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## Count on me to work out your Sudoku

A UCD mathematician has solved a worldwide problem by discovering Sudoku's magic number.

Professor Gary McGuire of the Dublin university's school of mathematical sciences joined the puzzle craze in 2004. And just eight years on he has solved the ultimate Sudoku problem. 'I started wondering what the fewest number of clues you could possibly have and have a unique solution,' he said.

It's a tricky game, too few clues and the grid can't be solved, too many and there may be multiple answers.

The professor and his former student Bastian Tugemann built an algorithm, a software-based method to answer this question.

After a lengthy seven million computer processor hours undertaken to deliver a final answer - the number grid game's magic number is 17.