

TappyPotato · Daily cryptic clues

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

1. Dixie country buried in southbound sleeper (5)

5 · Hidden word · difficulty 1/5

2. Gated, trimmed — a barrier (4)

4 · Deletion · difficulty 2/5

3. All ordered once they put the dial back (4)

4 · Reversal · difficulty 2/5

4. Pump as provide embracing rex (6)

6 · Container · difficulty 2/5

5. Recycle crash with a change of heart from C to T into junk (5)

5 · Substitution · difficulty 2/5

6. Icy slide — skip when one becomes another from P to D (4)

4 · Substitution · difficulty 2/5

7. Bog from battered rime (4)

4 · Anagram · difficulty 2/5

8. Fixed ideas really make lasting years, to begin with — securely (6)

6 · Letter selection · difficulty 3/5

9. Aviator trial (5)

5 · Double definition · difficulty 3/5

10. Wound, to begin with, better rally useful illness silver end (6)

6 · Letter selection · difficulty 3/5

Answers & explanations

1. **SOUTH** (5)

Night train when the corridor light flickers past empty seats. Buried in takes SOUTH from southbound — Dixie, the southern stretch. Rattling couplings and a thermos sell the hide as travel weather rather than a map slogan.

2. **GATE** (4)

Farm lane when the latch still sticks. Barrier is the gate sense, a stop across the path. Trimmed docks the final letter of gated, giving GATE. Soft mud and a leaning post cloak the deletion as rural weather, letters shedding quietly.

3. **LAID** (4)

Safe-cracker's whisper in a thriller. Back reverses DIAL to LAID. Ordered is the laid sense — set down as instructed — and velvet cloth sells the reverse as heist weather.

4. **CARTER** (6)

Stable yard when the water still gushes. Provide yields CATER; embracing parks rex as R inside — CA(R)TER. Pump is the carter sense, one who hauls and forces flow. Soft straw and a bent bucket sell the nest as yard talk rather than a Latin drill.

5. **TRASH** (5)

Take crash, turn its C into T, and out comes TRASH — "junk" in the everyday sense. A natural-sounding use of crash does the covering here.

6. **SKID** (4)

Hop turns into a slip. Slide defines (skid). Skip when one becomes another swaps P for D, giving SKID.

7. **MIRE** (4)

Battered beats RIME about and the letters sink into MIRE — a bog, a stretch of wet, sucking ground. The frosty poem on the surface is mere scenery; the anagram does the muddying work to leave the four-letter answer.

8. **FIRMLY** (6)

FIRMLY means securely. The clue's first letters, taken from its word list, spell FIRMLY.

9. **PILOT** (5)

Airfield hut when the charts still flap. Aviator is the aircraft operator; trial is the test scheme — a pilot run. Soft wind and a lukewarm mug sell the twin as hangar chatter, not a machine colon.

10. **BRUISE** (6)

Physio chart after a clumsy cup-final tumble. Taking the first letters of better, rally, useful, illness, silver, end gives BRUISE, which is wound. Ice packs and a dented medal turn the initials into one purple badge.