

CASE FILE • 2026

THE KILLER ISN'T JUNE

A CASE-FILE DEDUCTION PUZZLE

21,500 SUSPECTS • 20 CLUES • 1 HIDDEN ANSWER

OBSERVE • ELIMINATE • VERIFY

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The Killer Isn't June

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This is a work of fiction. The names in the suspect register are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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EDITION NOTE

A fair-play deduction puzzle designed for deliberate reading, marking, elimination, and verification. The printed register order is part of the evidence and must not be rearranged.

The Night the Register Arrived

Read this first. Then enter the case.

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 an evidence sheet containing twenty clues. The register held 21,500 names.

At first, the number felt absurd. How could anyone 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 opened the register. Names ran across the paper in neat lines. You would need to compare letters, count names, inspect neighbors, and keep track of pages.

Somewhere inside that enormous list was one person who satisfied every condition. You uncapped your pen. The first clue waited.

And somewhere among 21,500 printed names, one suspect was about to become impossible to eliminate.

THE CASE IS FAIR

No outside knowledge is required. Read every clue literally.

START HERE

How to Solve

The objective is simple: eliminate until one suspect remains.

01

READ

Read each clue exactly as written.

02

FILTER

Cross out every suspect that fails the clue.

03

TRACK

Keep the printed register order unchanged.

04

VERIFY

Re-check the final survivor against every clue.

SOLVING LOOP

READ → TEST → CROSS OUT → CONTINUE

You may solve clues in order for the intended progression, but every clue is a factual constraint on the killer. Do not alphabetize, sort, or rearrange the register.

Rules & Fair-Play

Use these definitions consistently throughout the case.

VOWELS	A, E, I, O, U only. Y is always a consonant.
NAME LENGTH	Count letters only; ignore spaces and punctuation if any appear.
REGISTER ORDER	Read left to right along each line, then continue downward.
PAGE COUNTS	Count every printed entry on the page, including crossed-out names.
NEIGHBORS	The entry before/after a suspect follows the printed register sequence, including across page breaks.
REPEATED NAMES	Every printed occurrence is a separate suspect entry, but a name-based letter rule applies identically to identical names.
ALPHABET VALUES	A=1 through Z=26.
FAIR PLAY	No outside knowledge is required. The clues are literal.

The Detective's Desk

Quick methods for the letter and position clues.

CONSONANT CHECK

Remove vowels A/E/I/O/U. Everything left is a consonant.

ALPHABET SPAN

Find the earliest and latest letters. Subtract their A=1...Z=26 values.

LAST-TWO TEST

Convert the final two letters to numbers and add them.

FIRST/LAST TEST

Convert the first and last letters to numbers and add them.

MIDDLE LETTER

For an even-length name, use the left of the two middle letters.

DISTINCT CONSONANTS

Count different consonant letters, not total consonant occurrences.

POSITION CHECK

For a neighbor clue, inspect the exact entry immediately before or after.

Tip: write your own shorthand in the investigator notes before entering the register.

Clues 01-10

Apply each clue literally. Cross out failures.

- 01 The suspect listed immediately after the killer has a first name that comes later in the alphabet than the killer's.
- 02 The suspect listed immediately before the killer has a first name that comes later in the alphabet than the killer's.
- 03 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).
- 04 The name immediately before the killer's name begins with a consonant.
- 05 The killer's name contains the letter E.
- 06 The killer's name has more consonants than vowels.
- 07 The killer's name ends with a consonant.
- 08 The second-to-last letter of the killer's name is a vowel.
- 09 The killer's name is fewer than 7 letters long.
- 10 The name immediately after the killer's name is longer than the killer's name.

Clues 11-20

The final filters are deliberately precise.

- 11 Counting every entry in the book, the killer's name length is NOT one of the most common name-lengths (those are: 6, 7).
- 12 The gap between the earliest and latest letter of the killer's name (in the alphabet) is less than 18.
- 13 Fewer than 2 letters of the killer's name are in the second half of the alphabet (N-Z).
- 14 The killer's name uses exactly 3 distinct consonants (Y counts as a consonant).
- 15 The last two letters of the killer's name add up to at least 19 (A=1 ... Z=26).
- 16 The first and last letters of the killer's name add up to at least 20 (A=1 ... Z=26).
- 17 The killer is NOT within the last 13 pages of the register.
- 18 The middle letter of the killer's name (the left of the two middle letters when the name has an even number of letters) comes LATER in the alphabet than the first letter (for example BRIAN: middle I is after B).
- 19 The killer's name contains the letter H.
- 20 The killer's name begins with two consonants.

Investigation Scorecard

Use these exact checkpoints to catch a counting error early.

AFTER CLUE 01	10,144	AFTER CLUE 11	86
AFTER CLUE 02	6,413	AFTER CLUE 12	52
AFTER CLUE 03	3,662	AFTER CLUE 13	32
AFTER CLUE 04	3,405	AFTER CLUE 14	20
AFTER CLUE 05	2,100	AFTER CLUE 15	13
AFTER CLUE 06	1,276	AFTER CLUE 16	8
AFTER CLUE 07	772	AFTER CLUE 17	5
AFTER CLUE 08	491	AFTER CLUE 18	3
AFTER CLUE 09	267	AFTER CLUE 19	2
AFTER CLUE 10	146	AFTER CLUE 20	1

Exact verification trail: 10,144 → 6,413 → 3,662 → ... → 1.

Investigator Notes

Mark, calculate, and record anything that helps you stay oriented.

SURVIVORS / ELIMINATIONS

NEIGHBOR CHECKS

PAGE REFERENCES

FINAL VERIFICATION
