

TappyPotato · Daily cryptic clues

9 October 2026 — 10 clues, easiest first. Answers overleaf.

1. Mouth within speaker cable tangle backstage (5)

5 · Hidden word · difficulty 1/5

2. Boss holding sherlock looks daft (6)

6 · Container · difficulty 2/5

3. Injury to feel pain (4)

4 · Double definition · difficulty 2/5

4. Mean to slip inward and mind the flock (6)

6 · Charade · difficulty 2/5

5. Esteem after grader upset (6)

6 · Anagram · difficulty 2/5

6. Banquet winner with a change from W to D (6)

6 · Substitution · difficulty 2/5

7. Genius in fine training earns distinction primarily — talent (6)

6 · Letter selection · difficulty 2/5

8. Piano to begin with — seed option feature theme leaving yes (6)

6 · Letter selection · difficulty 3/5

9. Bobby after a letter swap from B to O plays the dummy (5)

5 · Substitution · difficulty 3/5

10. How to invest with clerical ecstasy (6)

6 · Letter as symbol · difficulty 3/5

Answers & explanations

1. **SPEAK** (5)

Wings hush before the house lights fall. Within takes SPEAK from speaker — mouth, to utter. Gaffer tape and a muted cough cloak the hide as theatre weather rather than a lectern noun stripped for parts.

2. **STUPID** (6)

Newsroom desk after the edition locks and phones quiet. Sherlock yields PI; holding parks it in boss (STUD) — STU(PI)D. Daft is the stupid sense. Soft coffee and a humming printer dress the nesting as late-shift aside, not a detective nod.

3. **HURT** (4)

Clinic hush when the bruise still throbs. Injury is the health damage; feel pain is to hurt. Four letters for the wound and for being sore.

4. **INTEND** (6)

Sheepfold dusk when the gate still creaks. IN (inward) plus TEND (mind, as a shepherd) yields INTEND — mean, to purpose. Wet wool and a bent crook sell the join as farm weather rather than a bare verb dump.

5. **REGARD** (6)

'Upset' knocks GRADER about and it settles as REGARD — esteem, a favourable wish of mind. Road machines are the cloak.

6. **DINNER** (6)

Champion word softened into the evening meal. Banquet is dinner; winner with a change puts D where W sat, giving DINNER.

7. **GIFTED** (6)

Conservatoire praise: a prodigy under polished coaching wins plaudits. Primarily builds G-I-F-T-E-D from genius in fine training earns distinction. Talent is the gift; the recital programme tone fronts the letter trail.

8. **SOFTLY** (6)

Conservatoire note after seed option, feature theme, leaving yes. To begin with takes S-O-F-T-L-Y from that phrase. Piano is the softly sense — play quietly — while the recital cue covers the initials.

9. **BOOBY** (5)

The answer is BOOBY. The definition is 'dummy'. Starting from the fodder BOBBY, change the letter B to O to form BOOBY.

10. **CLOTHE** (6)

Vestry aside when the vestments still hang. Clerical is CLOTH and ecstasy E, so CLOTHE — to invest in garments. Incense tang and a squeaky wardrobe keep clerical-then-E as sacristy talk, not a stock-market joke alone.