubey: 2" each way. Same single panel on each side. So what's different? Look at the edges-just a single line! Every side is joined to it's neighbour by a bevel joint, and the grain on each side is 90° to the next side, making it impossible to tell which side you're looking at. Is that all? **NO**. Every panel now has to be moved **TWICE** in order to open the box.
Once you've started, there are two possible panels to move, the one you've just moved, and the next one to be moved, but because you can't tell where you are, you might go backwards instead of forwards. You might never get to open the box, **just going backwards and forwards for all time...**
The box is made from 1/8" and 1/4" plywood. Easy to cut, assembly is a little tricky. **Very hard** to open...

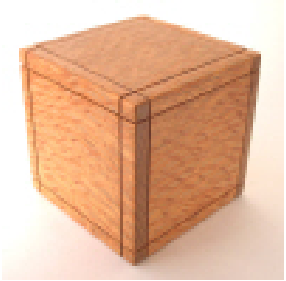


The Matchbox

This must be the smallest puzzle box! Only 1-1/4" square, and 2" long, yet it takes ten moves to open this box!
Extremely easy to build - every piece is a simple rectangle. No curves, no circles, no holes, no inside cuts, no intricate little tongues and notches to cut. You could even make this with a simple junior hacksaw!
To make this puzzle at this size will require 1/8" thick wood, but the plans allow you to make this any size you wish.
The inside measures 1" x 1" x 3/8", so you could put a couple of rings in, or a few small coins.
So easy to build, you could make this in a single day!
This is an ideal puzzle to make as a first attempt.

Matchbox 2

Is this the smallest puzzle box?
Even smaller than The Matchbox, measuring only 1-1/2" long, by 7/8" high by 1-1/8" wide!
Yet it takes **14 move**s to open the lid, and a few more to remove every panel.
Very easy to cut, every piece is a simple rectangle (admittedly, very small rectangles...)
No curves, circles, holes, inside cuts, tongues or notches.
Assembly is a little tricky, because this is a fairly precise little box, but not too hard.
That's a 50p coin in the top left picture, and a 5p coin in the top right picture....and 5p about all that will fit inside...



Modified Matchbox

This puzzle box is based on The Matchbox, in that all the movements are the same, but the box is bigger.
The size of this box is 2-3/4" square, and it takes ten moves to open.
Extremely easy to build - every piece is a simple rectangle.
You could make this with any kind of handsaw.
To make this puzzle at this size will require 1/4" thick wood, but the plans allow you to make this any size you wish.
So easy to build, you could make this in a single day!
This is an ideal puzzle to make as a first attempt.