

Surf's Up (On the Wall)!

NEW JERSEY COUPLE CREATES SURFING-THEMED PUZZLES AND MATERIALS FOR CREATING WALL ART BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN

WHAT'S BETTER than sitting down with a good, old-fashioned jigsaw puzzle during a rainy day?

Many people play the various jigsaw puzzle apps on their phones, which can be fun when you're waiting in line at the pharmacy. But here's a relaxing take on the typically rectangular-shaped, traditional jigsaw puzzle.

Jigsaw Surf Co.'s inventions are delightful, surfboard-shaped puzzles created by avid surfers Victoria and Charlie Fennell of Asbury Park, New Jersey. Everything that's necessary to create wall art with your masterpiece is included.

Jigsaw Surf Co. puzzles are designed to be mentally stimulating and therapeutic.



Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): How did this company and idea come about?

Victoria Fennell (VF): When we first came up with the idea for Jigsaw Surf Co., we were drinking coffee in our apartment on a rainy day, wondering what activity we could do since the surfing conditions were poor. We were looking for something that would be mentally stimulating but also therapeutic, which led us to open a jigsaw puzzle.

That's when it hit us: Why not add some stoke to puzzling!? And so, Jigsaw Surf Co. was formed.

EGT: When did you begin your company?

VF: We began conception and production around March 2023.

EGT: Did you start with featuring just one puzzle design, or with several? When did you launch?

VF: We launched with four different collections, with three designs in each collection for a total of 12 designs. We officially launched in September 2023.

EGT: Do you have a best-selling design?

VF: They are Aquamarine Life, which is part of our Resin Collection, and Moonrise Mountains, which is part of our Daydream Collection.

EGT: Have you had any issues or problems during product development (logistics, COVID, knockoffs, etc.)?

VF: So far, we can fortunately say we have not had any issues during development, production, or even delivery! We've been very lucky to work with a great manufacturer.

EGT: Where are you selling?

VF: In addition to our website, we wholesale to a lot of retail stores in the U.S. and a few overseas. We're mostly in shops along the east and west coast and are currently in about nine stores in Hawaii.

Three shops in South Korea just purchased for their stores, which we're stoked about! We never imagined that could be a market for us!

EGT: Have you done any crowdfunding?

VF: No, we have not done any crowdfunding. We've fortunately been able to build the business without any outside investment.

EGT: Do you have an age range for the puzzles (since children's products and toys must be safety tested)?

VF: Our recommended age range is 8 and over, due to the size of the pieces.

EGT: What is the average number of pieces per puzzle?

VF: All our puzzles are 450 pieces. They are random cut, so no two pieces are the same.

EGT: Tell us about the wax (puzzle glue) and scraper included, and their purposes.

VF: Many times, people buy a puzzle, build it, put it back in the box, and that's that. When we started Jigsaw Surf Co., we wanted to offer a puzzle that is a bit more than that—something that you can keep long term.

So, we decided to include glue with every puzzle so that when you are finished building it, you can glue it, frame it, and then hang it as wall art. We thought it would be fun to call it “surf wax” because when you're prepping to go into the water, you wax up your surfboard to keep your feet from slipping. It was just a play on words.

We spent quite a bit of time on the designs, trying to make our product as unique and fun as possible, and we hope that people find them as such.

EGT: Are you manufacturing in the United States, or overseas?

VF: They are designed in the United States and manufactured overseas.

EGT: Are your puzzles patented—and if so, were the various patents difficult to obtain for any reasons?

VF: We are currently in the process of patenting our puzzles. This is our first time patenting a product, so there has been a lot of research and learning along the way but no real roadblocks, thankfully!

EGT: Do you have any advice for inventors in the toys and games space?

VF: My advice would be to never give up. The process can be daunting and slow in the beginning but if you're truly passionate about your product and ideas, then I'm a firm believer that it will all work out. Just keep pushing and believing in yourself.



“I would do a lot of market research and ask your friends and families for their honest opinions—and more important, be receptive to them.”

—VICTORIA FENNELL

Also, be open to feedback. At the end of the day, people need to want your product, so I would do a lot of market research and ask your friends and families for their honest opinions—and more important, be receptive to them.

EGT: Do you have any new products or additions planned?

VF: We plan to add new designs this year and potentially some smaller-sized puzzles for children. 🌀

Charlie and Victoria Fennell (above left) were thrilled to learn that three shops in South Korea purchased the puzzles, which when completed can become wall art with the help of their “surf wax.”

Details: [Jigsawsurfco.com](https://www.jigsawsurfco.com)

Edith G. Tolchin has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000 (edietolchin.com/portfolio). She is the author of several books, including “Secrets of Successful Women Inventors” (<https://a.co/d/fAGlvZJ>) and “Secrets of Successful Inventing” (<https://a.co/d/8dafJd6>).



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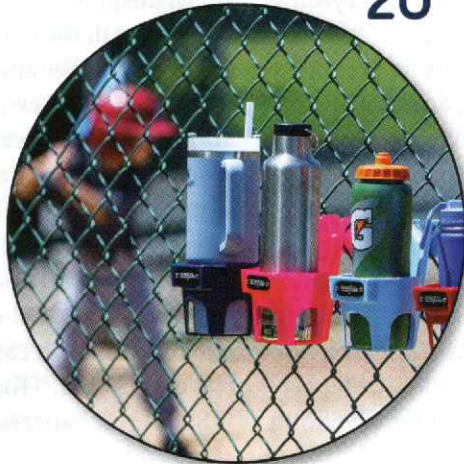
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- 5 "I push analogies until they break."
- 8 "I plan to live to 105, but I'll want an option clause."
- 12 "Wacky, waving, inflatable, arm-flailing tube man!"
- 32 "If you don't read the newspaper, you are uninformed. If you do read the newspaper, you are misinformed."



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