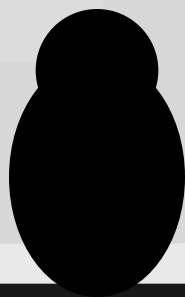


CASE FILE • 2026

THE KILLER ISN'T JUNE

A CASE-FILE DEDUCTION PUZZLE

19,900 SUSPECTS • 20 CLUES
ONE HIDDEN ANSWER



OBSERVE • ELIMINATE • VERIFY

VELVET CIPHER

The Case

A quick briefing before you open the register.

THE PACKET

At 11:47 p.m., a sealed evidence packet lands on your desk. Inside is a suspect register containing 19,900 names and a set of 20 facts about one hidden culprit. Your task is not to guess the name. It is to prove it.

YOUR JOB

Apply each clue literally. Eliminate every suspect who fails. Continue until exactly one name remains.

YOUR STANDARD

A correct solution must survive every clue—not just the clues that seem convenient.

THE CASE PRINCIPLE

This is a logic puzzle, not a guessing game. The register, clue wording, order of names, and counting rules are the complete evidence set.

THE OBJECTIVE

Find the one suspect who fits all 20 clues.

No shortcuts. No guessing. Just systematic elimination.

CASE PRELUDE

THE NIGHT THE REGISTER ARRIVED

A short story to set the case in motion — read it, then solve the evidence.

The rain had been falling for hours when the envelope appeared.

There was no knock. No footsteps. No name on the door. Just a plain evidence packet resting beneath the office light.

Inside was a single typed instruction:

"Do not look for the most suspicious name. Look for the only name that cannot be eliminated."

Beneath it sat a register thick enough to stop a door and a two-page evidence sheet containing twenty numbered clues.

The register held 19,900 names.

At first, the number felt absurd. How could anyone possibly search through thousands of suspects and find one person?

Then you noticed the second instruction.

"The order is part of the evidence."

That changed everything.

This was not a case for a lucky hunch or a convenient confession. Every clue was a filter. Every surviving name had to earn its place.

You turned to the first page. Names ran across the paper in neat rows. You could already imagine the work ahead: letters to compare, names to count, neighbors to check, and pages to track.

Somewhere in this enormous list was one person who satisfied every condition.

The room seemed quieter. You uncapped your pen.

And somewhere among 19,900 printed names, one suspect was about to become impossible to eliminate.

THE CASE IS FAIR

No outside knowledge is required. Read the clues literally.
Eliminate. Verify. Solve.

Turn the page when you are ready to begin.

How to Solve

Use the same four-step loop for every clue.

1

READ

Read the clue exactly as written.

2

TEST

Check every remaining suspect against that fact.

3

ELIMINATE

Cross out every suspect who fails the clue.

4

VERIFY

Keep moving until one suspect remains, then check all 20 clues again.

Register order matters

Names are read left to right along each printed line, then down the page. “Immediately before” and “immediately after” refer to that exact running order.

SOLVER TIP

Write a small mark beside difficult clues. Do not rely on memory when a clue involves position, page counts, or alphabet values.

Rules & Register Logic

These conventions make every clue deterministic.

VOWELS

A, E, I, O, U only. Y is never a vowel.

COUNTING

When a clue counts names on a page, count every printed name—including names already eliminated.

CAPITALISATION

Letter matching is case-insensitive.

REPEATED NAMES

Every printed occurrence is a separate suspect. A name-based clue treats identical copies the same way.

ALPHABET VALUES

A=1 through Z=26.

NAME LENGTH

Unless a clue says otherwise, count letters in the first name only.

PAGE RULE

The register contains 77 numbered suspect pages. "Last 12 pages" means pages 66–77.

VOWEL GROUPS

Adjacent vowels count as one vowel group.

Useful Checks

A compact reference for the clues that require calculation.

ALPHABET VALUE

A=1, B=2 ... Z=26. For a first/last-letter sum, convert both letters to numbers and add them.

ALPHABET GAP

Find the earliest and latest letters in the name. Subtract the smaller value from the larger.

MIDDLE / HALVES

For an even-length name, split into equal halves. For an odd-length name, ignore the middle letter when the clue says to.

VOWEL GROUPS

A vowel group is a run of adjacent vowels. Example: "AURELIA" contains three groups: AU, E, IA.

WORKED EXAMPLE • "SAMPLE"

Letters: S-A-M-P-L-E. Vowels: A, E. First + last = $19 + 5 = 24$. Alphabet gap = $19 - 1 = 18$. This is only a demonstration of the method.

KEEP THE ARITHMETIC VISIBLE

Small calculations are easier to audit than mental shortcuts.

Clues 01-10

Read literally. Every clue describes a fact that is true of the killer.

1. The suspect listed immediately before the killer has a first name that comes earlier in the alphabet than the killer's.

2. The suspect listed immediately after the killer has a first name that comes earlier in the alphabet than the killer's.

3. The name immediately before the killer's name begins with a consonant.

4. The killer's initial is NOT one of the 4 most common starting letters in the whole register (those four are: A, M, K, J).

5. The killer's name begins with a letter from A to S.

6. The killer's name is fewer than 7 letters long.

7. The killer's name does NOT contain the letter I.

8. The two halves of the killer's name contain the same number of vowels (ignore the middle letter in an odd-length name).

9. Counting every entry in the book, the killer's name length is NOT one of the most common name-lengths (those are: 6, 7).

10. The first and last letters of the killer's name add up to at least 20 (A=1 ... Z=26).

Clues 11-20

Continue applying the clues to the survivors from the previous round.

11. The last two letters of the killer's name add up to at least 19 (A=1 ... Z=26).

12. The second-to-last letter of the killer's name is a vowel.

13. The killer's first letter comes before its last letter in the alphabet.

14. The killer's name does NOT contain the letter O.

15. At least 2 letters of the killer's name are in the second half of the alphabet (N-Z).

16. The killer is NOT within the last 12 pages of the register.

17. Exactly 1 different letter appears more than once in the killer's name.

18. The name immediately after the killer's name begins with a vowel.

19. The gap between the earliest and latest letter of the killer's name (in the alphabet) is less than 18.

20. The killer's name has exactly 2 vowel groups; adjacent vowels count as one group.

Investigation Scorecard

Verified survivor counts after each clue. Use this as a self-check—not as a shortcut.

CLUE	SURVIVORS	CLUE	SURVIVORS
1	10,012	11	126
2	6,613	12	82
3	4,971	13	51
4	4,028	14	27
5	2,345	15	23
6	1,430	16	20
7	855	17	8
8	506	18	4
9	321	19	2
10	216	20	1

CHECKPOINTS

After clue 5: 2,345 • After clue 10: 216 • After clue 15: 23

After clue 20: exactly 1 survivor

Investigator's Notes

Use these spaces for eliminations, calculations, and page references.

SURVIVOR NOTES

NEIGHBOR / ORDER CHECKS

CALCULATIONS