

# Get Lost!

## The Puzzle of Mazes

Getting through a maze can be a challenge!

**I**magine you are running along a narrow, gravel pathway. On either side of you is a six-foot wall of tangled hedges. Openings along the hedge lead to other long, leafy green hallways. They all look the same. You are caught in a maze! Can you find your way out? Even a compass won't help you. Many of these twisting passageways will never take you to the end. Instead, they lead to dead ends and you have to retrace your steps. This is what makes mazes so much fun—and so difficult!

### What's a Labyrinth?

Many people confuse mazes with labyrinths. Unlike mazes, many labyrinths have no walls at all. They are simply designs built into a floor or other flat surface. Mazes are multicursal, meaning they have many paths. A labyrinth is unicursal—it has a single path from the beginning to the end. Most labyrinths are less challenging than mazes, but there's one exception you'll read about on page 73!

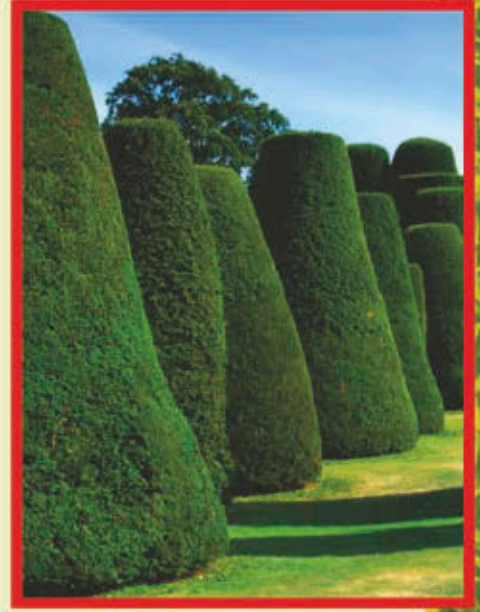




# Hemmed In by Hedges

Hedge mazes are one of the most common kinds of mazes. These are often made from the yew, an evergreen tree or shrub. Yews make good maze borders because they grow slowly and keep their shape.

Mazes are created in all kinds of designs from easy to difficult. Some mazes end in their middle. In others, you must find your way from one side to another. In 1977, Queen Elizabeth celebrated twenty-five years as queen of England. To mark this event, brothers Edward and Lindsay Heyes created the Silver Jubilee maze.



The slow-growing yew tree



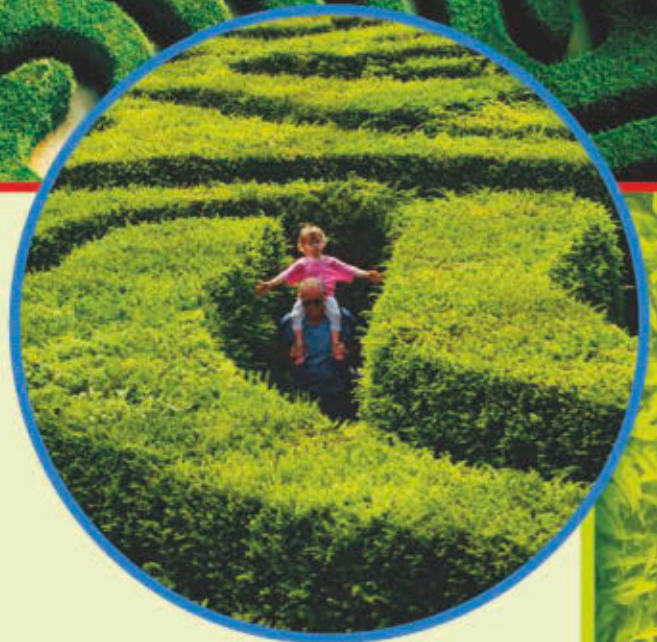
This “aMazing Hedge Puzzle,” as the brothers call it, has twelve paths to the center and thirteen unlucky dead ends. And there’s a balcony outside the maze from which you can shout hints to your friends inside—or confuse them even more!

The Silver Jubilee maze pathways can hold many people at once, and even wheelchairs. So many people visit that the paths wear down two inches a year!





The length of mazes can vary, too. Some are extremely long. In 1975, for example, Greg Bright created the Longleat Hedge Maze in Wiltshire, England. This maze, one of the longest hedge mazes in the world, uses more than 16,000 English yew trees. It takes about ninety minutes to complete. Other mazes are short and may take very little time to finish.



The Longleat Hedge Maze has almost two miles of pathways.



## A Royal Puzzle

One of the most unusual hedge mazes is found at Leeds Castle in Kent, England. Made from yew and designed by a maze expert, it was planted in 1988. Part of the maze is cut in the shape of a crown to honor the many queens who have lived in the castle. At the center of the Leeds Castle maze is the entrance to a grotto, or cavern, filled with sculptures of mythical beasts.

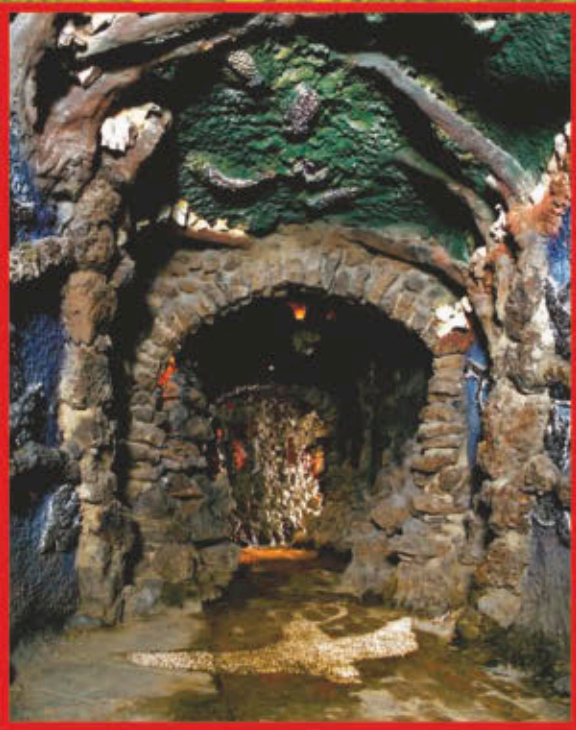


The maze at Leeds Castle in Kent, England



If you're lucky enough to find your way to the center, you can climb to the top of a small tower for a view of the entire maze. Then you can take stone steps down into the most unique part of the maze—its grotto. The maze winds through an underground cave that's cold, dark, and narrow. This part of the maze is unicursal, which means it has a single path leading from the beginning to the end. You can't get lost!

Can you find the crown in the maze?



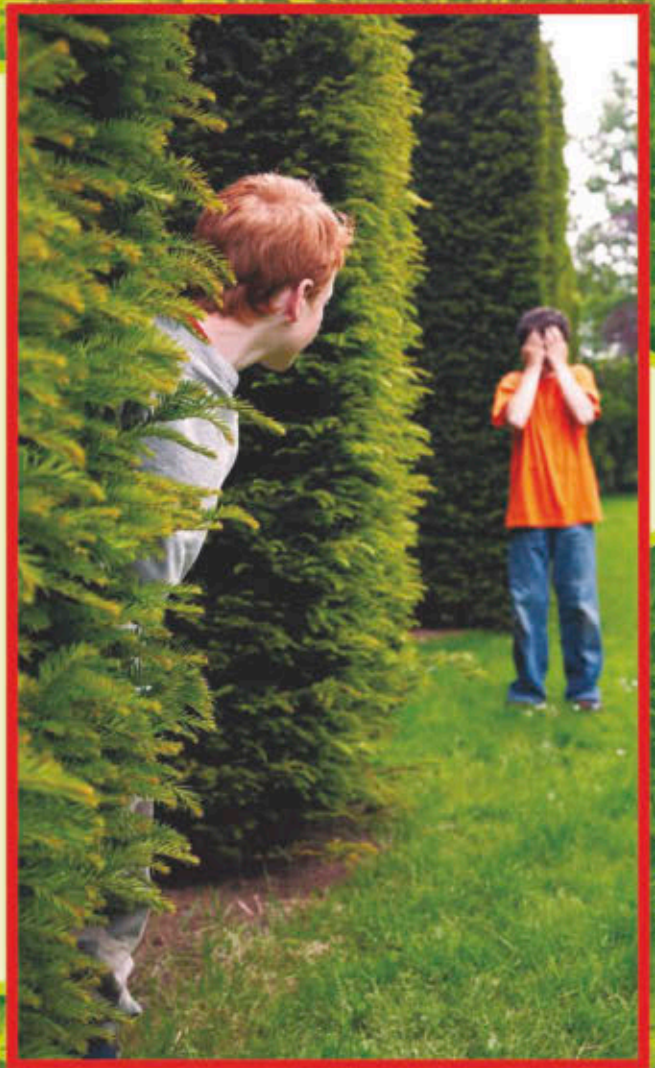
If you find your way to the center tower, you will have the chance to explore the underground part of the Leeds maze.





For younger children, Leeds Castle offers the Turf Maze. No taller than ankle height, this maze also has a surprise at its center—a small wooden castle. Leeds Castle offers something to amaze both the young and the old.

Even young children enjoy the maze experience at Leeds Castle.



Underground you will pass a fountain carved in the shape of a mysterious face. Follow the light to the end of the maze!



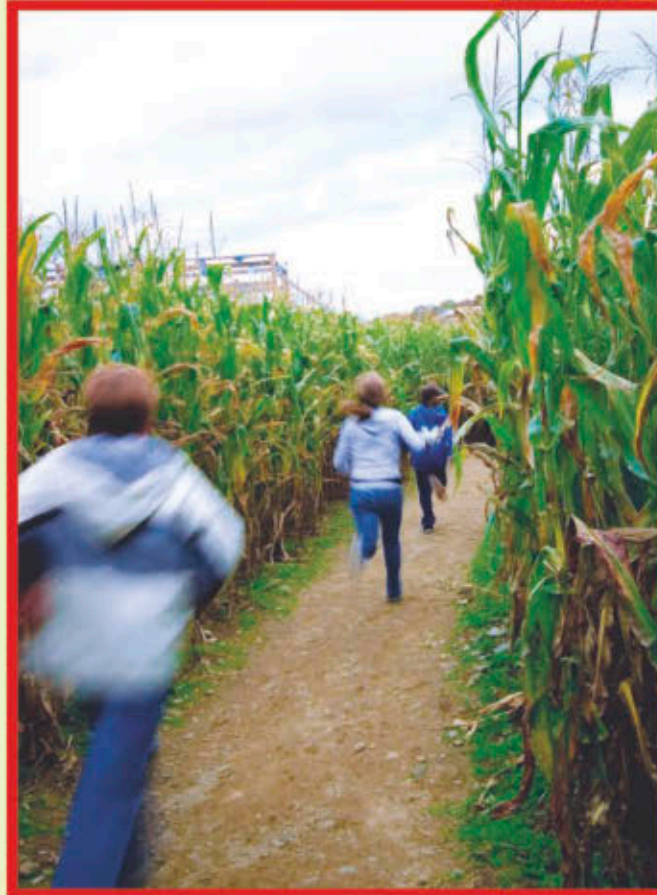


# Lost in the Cornstalks

There are hedge mazes in the United States, but not as many as in England. Our most common type of maze is made from cornstalks. It's nicknamed a maize maze because maize is another word for corn.

Unlike hedge mazes, which last for years, maize mazes last for only one season. However, they are fast and easy to grow. Designs are usually cut into the cornfield with tractors when the corn is only a few inches high. Picture designs are especially popular for maize mazes. And since corn is tallest in the fall, these designs are often related to the season of autumn.

**Maize mazes are fun but hot and dusty inside. Be sure to bring water and wear running shoes instead of sandals when you try one!**



Not all maize mazes have autumn themes. In 1993, British maze designer Adrian Fisher created a huge corn maze in the shape of a dinosaur in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Other maize mazes have featured castles, a map of the United States, an Egyptian pyramid, the Statue of Liberty, a cowboy, a pig, and even a portrait of the actor John Wayne.

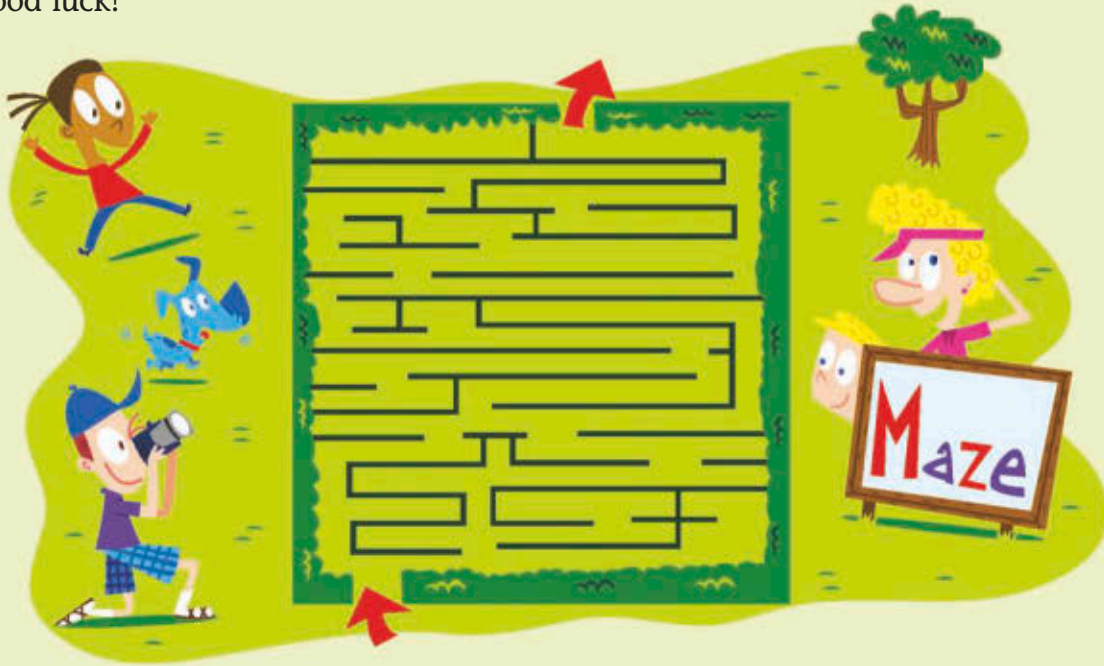


**Corn mazes are created in all kinds of imaginative designs!**



# A Test of Skill

Have you ever tried making your way through a maze on paper? If so, you know you place your pencil at "Start" and draw a line all the way through to the end. If you practice solving paper mazes, it might help you find your way through a hedge or maize maze. You may not need to go very far to try. Mazes have become popular tourist attractions, and they're found all over the world. Maybe you'll get a chance to test your maze-solving skills outdoors. Good luck!



## Labyrinth of the Minotaur

A story from Greek mythology has made one labyrinth famous the world over. In ancient days, King Minos ruled the island of Crete where people lived in fear of a beast called the Minotaur. The Minotaur had the head of a bull and the body of a man.

Minos kept the Minotaur in a huge labyrinth. Every few years fourteen people were sacrificed to the Minotaur. But Theseus, a brave young man, volunteered to stop this terrible practice by battling the Minotaur.

King Minos' daughter, Ariadne, gave Theseus a sword to fight the Minotaur and a ball of string to help him find his way out of the labyrinth. Theseus killed the Minotaur, rescued the people who were meant to be victims, and led them out to freedom.



"Minotaur Waking," a bronze sculpture by Michael Ayrton