Rubik's Cube Encyclopedia Article

Rubik's Cube

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Rubik's Cube

A puzzle that confounded people worldwide during the late 1970s and early 1980s was patented by Hungarian inventor Erno Rubik in 1977. The puzzle was a cube, assembled around a sphere, so that all six sides moved in all directions. When the puzzle was purchased, each side of the cube was all one color. After mixing up the colors, the frustrated puzzle solver would try to get the cube back to its original position. With millions of combinations possible, many of the puzzles were never solved.

Although the Ideal Toy Company, which purchased the American rights, made $75 million on the cube between 1980 and 1983, a successful 1984 patent infringement suit by American game inventor Larry D. Nichols cut into those profits significantly. Nichols claimed he had invented a similar puzzle in 1969.