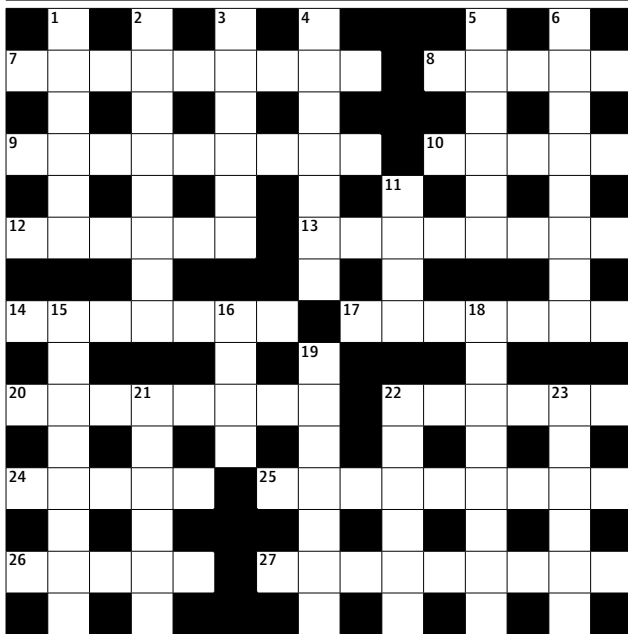


# Guardian cryptic crossword



No 26,256 set by Paul

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 26,256, 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 19 May.

## Across

- 7 Boat, vessel crossing a river (9)
- 8 Bird, tit with tail of grey (5)
- 9 It's bang in the middle of classic course, unfinished (9)
- 10 Second top, say (5)
- 12 Gripping bar a hindrance for bird (6)
- 13 Mystic recites impromptu about love (8)
- 14 Description of a fox eating bird in a grim manner (7)
- 17 Yellow bird (7)
- 20 Orange bird? (8)
- 22 Bird's infection (6)
- 24 Strip a 17, say – a 17 won't have it? (5)
- 25 Most energetic kisser apt to get carried away (9)
- 26 Bird – be a 17! (5)
- 27 Thus screening gull eating head of moorhen is graphic (9)

## Down

- 1 Asian capital I invested in record industry, primarily (6)
- 2 Knot clean for bird trainer (8)
- 3 Pig bird (6)
- 4 Dog bird (7)

- 5 Ring dove oddly dismissed as a bird (6)
- 6 In prayer, underwear is upside down – that's annoying (8)
- 11 Classy pitch so perfect, somewhat uplifting (4)
- 15 Room one found in stomach for toxic element (8)
- 16 Bird's adventure (4)
- 18 Top cryptic is, for starters, a grand to compose (8)
- 19 Keep an eye on Pakistani opener in cricket, perhaps? (7)
- 21 Bird that is my love (6)
- 22 Bird's a loser (6)
- 23 Bird is in hide (6)

Solution No. 26,255

