

## **The New York War Crimes Crossword Puzzle Spec Sheet**

[The New York War Crimes](#) — everyone's favorite pro-Palestine, anti-*New York Times* newspaper — now has a [crossword puzzle](#)! And we'd love for you to contribute. Below you'll find some guidelines describing what we're looking for.

The *NYWC* puzzle aims to provide an alternative to the *NYT*'s puzzles, and to inspire people to cancel their subscriptions to the *NYT*. Like the rest of what the *NYWC* publishes, the puzzle functions as agitprop, bringing attention to the causes of Palestinian liberation, anti-imperial/anti-colonial struggle, and left-wing politics in general.

The *NYWC* puzzle mimics the *NYT*'s Thursday puzzle, meaning that it has a strong theme and is of moderate difficulty. Submissions for the puzzle should adopt this format (more details on this below).

Our goal is to have puzzles run on a weekly basis.

Please send submissions to Brandon and meatdaddy69420 at [newyorkwarcrimespuzzles@gmail.com](mailto:newyorkwarcrimespuzzles@gmail.com), and feel free to reach out to either with questions. Please submit the puzzles as .puz files with the file named as [YOURNAME]\_NYWC.puz.

### **A Few Brass Tacks:**

- Compensation: *NYWC* is an entirely volunteer-run publication. **We are unable to offer compensation for published puzzles.**
- Attribution: The puzzles will not include bylines on the *NYWC* website. You're welcome to claim authorship of your puzzle on your own social media/wherever else, but they'll all just be published as the *NYWC* puzzle.
- Submission Frequency: Please only submit one puzzle at a time. Once you've received a response about your submission, we'll welcome you to submit again.

### **Crossword Guidelines:**

#### **1. Format and Puzzle Specifications**

For now, the *NYWC* crossword will be a themed, *NYT* Thursday-style 15×15-square grid. As the project grows, we may incorporate other grids, but for now we'd like to keep it at this standardized size.

Additionally, we ask that you:

- Include a title if you would like your puzzle to have one (though titles are not required)
- Create a grid that has rotational symmetry
- Avoid using fill that is not in common usage (e.g. "GREENPAINT")
- Check to make sure that no proper nouns are crossing

- Do not make a grid with unchecked squares
- Do not make a grid with two-letter words
- Fact-check your clues—while we will also be fact-checking them, we appreciate your attention to detail!
- Ensure that any names listed in your puzzle aren't people who have accusations of misconduct, hateful speech, etc.
- (Obviously) do not include fill or clues that could be considered hateful in regard to people's race, gender, ability, religion, sexuality, age, or other demographic categories

## 2. Difficulty

Because the project is about giving people puzzle options that aren't the NYT, we want to make ones that will cater to the habitual crossword solver. Brandon conceived of the first three puzzles as "Thursday" ones—tricky enough to be a challenge, but not so difficult that they turn people off.

And because we're starting with one puzzle per week, we obviously won't have the luxury of offering an array of puzzles for people of varying skill levels. We'd therefore like to have them err on the side of "a little too difficult" rather than "a little too easy."

## 3. Themes

As mentioned above, we have conceived of the original three puzzles as Thursday puzzles, meaning that not only are they of moderate difficulty, but they also have a strong theme that ties them together and determines the layout of the grid.

We welcome puzzles that not only have clues related to the topics of Palestinian liberation, anti-imperial/anti-colonial struggle, and left-wing politics, but that also incorporate these ideas into the form of the puzzle.

However, this point is quite flexible. We're open to (and excited to see!) many different takes on what a puzzle constructed for this cause might be.

## 4. Voice

While we want to allow for expression by individual puzzlers, we do want these crosswords to be identifiable as the *NYWC* crossword, meaning that they should feel like agitprop. Feel free to editorialize in the clues, e.g.:

**Clue:** Quality exemplified by Oktoberfest, lederhosen, and a formerly genocidal nation using its official antisemitism initiatives to silence left-wing Jews

**Answer:** GERMANNES

As mentioned in point 3, the subjects of Palestinian liberation, anti-imperial/anti-colonial struggle, and left-wing politics are a primary goal.

**5. Exceptions to These Guidelines**

Totally possible (except for point 4 lol)! If you've got an idea you're confident in, but that doesn't fit strictly within these guidelines, feel free to run it by us first. (We don't want you to toil over the execution if we don't think it's a great fit for the *NYWC* puzzle.)

Looking forward to hearing from you! Happy puzzling!