

Contrived Math

Tricked-Out Word Problems with Ordinary Numbers

contrived Invented; devised; planned with ingenuity; concocted; made up.

tricked-out Modified, decorated or embellished in an extravagant way.

Numbers are everywhere. Sometimes they are in the form of a problem needing to be solved. But more often they are in information mode, hanging out, waiting, ready when someone needs them—like the four quarts that can join forces to create a gallon or the twelve months that add up to a year, for instance.

Occasionally people mess around with idle numerical facts and make up tricked-out math problems just for the fun of it, as is the case here.

Solve the following concocted problems and then have some fun of your own. Contrive a few more puzzlers to share with your friends. The numbers are waiting.



Use the figuring space for calculations and then write your final answers in the blanks to the left.

- _____ 1. Subtract four from the number of days in a year. Now add two.
- _____ 2. Begin with the greatest number on a clock and multiply it by two.
- _____ 3. Suppose each of the blind mice who ran up the clock had been one of triplets. If every sibling had been involved, how many mice would have run up the clock?
- _____ 4. Remove six from the number of inches in a foot and reattach four of them. What is the final total number of inches?
- _____ 5. How many sides are there on five triangles?