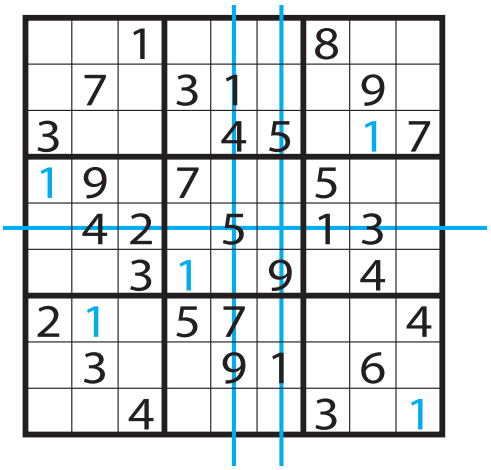
How To Solve Sudoku

Place a number from 1-9 in each empty cell so that each row, each column and each 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1-9.

Here are three basic solving tips:

1 Stepping stones

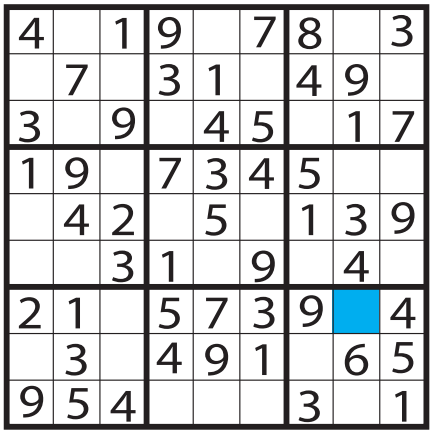
Study the picture here and look particularly at the central 3x3 block. You have to place a number 1, but it can't fall in the same row or column as any other 1. In this instance, there's only one position for the 1. Using this method, you can quickly identify the positions of the other 1s.



2 Row, box and column

It is possible to zone-in on a single cell and, by taking account of the other numbers in the row, column and 3x3 block in which it appears, identify the digit that must appear in that cell. Look at the tinted cell in the picture here.

If you consider the numbers that are already in the row, the column and the 3x3 block, you can see that the only number that can fit here is an 8.



3 Exceptions

This is a slightly more tricky approach. Here, you need to consider which numbers cannot go in certain cells. Take a look at the picture here.

In the central block at the bottom of the grid, we know that we need to place the numbers 2, 6 and 8. We don't yet know the order, but we know they are there. This means that these numbers (2,6,8) can't go in any other block along that row. Now, if we look at the bottom-left block, along the bottom row, we can see that the only number that will fit in the empty cell is a 5.