



Power of puzzles

Solving puzzles, such as sudoku or crosswords, are not only challenging and fun, they may sharpen your brainpower, enhance your creativity and help with memory. According to research, puzzles may even help you relax and reduce stress.

Below are some of the benefits that result from various types of puzzles.



Word puzzles and games

- May reduce cognitive decline in the aging.
- Have a two-step process of knowing the answer and making sure it's spelled correctly.
- May delay loss of memory of people already diagnosed with dementia by two and a half years.

Trivia games

- Help us access memories to combine that information into new ideas.
- Getting the right answer releases dopamine.
- Encourages socialization when done with others.
- Retaining information works out the frontal cortex.

Jigsaw puzzles

- Finishing a puzzle releases dopamine.
- Engages both right (creative) and left (logic) sides of brain encouraging communication between the hemispheres.
- Encourages problem solving skills.
- Improves short-term memory by reinforcing brain connections.

Sudoku and number games

- Boost concentration.
- Help improve memory and logic.
- May reduce cognitive decline.
- Provide a sense of calm.
- Provide a brain "work out" because you must think steps ahead.

Sources: *Psychology Today*, *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*, *Healthline*