

TappyPotato · Daily cryptic clues

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

1. Initial in firstly reported county results (5)

5 · Hidden word · difficulty 1/5

2. Sure, part of positively glowing notices (8)

8 · Hidden word · difficulty 2/5

3. Shelly briefly — a casing (5)

5 · Deletion · difficulty 2/5

4. Witness excuse six primary, last of all, turns erotic (4)

4 · Letter selection · difficulty 2/5

5. Ideal kiwi from tree, ultimately — fruit (4)

4 · Letter selection · difficulty 2/5

6. Thick and heavy — tense after a letter swap from T to D (5)

5 · Substitution · difficulty 2/5

7. Neglect that light gait (4)

4 · Double definition · difficulty 3/5

8. Blade for the digger after one letter changed from I to A (6)

6 · Substitution · difficulty 3/5

9. Shack? To begin with, humble under tree cabin house (5)

5 · Letter selection · difficulty 3/5

10. Vary recipe for a modifier (7)

7 · Letter as symbol · difficulty 3/5

Answers & explanations

1. **FIRST** (5)

Newsdesk hush as the returns trickle in. In takes FIRST from firstly — initial, the opening figure. Coffee rings and a humming printer sell the hide as election night, not a bare ordinal.

2. **POSITIVE** (8)

Foyer mutter after the first-night notices land. Part of parks POSITIVE inside positively — sure, positively certain. Programme stubs, damp coats and a humming lift sell the long hide as theatre weather, host untouched.

3. **SHELL** (5)

Shore rockpool when the tide still laps. Casing is the shell sense — a hard outer cover. Briefly clips the last letter of shelly, leaving SHELL. Soft brine and a lukewarm picnic cloak the chop as beach mutter rather than a biology card.

4. **SEXY** (4)

Court corridor whisper after a flimsy alibi. Taking the last letters of witness, excuse, six, primary gives SEXY, which is erotic. Bail forms and a raised eyebrow hide the terminals in one charged aside.

5. **LIME** (4)

Orchard joke: the ideal kiwi straight from the tree. Terminal letters of ideal kiwi from tree, marked by 'ultimately', spell LIME. Fruit is the definition — a lime — while the New Zealand fruit talk misleads nicely.

6. **DENSE** (5)

Fog on the motorway. Heavy means dense; tense after a letter swap turns T into D, giving DENSE.

7. **SKIP** (4)

Twin definitions: skip a light springing gait, and skip as to neglect or omit. Playground surface, adult reading.

8. **DAGGER** (6)

The answer is DAGGER. The definition is 'Blade'. Starting from the fodder DIGGER, change the letter I to A to form DAGGER.

9. **HUTCH** (5)

Shack. HUTCH comes from the first letters of Humble, Under, Tree, Cabin, House.

10. **CHANGER** (7)

Kitchen bench when the scales still hum. Vary yields CHANGE, recipe R — CHANGER, a modifier of the mix. Steam and a sticky spoon sell vary-then-recipe as cook mutter, letters soft on the surface.