HAZEL MAPLE CASE FILES

WHODUNIT AT MAPLE HOLLOW

40 Murder Mystery Logic Puzzles
with Hints and Worked Solutions

Four suspects. Four visits.
One record to reconstruct.

Hazel Maple

Reconstruct the visits

Each case has four suspects, four places, four objects and four appointment times: 9 AM, 10 AM, 11 AM and 12 noon. Every suspect made exactly one visit, used one listed place and brought one listed object. Every place, object and time was used exactly once.

A clue about an object or a place describes the person associated with it. For example, "the visitor carrying the ledger arrived before Alice" compares the ledger carrier's appointment with Alice's appointment. All listed clues are true; suspects do not lie in these puzzles.

"Earlier than" means any earlier listed time. "Exactly one hour before" means consecutive times in that direction. "Exactly two hours apart" allows either direction: 9 and 11, or 10 and 12. "Exactly one hour apart" also allows either direction.

The briefing supplies atmosphere, not extra clues. Only the numbered clues, the one-to-one rules above and the final evidence are needed. Do not infer anything from names, occupations, the order of a list, or real-world police procedure.

The final evidence is a fictional fact established by the investigation. It identifies the murderer's place, object or time. Reconstruct the visits to discover the corresponding name. An object need not be a weapon; presence alone is not a general rule for guilt.

Make the grid work for you

1. Mark a fact

Use O for a confirmed pairing and X for an impossible one. An O rules out every other cell in its row and column within that four-by-four block.

2. Compare the blocks

If Alice has the ledger and the ledger goes with 10 AM, Alice goes with 10 AM too. The six grids let you connect suspects, places, objects and times in every pairing.

3. Use the ends

A visitor who arrives before someone else cannot be at 12 noon. A visitor who arrives after someone else cannot be at 9 AM. An exact one-hour gap narrows both ends further.

4. Reserve a pair

If two places can only use 9 and 10 AM, those times belong to those two places in some order. The other places must use 11 AM and noon. The same rule works for suspects or objects.

5. Finish the whole record

Name the murderer, then check all four visits against every clue. One correct name is not the same as a complete solution.

The Last Seed Order

Edwin Pike had promised to sell the seed shop to his assistant. On the morning of the signing, a different buyer arrived with a contract already bearing Edwin's name. By lunchtime Edwin was dead. Four people had visited separately that morning. Inspector Rowan's task is to reconstruct their visits before deciding which statement to challenge.

Suspects: Amelia Arden, Jasper Nash, Sebastian Abbott, Brendan Neale.

Places: counter, office, store room, glasshouse.
Objects: seed tin, ledger, parcel, watering can.

CLUES

1. The visitor carrying the parcel arrived earlier than the visitor to the glasshouse.

2. Amelia Arden arrived exactly one hour before the visitor to the office.

3. The visitor carrying the watering can arrived earlier than the visitor to the store room.

4. Jasper Nash arrived exactly one hour before the visitor carrying the seed tin.

5. The visitor carrying the parcel arrived exactly one hour before Brendan Neale.

6. Sebastian Abbott arrived exactly one hour before the visitor to the glasshouse.

FINAL EVIDENCE

A concealed recorder proves that the murderer handled the seed tin during their recorded visit. No visitor exchanged objects.

Hints: page 88. Worked solution: see the solution index on page 96.

CASE 01 / WORKSHEET

Mark O for a match and X for an exclusion.

	counter	office	store room	glasshouse
Amelia Arden				
Jasper Nash				
Sebastian Abbott				
Brendan Neale				

	seed tin	ledger	parcel	watering can
Amelia Arden				
Jasper Nash				
Sebastian Abbott				
Brendan Neale				

	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	12 noon
Amelia Arden				
Jasper Nash				
Sebastian Abbott				
Brendan Neale				

	seed tin	ledger	parcel	watering can
counter				
office				
store room				
glasshouse				

	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	12 noon
counter				
office				
store room				
glasshouse				

	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	12 noon
seed tin				
ledger				
parcel				
watering can				

My culprit: _____

Decisive clue(s): _____

Hints - one step at a time

Case 01: The Last Seed Order

Hint 1. Start with clue 1. Which appointment times does that immediately rule out?

Hint 2. Clue 3: watering can = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; store room = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Case 02: Death at the Repair Cafe

Hint 1. Start with clue 1. Which appointment times does that immediately rule out?

Hint 2. Clue 3: Zachary Lloyd = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; side room = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Case 03: The Empty Cake Stand

Hint 1. Start with clue 1. Which appointment times does that immediately rule out?

Hint 2. Clue 3: flour tin = 9 AM / 10 AM; Xavier James = 10 AM / 11 AM.

Case 04: An Uncollected Parcel

Hint 1. Start with clue 1. Which appointment times does that immediately rule out?

Hint 2. Clue 3: Esther Gray = 10 AM / 11 AM; brown parcel = 11 AM / 12 noon.

Case 05: The Vanishing Receipt

Hint 1. Start with clue 1. Which appointment times does that immediately rule out?

Hint 2. Clue 3: Patrick Dawson = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; Leonie Ross = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Worked solution index

Each route records the remaining times after a clue or a one-to-one deduction. If a time disappears, it has no compatible partner under that rule. A single remaining time is a confirmed assignment.

Case 01 97
Case 02 99
Case 03 101
Case 04 103
Case 05 105
Case 06 107
Case 07 109
Case 08 111
Case 09 113
Case 10 115
Case 11 117
Case 12 119
Case 13 121
Case 14 123
Case 15 125
Case 16 127
Case 17 129
Case 18 131
Case 19 133
Case 20 135
Case 21 137
Case 22 139
Case 23 141
Case 24 143
Case 25 145
Case 26 147
Case 27 149
Case 28 151
Case 29 153
Case 30 155
Case 31 157
Case 32 159
Case 33 161
Case 34 163
Case 35 165
Case 36 167
Case 37 169
Case 38 171
Case 39 173
Case 40 175

The Last Seed Order

Suspect	Place	Object	Time
Amelia Arden	store room	seed tin	10 AM
Jasper Nash	counter	watering can	9 AM
Sebastian Abbott	office	parcel	11 AM
Brendan Neale	glasshouse	ledger	12 noon

Culprit: Amelia Arden. A concealed recorder proves that the murderer handled the seed tin during their recorded visit. No visitor exchanged objects.

Clue 1: parcel = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; glasshouse = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Clue 2: Amelia Arden = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; office = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Clue 3: watering can = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; store room = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Clue 4: Jasper Nash = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM; seed tin = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Clue 5: Brendan Neale = 10 AM / 11 AM / 12 noon.

Clue 6: Sebastian Abbott = 9 AM / 10 AM / 11 AM.

One distinct time per suspect: Brendan Neale = 12 noon.

Follow the deductions

One distinct time per place: counter = 9 AM.

Clue 5: parcel = 11 AM.

One distinct time per object: seed tin = 10 AM / 12 noon; ledger = 9 AM / 10 AM / 12 noon; watering can = 9 AM / 10 AM.

Clue 1: glasshouse = 12 noon.

Clue 4: Jasper Nash = 9 AM / 11 AM.

Clue 6: Sebastian Abbott = 11 AM.

One distinct time per suspect: Amelia Arden = 10 AM; Jasper Nash = 9 AM.

One distinct time per place: office = 10 AM / 11 AM; store room = 10 AM / 11 AM.

Clue 2: office = 11 AM.

Clue 4: seed tin = 10 AM.

One distinct time per place: store room = 10 AM.

One distinct time per object: ledger = 12 noon; watering can = 9 AM.