

Propellerheads
Adam Maresca
 Answer: **AMENDS**

All the provided “blade” clues resolve to four-letter words, with the answers given in alphabetical order. As clued by the diagrams, these can be treated as “rotor blades” and arranged so that a pair across from one another form a nine-letter word: one blade reads in one direction, a central “hub” letter, and then the word opposite in the other direction. The different “rotations” of the rotors (red or green) indicate whether the front or back “blade” word is reversed. (You can also think of this as the red propellers facing inwards and the green propellers facing outward.)

Bottled (up)	P E N T	D E E R	Musical instrument type	Operator	R E S U	B L E D	Exsanguinated
		A				M	
Sphere	B A L L	G O N S	British PDA?	Circumference sections	S C R A	A B L E	Up to the task
Proper to a fault	P R I M	L L U M	Contemplate	Always	R E V E	D I N G	Small bell sound
		E				N	
Pennant	F L A G	T I M E	Give off	Dark ____	S T R A	A N T S	Insects with a queen
Alternative to truth	D A R E	R O O M	Heath or upland	Committed a hockey foul	D E C I	T I C K	Little bloodsucker
		D				S	
Wild pig	B O A R	E V I L	Not pre-taped	Best buddies	S L A P	I O N S	Charged particles

Using the letters above the propellers as guides, the centers spell out the answer, **AMENDS**.

Author’s Notes

Adam: Originally, I thought alphabetizing the clues (instead of the “blade” answers) would give the puzzle some extra spice, but it was too much and it led to the bad, not-fun type of ambiguity. There were also arrows in the final diagram to imply the rotor types went in different directions, but it was ultimately both unnecessary and confusing, so they got chopped as well.

The letters at the tops were a late addition, as well, at the behest of fellow authors and testers. While it’s true that “an anagram of [ADE] and [MNS] that alternates letter groups” only has one reasonable answer, it was decided to sacrifice visual elegance for mechanical elegance.