

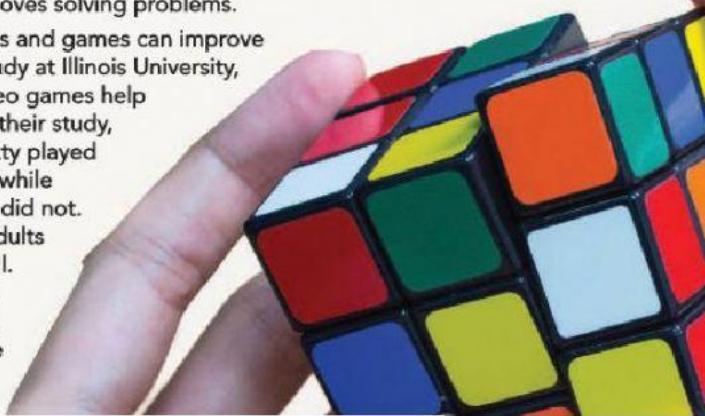


1 In 1974, Professor Erno Rubik was looking for an interesting way to teach his architecture students about 3D¹ geometry.² To do this, he made a cube with nine other cubes on each of its sides. The smaller cubes were different colors, and you could turn them in different directions. The challenge was to make each side all one color. The problem was that there are 43 quintillion (43,000,000,000,000,000,000) ways to move the cubes. As a result, it took Professor Rubik over a month to solve his own problem.

2 In the end, the Rubik's cube became one of the most popular toys in history. Over 400 million Rubik's cubes have been sold around the world, and one in seven people have played with one. In 2016, a Dutch man named Mats Valk solved the Rubik's cube in 4.74 seconds—the world record for a human at the time. A robot beat him with a time of 1.019 seconds.

3 So why do humans love challenging themselves with puzzles like the Rubik's cube? It's the same reason we like crosswords and puzzles in newspapers, or why we play games on our cell phones. Our brain naturally loves solving problems.

4 Some scientists also think puzzles and games can improve memory in the elderly. In one study at Illinois University, the researchers studied how video games help older people's mental health. In their study, twenty adults over the age of sixty played a video game for a long period, while another twenty adults over sixty did not. Afterwards, they gave all forty adults a test of memory and mental skill. Overall, the video game players scored higher on the test, which means a challenging video game could be good for our brains.



3 Read the article on page 51. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

1 Professor Rubik taught students about architecture.	T	F
2 He made the cube to teach his students about puzzles.	T	F
3 Professor Rubik solved the cube right away.	T	F
4 A robot can solve a Rubik's cube faster than a human.	T	F
5 Some scientists think puzzles are good for older people's brains.	T	F
6 A study showed that playing video games has no impact on human memory.	T	F