



FAST CUBE FACTS

**Fantastic facts you might not know
about the legendary
Rubik's Cube**

The Cube is the world's biggest-selling toy EVER, and has sold in excess of **350 million units** worldwide

The Cube has **43 quintillion different possible configurations**
(or 43,252,003,274,489,856,000 to be precise)
and only **ONE** solution

CUBE HISTORY – let's put it in context ...

The legendary Rubik's Cube was invented in 1974 by Hungarian Professor **Erno Rubik**, then a lecturer at the Department of Interior Design at the Academy of Applied Arts and Crafts in Budapest. It was originally called the **Magic Cube**.



After winning the highest prize for outstanding inventions in Hungary, in 1980 the Cube won **top toy awards** in Britain, Germany, France and the US.

Its **worldwide launch** also took place in **1980**. Hungarian actress Zsa Zsa Gabor was chosen to host the Rubik's Cube's launch in America, at a Hollywood party.

Meanwhile, **Margaret Thatcher** took to the world stage as Britain's first female Prime Minister, **Indira Ghandi's** Congress Party won the elections in India - and in the USA, Democrat Jimmy Carter handed over the reins of the USA Presidency to Republican, **Ronald Reagan**.

A young, gamine **Lady Diana Spencer** took her first tentative steps into the glare of the world's media spotlight in preparation for her wedding to **Prince Charles**. Dutch company, Phillips, launched their innovative 'Compact Disc', Post-It Notes were introduced to the world by 3M, Small Pox was considered eradicated by the World Health Organisation, and Japan passed the US as the World's largest car manufacturer.

Muhammad Ali's last world title bout was to end in defeat to **Larry Holmes**, who retained the WBC World Heavyweight title, while the USA boycotted the Moscow Summer Olympic Games as a protest against Russia's invasion of Afghanistan.

1980 also saw the birth of a global social sea-change – the beginnings of the new 'consumerism' and a passionate drive for material wealth.

In 1981, the Rubik's Cube was included as an exhibit within the hallowed halls of the **New York Museum of Modern Art**.

By 1982, the Cube had achieved such a universal presence and penetrated the fabric of British society so deeply, it was included in the revered **Oxford English Dictionary**.

If you made a single turn of one of the Cube's faces every second, it would take you **1,400 million million years** to go through all the possible configurations. (By way of comparison, the universe itself is only 14 *thousand* million years old.)

Rubik's fastest/craziest Speedcubers

In **official Rubik's Speedcubing competitions** (national and international gatherings are held by the World Cube Association), timing is done with a special **StackMat**. It's average times that count: contestants solve 5 Cubes in each round, with the fastest and slowest times being discounted.

Since 2004, the number of WCA competitions escalated from 12 during that year to 24 in 2005, 33 in 2006, 53 in 2007. By 2008 the figure had reached 110, and last year 169 competitions were held – in 38 countries. This year WCA co-founder **Ron van Bruchem** forecasts that well over 200 competitions will be organized, in 45 to 50 countries.

The **first official World Rubik's Championship** was held on 5 June **1982** in Budapest. The winner was American Minh Thai, who solved a standard (3x3x3) Rubik's Cube in **22.95 seconds**.



The **World Record for a single solve** on the 3x3x3 Cube is held by Erik Akkersdijk (*pictured, left*) from the Netherlands, who achieved **7.08 seconds** at the Czech Open in **2008**.

The current **youngest official Speedcuber** is China's Enxi Xie, a little girl aged just 4 years, 6 months and 10 days, who solved the Cube in just 1:28:06!

The **current oldest Speedcuber** is also from China – Xinxian Li, at the grand old age of 88 years, 6 months and 6 days, with a time of 4:43:52.



There are also official records for **solving the Cube one-handed** (currently held by Sweden's Gunnar Krig in 13:80 seconds), **blindfolded** (Haiyan Zhuang of China in 35:96 seconds) and **with the feet** (Anssi Vanhala of Finland in 36.72 seconds).

The current **World Rubik's Speedcubing Champion** is teenager Breandan Vallance (*left, centre of podium*) from Scotland, who won the title in October last year, with an average solving time of **10.74 seconds**.

On 20 December 2008, **96 people** in Santa Ana, California broke the Guinness Book of World Records for the **most people solving a Rubik's Cube at once**.

On 11 April 2009, Adam Morgan solved the Rubik's Cube in around 47 seconds while in a **freefall skydive!**

Note: All these facts are correct as of 1st February 2010. Please check the www.worldcubeassociation.org website for the latest information on Speedcubers/Speedcubing records.

Fun Cube Facts

It is estimated that **one eighth of the world's total population** has laid hands on the Cube.

In Britain, the **ultimate collectible of 1981** was a Rubik's Cube showing Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

Frau Schmit of Dusseldorf, Germany sued her husband for divorce in 1981, citing **the Rubik's Cube as co-respondent**: "*Gundar no longer speaks to me and when he comes to bed, he is too exhausted from playing with his Cube to even give me a cuddle.*"

With over 350 million Rubik's Cubes sold worldwide, if all the Cubes were placed on top of each other they would **reach the top of Mount Everest a staggering 1,937 times!**

In 1992, the UK's Prime Minister John Major used the Cube to demonstrate to his TV audience the virtually insoluble complexities of the **Maastricht Treaty**. In November 2009, when EC President Jose Manuel Barroso presented the Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt with a Rubik's Cube to congratulate him on solving the puzzle of gaining consensus on the new EU appointments, following the ratification of the **Lisbon Treaty**, he chose to do it live – on worldwide TV!

The **most expensive Rubik's Cube** ever produced is the Masterpiece Cube, created by Diamond Cutters International in 1995. This actual size, fully-functional cube features 22.5 carats of amethyst, 34 carats of rubies, and 34 carats of emeralds, all set in 18-carat gold, and has been valued at approximately **1.5 million US dollars**.

So compulsive can Cube solving become, it has given rise to two recognised medical conditions amongst some hardcore enthusiasts – **Cubist's Thumb** and **Rubik's Wrist**.

The actor, **Will Smith**, star of films such as *Men in Black*, *I am Legend*, *Ali* and ***The Pursuit of Happyness***, can solve the Rubik's Cube in 55 seconds. It was for the latter film that he learned to solve The Cube - with the help of Speedcubing champions, Tyson Mao and Lars Petrus.

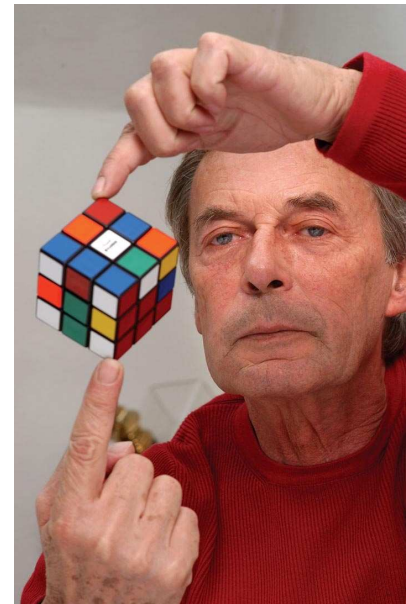
Teenager Daniel Kaczowski not only solves Rubik's Cube while **Ripstiking** (an advanced skateboard with only two wheels), he also finishes with his eyes closed!

Erno Rubik - Quotable Quotes

"Nobody has been able to improve on the basic design, which pleases me as a designer, or on the engineering, which pleases me as an engineer."

"It's simple but it's complex; it's stable but it's flexible; it's easy to understand, but it's hard to work out the solution."

"For me, it was never about speed, it was about looking at a problem and finding the solution. So I can solve it, but not very fast."



"The Cube is part of me because I designed it, I created it. It's my child, if you like. But it's not a newborn. When you have children you spend a lot of time with them when they're young, nurturing them. But when they grow up they develop a life of their own and you don't need to be with them all the time anymore. The Cube is like that."

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NOTES FOR JOURNALISTS AND BROADCASTERS

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For information on all things Rubik's, visit
www.rubiks.com

Please note that Erno Rubik does not give individual interviews

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