



Magica Squares

by Philip Z Loh

The third in the trilogy of anime-related Sudoku puzzles is Magica Squares. On the surface, the anime connection may not be as apparent, but be warned that by solving this puzzle, you've entered into a magical contract with Kyubey from Puella Magi Madoka Magica. SPOILERS exist in this solution beyond this point! The title is a merge between "Madoka Magica" and "Magic Square"; the use of Sudoku is somewhat inspired by the character for 9, "九 (Kyu)".

Solvers first follow the rules to complete the Magica Squares. This isn't just a regular Sudoku puzzle, though – even the diagonals now have to add up to the same total.

These are the filled out grids:

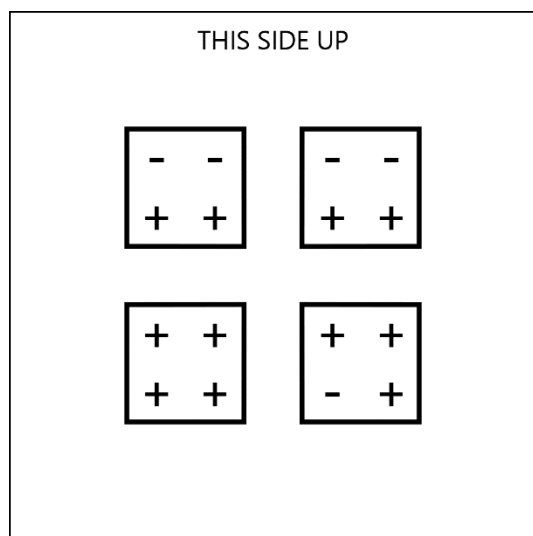
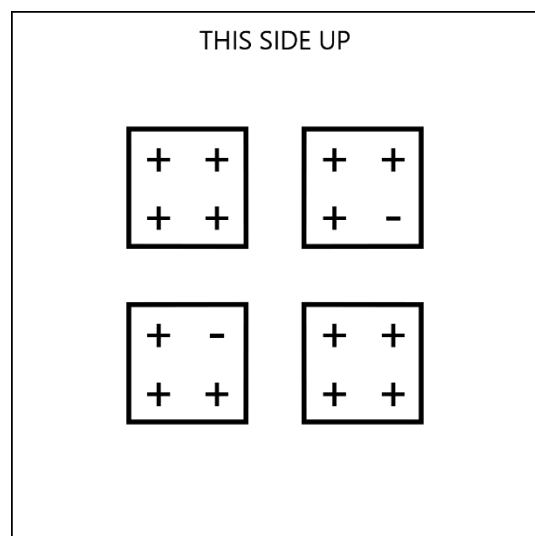
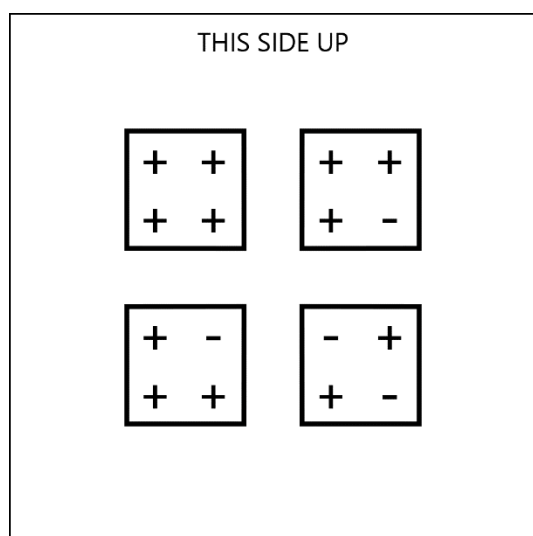
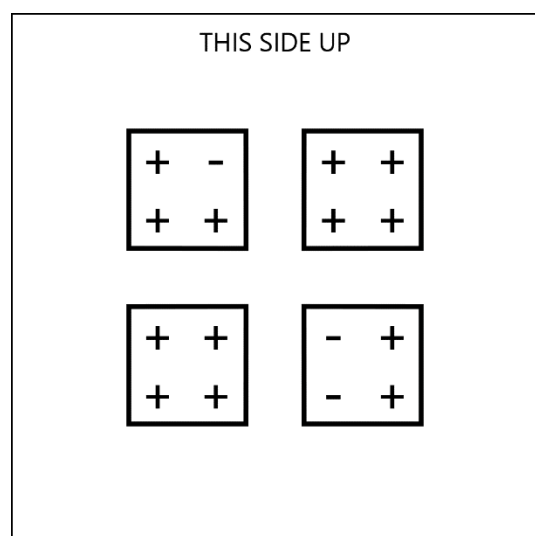
1	6	5	7	8	2	3	9	4
4	7	9	3	6	5	2	8	1
2	3	8	1	4	9	7	5	6
9	8	7	5	2	1	4	6	3
6	1	4	8	9	3	5	2	7
3	5	2	6	7	4	9	1	8
7	9	3	2	1	8	6	4	5
8	2	6	4	5	7	1	3	9
5	4	1	9	3	6	8	7	2

2	3	4	7	5	6	9	8	1
1	7	8	2	4	9	6	3	5
6	9	5	1	3	8	7	2	4
8	1	3	6	7	5	2	4	9
4	5	2	9	8	3	1	6	7
7	6	9	4	2	1	3	5	8
5	8	6	3	9	7	4	1	2
3	2	7	8	1	4	5	9	6
9	4	1	5	6	2	8	7	3

8	1	5	4	7	9	3	6	2
7	4	3	6	2	8	9	1	5
6	9	2	5	1	3	8	7	4
1	3	4	7	8	5	2	9	6
5	7	6	1	9	2	4	8	3
2	8	9	3	4	6	1	5	7
3	2	7	8	6	1	5	4	9
9	6	1	2	5	4	7	3	8
4	5	8	9	3	7	6	2	1

6	9	8	3	4	7	2	5	1
3	1	5	2	9	8	6	7	4
7	2	4	5	6	1	3	9	8
9	7	3	8	1	5	4	6	2
8	5	6	7	2	4	9	1	3
1	4	2	6	3	9	5	8	7
5	3	9	1	8	2	7	4	6
2	8	7	4	5	6	1	3	9
4	6	1	9	7	3	8	2	5

Solvers then have to overlay frames so that each window adds up to a positive integer. "窓 (Mado)" means window, and "加 (Ka)" means add. It's also intentional that you have 4 Sudoku puzzles (the 4 other main characters) and then have 1 Madoka step. The frame configuration where the sum of each window is a positive integer is:





The sums of each window (1-26) are used as letters (A-Z) read to form the phrase **SUMCORNERNUMBERS**. The sum of the corner numbers spell the final answer **LOOP**.

In Puella Magi Madoka Magica, Homura enters into a contract with Kyubey in order to turn back time and stop Madoka from ever becoming a magical girl, causing a time LOOP with karmic consequences.

ANSWER:

LOOP