

TappyPotato · Daily cryptic clues

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

1. Cab within taxing schedule before noon (4)

4 · Hidden word · difficulty 2/5

2. Alliance from gutted bound (4)

4 · Deletion · difficulty 2/5

3. Bust embracing southeast, laid (6)

6 · Container · difficulty 2/5

4. Motel when one becomes another from T to D — exemplary (5)

5 · Substitution · difficulty 2/5

5. Practise on leather, it soon hardens — refinement, initially (6)

6 · Letter selection · difficulty 2/5

6. Oratory for a bloke at altitude (6)

6 · Charade · difficulty 2/5

7. Clumsy finally, anti brain welfare hip target (5)

5 · Letter selection · difficulty 3/5

8. Boom semi rock formula expand radio, finally — emperor (6)

6 · Letter selection · difficulty 3/5

9. Kin that describe day (7)

7 · Letter as symbol · difficulty 3/5

10. Staining from sporting when one becomes another from R to T (8)

8 · Substitution · difficulty 3/5

Answers & explanations

1. TAXI (4)

Office runner scanning the diary. Within lifts TAXI from taxing. Cab is the taxi sense — a hire car.

2. BOND (4)

Treaty room when the seals still warm. Gutted pulls the heart from bound (the middle U), leaving BOND. Alliance is the tie of partners, a sealed pledge. Soft wax and a leaning blotter cloak the gutting as diplomatic aside, letters exact under the hush.

3. RAISED (6)

Yard dawn when the hens still fuss. Southeast yields SE; embracing nests it in bust (RAID) — RAI(SE)D. Laid is the raised sense, set up. Soft straw and a bent bucket cloak the container as coop chatter.

4. MODEL (5)

Roadside upgrade: motel when one becomes another T becomes D turns exemplary. MODEL; the inn flips into the pattern to copy.

5. POLISH (6)

Refinement is the definition, polish in its figurative sense. 'Initially' takes the first letters of practise, on, leather, it, soon and hardens: P-O-L-I-S-H. A cobbler's tip carries the surface.

6. CHAPEL (6)

Hill chapel on a walking map. Bloke is CHAP and altitude (el) is EL — CHAPEL — while Oratory is the small chapel sense. Two familiar cryptic abbreviations dressed as a hike.

7. INEPT (5)

Clumsy is the definition. Taking the last letter of each word in the clue gives INEPT.

8. MIKADO (6)

Emperor is the definition. Taking the last letter of each word in the clue gives MIKADO.

9. RELATED (7)

Family album under a kitchen lamp while someone dates the photo. Describe is RELATE and day D, so RELATED. Kin is the blood-tie sense. Tea rings and soft corners hide a verb-plus-letter add as Sunday talk.

10. SPOTTING (8)

Kit-bag blot once athletics is retouched. Staining is spotting; sporting when one becomes another turns R into T, giving SPOTTING.