

## **Entertaining Mathematical Puzzles**

Martin Gardner

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Playing with mathematical riddles can be an intriguing and fun-filled pastime — as popular science writer Martin Gardner proves in this entertaining collection. Puzzlists need only an elementary knowledge of math and a will to resist looking up the answer before trying to solve a problem.

Written in a light and witty style, *Entertaining Mathematical Puzzles* is a mixture of old and new riddles, grouped into sections that cover a variety of mathematical topics: money, speed, plane and solid geometry, probability, topology, tricky puzzles, and more. The probability section, for example, points out that everything we do, everything that happens around us, obeys the laws of probability; geometry puzzles test our ability to think pictorially and often, in more than one dimension; while topology, among the "youngest and rowdiest branches of modern geometry," offers a glimpse into a strange dimension where properties remain unchanged, no matter how a figure is twisted, stretched, or compressed.

Clear and concise comments at the beginning of each section explain the nature and importance of the math needed to solve each puzzle. A carefully explained solution follows each problem. In many cases, all that is needed to solve a puzzle is the ability to think logically and clearly, to be "on the alert for surprising, off-beat angles...that strange hidden factor that everyone else had overlooked."

Fully illustrated, this engaging collection will appeal to parents and children, amateur mathematicians, scientists, and students alike, and may, as the author writes, make the reader "want to study the subject in earnest" and explains "some of the inviting paths that wind away from the problems into lusher areas of the mathematical jungle."

65 black-and-white illustrations.



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