



# LABYRINTH

# THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR

Before he became king, Minos has asked the god Poseidon for a sign that he, not his brother, would come to the throne. Poseidon agreed and sent the white bull on condition that Minos sacrifices it to him. A beautiful bull came from the sea. Minos liked it so much that he rather sacrificed another bull, thinking that Poseidon would not notice the difference. Poseidon got mad and made Minos' wife Pasiphaë madly in love with the bull. So Pasiphaë born half-bull and half-man - Minotaur. Pasiphaë raised him as a child, but he grew wild. The Delphic oracle said Daedalus to build a labyrinth in which to hold the Minotaur. He did it, and the maze was built below the palace of Minos at Knossos.

Androgeus, the son of Minos, was killed by Athenians. To avenge his son's death, Minos went to war with Athens. He demanded seven Athenian girls and young men (chosen by straws) to be sacrificed to the Minotaur every nine years.

When the third sacrifice drew near, Theseus volunteered to slay the monster. Ariadne, daughter of Minos, fell in love with Theseus and helped him out of the maze by giving him a ball of wool, which he used to follow his own trail. Theseus killed the Minotaur with magic sword given to him by Ariadne and let the other Athenians out of the maze .

## ORIGIN OF THE WORD LABYRINTH



The word *labyrinth* is derived from the word *labris*, which means double-sided ax. The first written word labris comes from Plutarch, who described it as a Lydian (the Greek Asia Minor) word for ax. As well as its obvious derivatives "maze, word labris came to Greece as a borrowed term from Asia.

In its original meaning Labyrinth referred to the "Hall of a double-edged ax", a room in the famous palace of Knossos, in which was closed the Minotaur, which is due to its size and huge number of the rooms looked like an intricate tangle - a maze.

## **DEFINITION OF THE MAZE**

The Greek philosopher Plato was the first who used expression maze conveying a Socratic dialogue ( Euthydemus ). Following logical arguments, philosophers seemed to have solved the problem and that they approached the end, and then - "as if they fell into the labyrinth" - they were on the start of the debate again! So, the labyrinth is something confusing, but the end does not ends in the middle of something, but at the beginning, at the point from which we started .

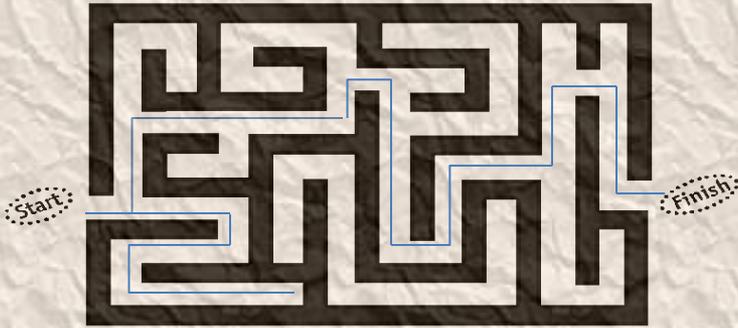
The expression labyrinth is used as an analogy for something confusing and unknown, and something that brings us back to the beginning instead to another place. We usually thought a labyrinth is a path or a building with a lot of choices from which it is difficult to find exit

Unfortunately, in Serbian language We use the same word for the structure in which is easy to get lost and for a real labyrinth. In English it is not so, because there is a word that means the maze - mentioned structure, and the labyrinth which, of course, means the maze.

Let us try to determine what is really a labyrinth. Labyrinth have to satisfied the following conditions: to have one entrance, there is a trail that winds or more turns, there is no intersection, there are no blind alleys, it has a center, that same path leads to the exit and the exit is at the same place as the entrance .

If you consider these elements, you will notice the fact that the labyrinth can not lose! If You are in labyrinth, all you have to do is to walk away. If you do not turn around and go back, you will come to the center, where You turn and return the same way back. Labyrinth is really complex and confusing structure, but in it you can not lose .

As much as the structure in which you can lose it's amusing and cute,  
they are not a labyrinth.



MAZE



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# HOW TO BUILD A LABYRINTH?

Draw a black meander, remove several rectangles or squares, rotate each of them around its center by the angle of  $90^\circ$ .



(a)



(b)



(c)

