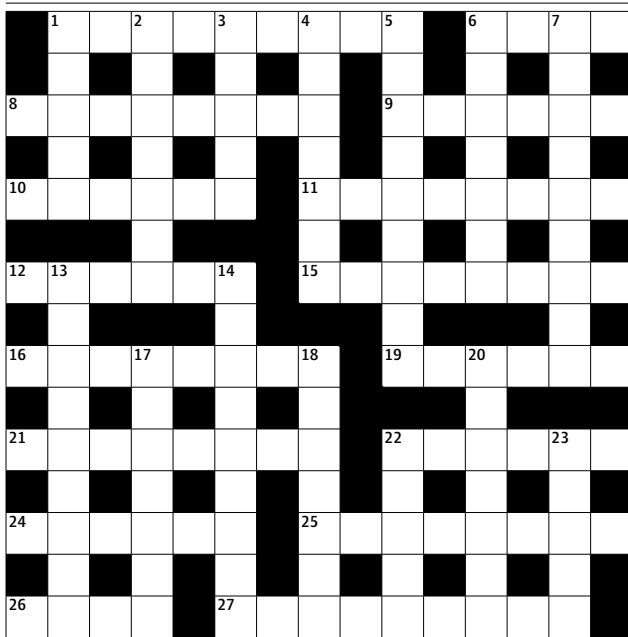


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 25,867 set by Bonxie

The first five correct entries drawn each week win Guardian Style and Secrets of the Setters, worth £28.99.

Entries to: The Guardian Crossword No 25,867, P.O. Box 6603, Birmingham, B26 3PR, or Fax to 0121-742 1313 by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday 18 February.

Twelve solutions contain others like 6 across, which are not defined in their clues.

Across

- 1 It's brought back to eat with a fish (9)
- 6 Soil quietly removed from worm's head (4)
- 8 Fried food is wasteful (8)
- 9 Tawny owl scratching tail (6)
- 10 In the manner of a loud disturbance (6)
- 11 Survived Communist state intervention (8)
- 12 Gas is not entirely fresh (6)
- 15 Kiss Japanese people returning small flowers (8)
- 16 Irregular code is broken with constant input (8)
- 19 Talk excitedly with civil war fighter on horseback (6)
- 21 Final eliminator involved 10 being knocked out (8)
- 22 He directs agents to lose (6)
- 24 Nervous individual doesn't give everyone introductions (2,4)
- 25 Agreed to drop odds, when they're lined up (8)
- 26 Midday hail at sea (4)
- 27 Take turns to restrict entrance (9)

Down

- 1 Bass instrument over a stone (5)
- 2 Extremely rare – a lady of leisure (7)
- 3 Elite soldiers each punched through a hole in the wall (1-4)
- 4 Loosen tie and cuff (7)
- 5 Inequality? Bars for women display this (9)
- 6 One working in bar with glass on either side (7)
- 7 Entertainment in bed – stroke bottom, then pull together (2-7)
- 13 The last of many put the men in a spin (9)
- 14 Threatens to throw grenades around noon (9)
- 17 African boxer to leave later on (7)
- 18 Gather and put away (7)
- 20 Dog's foot a state – iodine applied (7)
- 22 Half-heartedly bite a fungus (5)
- 23 Student leaving dock collars me for change (5)

Solution No. 25,866

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