

# Cryptic Tutorial with Examples

## What is a Cryptic?

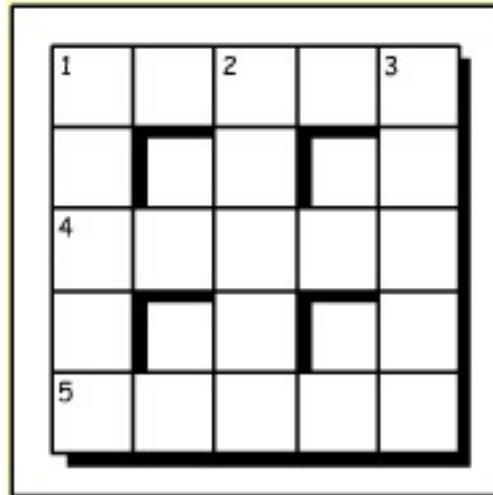
A cryptic crossword provides cryptic clues for the answers. A cryptic clue is assembled from two parts — one, the straightforward definition of the answer, and two, a definition which uses **wordplay**. These parts may come in either order. Finding the divide between them is a big help. The fact that the entire clue makes some sense is often only a distraction.

## Types of Wordplay

1. **Anagrams:** All or part of the answer may have scrambled letters. A word in the clue will indicate a mixup.  
Example: Beginner with no garbled voice. (No abbr. + voice anagram = NOVICE). The passive word “with” divides the two parts of the clue.
2. **Hidden Answers:** A word may be hidden inside a word or phrase.  
Example: Liza’s idea conceals a stage secret. (Liza’s idea contains ASIDE).
3. **Homophones:** The wordplay answer sounds like the straight answer.  
Example: Music heard in kid’s animation. (‘TOON)
4. **Second Definition:** Example: A far cry from a Drake’s delicacy. (YODEL).
5. **Charades:** Assemble the answer by adding or removing pieces. These come in many types. Two of them are:
  - a. **Initials:** Use the first letters of the words in a phrase.  
Example: New wrinkle every first of February, April, and December. (FAD).
  - b. **Deletions:**  
Example: Prohibition pertains to barn right away. (BARN – R = BAN).
6. **Reversals:** Answers will be obtained from other words heading right-to-left or rising.  
Example: [Down clue] “Bash the Left” always coming up. (L+EVER, rising, is REVEL).  
and finally, be on the look out for
7. **Miscellaneous:** Example: No holds barred in Porter’s song, 2 words.  
(ANYTHINGGOES)

**Let’s solve one together ...**

## An Example Mini-Cryptic



### Across

1. Tree grows in Altoona's penitentiary.
4. Enrico's part perfect or ...?
5. O'Donnell gets Spain's OK to inject fish eggs.

### Down

1. Destination of suitor sounds like instruction to suiter.
2. Spend crazy and result awaits.
3. Eric was right on the nose.

## Solutions

### Across

1. The clue contains ASPEN.
4. Caruso sings TENOR (ten + or).
5. ROSIE (si inside roe).

### Down

1. Alter sounds like ALTAR.
2. Anagram spend for PENDS.
3. Put right on nose for NORSE.

Cryptics are prized by solvers who want tough challenges. You'll find that, after a slow start, you improve with every clue type that you experience. Oh yes, they give you lots of chuckles too. Try one.