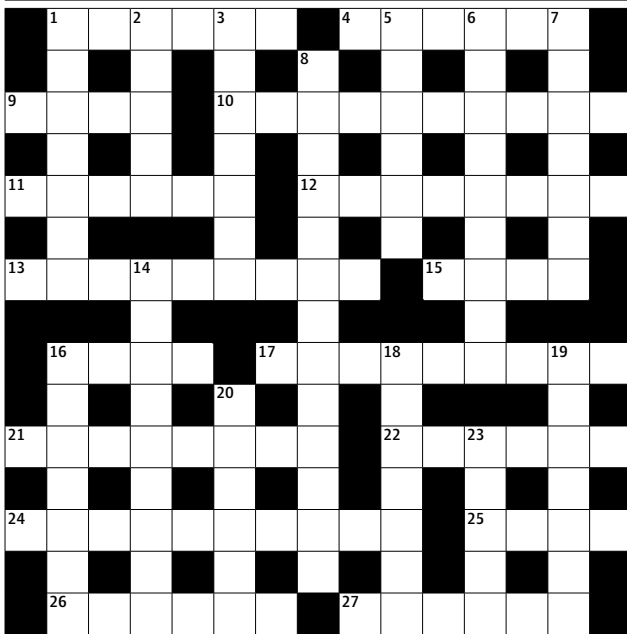


# Guardian cryptic crossword



No 25,863 set by Crucible

*Note added 6 February 2013: the clue for 12 across has been changed from that originally published.*

### Across

- 1 It takes months to boil off (6)
- 4 Shuffle, say, round well to find creeper (6)
- 9 Spotted old Whig close to Tory (4)
- 10 Doctor saw one overhead, circling (10)
- 11 Muddles ahead in M6 shambles (3-3)
- 12 Firm recalled watchmaker at noon for special event (8)
- 13 What bailiffs do with bias? Scratch head (9)
- 15 Dazzling display in Port Talbot at the front (4)
- 16 Smell ship's captain (4)
- 17 Native Americans caught lion – hunt's over (9)
- 21 I fill small beer with more punch (8)
- 22 Ring teams to corral a large sorrel (6)
- 24,3 In today's game make a big hash to start (7,3,7)
- 25 Steers by intercepting one mobile (4)
- 26 Yankee gets on with the German over there (6)
- 27 Extremely easy-going officer accepts cuts (6)

### Down

- 1 Some say stain leather in compound (7)

- 2 Reserved costlier mounts for fur supplier (5)
- 3 See 24
- 5 Bloodhound, I think, ignored trash (6)
- 6 Old shabby togs the best clothes for bouncer (4,5)
- 7 Runs I'd built up in scramble (7)
- 8 The house opposite has decorators busy (6,3,4)
- 14 Uneasy with this hormone, rep produces progesterone (9)
- 16 Using agent before enlisting expert in axes (2,5)
- 18 Royal duke visits car maker in part of Wales (7)
- 19 Demanding dope during leave (7)
- 20 This pot some occasionally steal (6)
- 23 Sailor abandons mollusc for sole (5)

Solution No. 25,862

S	T	R	E	T	C	H	A	D	V	A	N	C	E
U	P	L	G	R	C	A							
A	M	P	S	A	D	O	L	E	S	C	E	N	T
B	O	S	I	A	O	A							
C	L	I	M	B	S	N	A	M	E	L	E	S	S
E			I	G	Y	A	T						
B	R	O	A	D	C	A	S	T	I	D	E	A	L
			N			T							
A	F	F	I	X	B	R	O	A	D	S	I	D	E
L	M	F	A	R									I
P	A	G	A	N	I	N	I	I	N	S	U	L	T
N	T	N	G	A	E	E							
U	N	F	I	N	I	S	H	E	D	V	A	M	P
E	O	T	T	N	E	M							
B	L	A	N	K	E	T	R	E	T	R	E	A	T