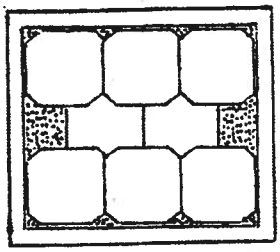
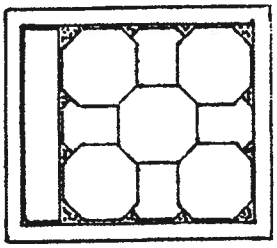
The Distorted Cube Puzzle - No. 61-A

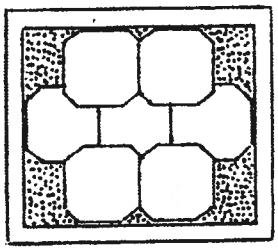
This puzzle was first made in 1988 in a very limited edition of about eight units. It is described in *Puzzle Craft 1992*. This new instruction sheet is for a run of 12 additional units made in December 1996. The new ones are practically identical to the original, but made of cherry rather than spruce. These new instructions are also essentially the same. The four dissimilar puzzle pieces are made up of 14 edge-beveled cubic blocks joined together different ways, all contained in a rather novel rectangular box with cover.



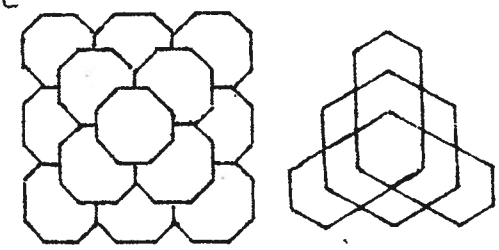
1. The first problem is to pack the four pieces into the box so that the cover placed on top of them will be flush with the top of the box. A variation of this is to first lay the cover in the bottom of the box, in which case the puzzle assembly will be flush with the top. See diagram at right.



2. For the second exercise, the first step is to convert the box from rectangular to cubic. This is done by inserting the cover vertically into the slot in the bottom of the box. Now assemble the puzzle into this cubic configuration. Again the top of the assembly will be flush with the top of the box. See diagram.



3. Now with the cover set aside, pack the pieces symmetrically into this larger space so that, surprisingly, they are still flush with all four sides and the top, as shown. (In all assemblies, there is some side clearance to allow room for this sheet folded.) ⊛ STICKS ABOVE BOX A LITTLE



4. Setting the box aside, build a square pyramidal pile, as shown here in top view.

5. Using only three pieces, construct a triangular pyramidal pile, shown likewise in top view.

How many solutions to each of these problems can you discover? (As of this writing, after eight years I have yet to hear from anyone who reports having found even one solution for each of these five exercises. Can they really be that difficult?)

Stewart T. Coffin, 79 Old Sudbury Road, Lincoln, MA 01773 Dec. 1996