

# WINK PUZZLES



## Q&A with Brenda Bergen, Chief Puzzler of Wink Puzzles

### How did Wink Puzzles come about?

The idea came about because I love puzzles and it's hard to find a well-designed puzzle out there. There's a same-ness to them – collections of buttons or items that make you reminisce about your childhood. I noticed there was a hole in the market – modern puzzles from a designer's perspective.

### Why did you decide to start your own company?

All the jigsaw puzzles were sold out during quarantine and that inspired me to create my own. You couldn't even find a boring one out there, or the nostalgic kind you find in your grandma's basement.

### What inspired your first design?

On one very cold snowy day, my friend Stacy dropped off a single poppy flower. She knows that I much prefer one unique flower over a bouquet of boring blooms. That one poppy brought me daily joy. Every morning it looked a little different, and I found myself taking a few photos each day for about a week. That series of images was my inspiration when I set out to design my first puzzle.

### Do you have themes you plan on sticking to?

I love graphic, colorful puzzles with words. The best selling puzzle to date is Words & Stripes, it has colored stripes with names that have a sense of humor to them, like "Heather Locklear stole my boyfriend" or "Brad Pitt's lips". Botanicals are always a fave, and I intend to create them with an unexpected visual appeal, with a psychedelic twist. Designs that are symmetrical are another theme that we will be offering. These will all have a kaleidoscope affect. We will also be designing a line of typography-based puzzles that I'm really excited about.

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### **How often do you repeat puzzles?**

If they're really beautiful, I'll make them again and again and again. I find it really satisfying to bring my favorite puzzles on a weekend trip with friends. Watching them get into a puzzle that I've chosen is really fun. Once I've thoroughly exhausted a puzzle, I'll trade it. Puzzlers love trading because we always need a new challenge.

### **What is the main difference between Wink Puzzles and other puzzle companies?**

A lot of other puzzle companies are photography based. I'm the founder of [Wink Design Atelier](#), a branding and graphic design studio. This is why Wink Puzzles come from a designer's point of view and have strong design and typography.

### **Are you a part of any puzzle groups or discuss with others who have the same hobby?**

You can always find other puzzlers on local Facebook group because we love to trade puzzles. When the pandemic started, I noticed a lot of newbies asking if anyone had any puzzles they were getting rid of. I gave away a bunch of puzzles and the recipients told me I helped them start a new hobby (which is much needed during this crazy time). I never really considered myself an expert, but they would private message me for help and advice on how to do a puzzle. It's one of the reasons I thought a new puzzle company would be successful.

### **How often do you plan on introducing new designs?**

I would love to launch another grouping or two before the upcoming holiday season. As much as I hope we're not in a quarantine again, this time, I'll be prepared with more puzzles!

### **How did your friends and family react when you told them you started your own puzzle company?**

They weren't shocked at all! I always have a puzzle going in my house at all times. It's my meditation, my point of transition times during the day. I wake up, make coffee and puzzle before I start the day. I puzzle after work before dinner. I think it makes me a better person.

### **Have you found that puzzlers have a preference of puzzle pieces?**

500 - 1,000 pieces is the sweet spot. Puzzle lovers prefer 1,000 pieces. Puzzle savants might be into 2,000+ pieces, that takes a very long time. It's essentially the same as a 200 page book reader verse the 800 page. Few people read a Moby Dick multiple times a year. Same goes for puzzles. 1,000 piece puzzles change it up more often, while still feeling like you've accomplished something!

### **Any other benefits you've found from puzzling that you'd like to share with the world?**

Absolutely! They are so incredibly meditative and genuinely cause me to have a better day. I know a lot of people have a hard time finding the time to just sit with their thoughts and meditate. This allows them another option that engages their brain while still entering a resting state of mind. I've also found I tend to pull out a puzzle when I feel stressed out, to lift my spirits, or to just conquer boredom. I encourage everyone to give it a try!