A Pencils puzzle consists of a grid that starts with some combination of numbers and pencil tips. By the end, every cell in the grid must be filled with either a pencil or a line from the tip of a pencil. Each pencil is a straight sequence of cells with a tip at the end. From the tip of each pencil there must be a line—as if drawn by the pencil—passing through a number of cells equal to the size of the pencil itself (minus the tip). While the pencils are straight, the line may turn at right angles as it passes through cells, but it can’t cross or branch off.

For example, a pencil that is four cells long will consist of four cells and a cell occupied by the tip. Then a line that extends from that tip through the centers of four additional cells.

The numbers show the length of the pencil that contains that square. A pencil may contain zero, one, or several (of the same) numbers within it. You may have to draw the tip of a pencil!