

# The Puzzle Hunt Rules

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The abstract concept of “puzzle hunt” has led to numerous great ideas over the last twenty years. We discuss the definition here, and future papers in this volume explore individual aspects.

**Definition** A *puzzle hunt* is a themed collection of puzzles subject to the following constraints:

1. Mathcamp rules always apply.
2. The goal of the Hunt is to have fun. If you are not having fun, it’s our fault, so come tell us.
3. You may always ask for hints. We probably won’t give any, but it never hurts to ask, unless you’re being annoying. *If you have been working on a puzzle without progress for more than an hour, come talk to us. You deserve a big hint.*
4. Hunt honor code allows for almost everything. You are strongly encouraged to think outside the box, look things up online, and call family and friends. But peering over shoulders and stealing answers, from Headquarters or from other teams, is strictly forbidden. (Please don’t even share answers. If there comes a time when two teams want to merge, talk to us.)
5. This is not a computer-intensive Hunt. Nevertheless, should you choose to use a computer for any puzzle, feel free to use either of the McIntyre computer labs. Teams in the fraternities and farther afield are welcome to use the wired internet there for up to two personal laptops. Teams working in the dorms may use only one laptop, as they are closer to the computer labs and to headquarters.
6. Any time you get an answer, come to Headquarters and tell us, or call (541) 915-0578. You’re always allowed to guess, unless you’re being annoying.
7. If there is a puzzle with a lot of pieces — say a series of math questions or crossword clues — you may ask us to check individual answers on the list.
8. If you think a puzzle is telling you to go somewhere, call someone, do something, etc., check with us first.
9. This Hunt contains two rounds of six puzzles each. Each round is equipped with a metapuzzle; the second meta uses answers to all twelve puzzles. Solving the first metapuzzle will unlock the second round; the second round is also on a time release and will become universally available at 2pm. Headquarters will be located behind Jones Hall, where relays are held.