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Ezy Magic Fun Book

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Read This First ...

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About the Author ...

John Williams is a professional magician with his own [Magic shop](#) on the Internet. John performs almost every kind of Magic at children's parties, banquets and country fairs. He uses light-hearted miracles that audience members take part in. His workshops for both children and adults are where he was encouraged to write his ebooks. The first, "Ezy Magic", was published by EbookWholesalers in 2002. It has simple tricks and stunts for adults and older teenagers to amaze their friends, family and themselves.

"Ezy Magic Fun Book" has more magic tricks along with fun projects that all your family, from about the age of seven, can share.

FUN Gags ...

Ball and Umbrella Juggling

This is one of the easiest ways to juggle that you could find. That's because it's "cod" or false juggling.



You need to do a little practice so that you don't have to think what to do next and you don't do anything so obviously unreal that people know you have tricked them, even if they can't work out how.

Find a medium-sized umbrella, a table tennis ball and some strong thread that is the same color as the cloth on your umbrella (a dark color is best).

Tie and then glue one end of the thread to the point of the umbrella. Make a small hole in the table tennis ball. Push the loose end of the thread inside it and glue the thread in.

Show everyone the umbrella and the ball that you put carefully on top of the open umbrella near the center. The ball will not fall very far because of the thread but you do not let your audience suspect that the ball and umbrella are connected.

That's why you need to practice the routine in advance.

Use your other hand to spin the umbrella by its handle. You pretend that you are balancing the ball on the umbrella fabric as it spins. The thread gives you an advantage. You will, after some practice, be able to give a short, interesting routine that looks like really skillful juggling!

Scarf Juggling

This is real juggling but even the clumsiest of us (that's me) can do it in a fairly short time.



You need 3 colorful, thin nylon squares to start. Hold one in one hand and two in the other. Toss one of those two a couple of feet in the air and then toss the single square from your other hand directly across to the hand that launched the first square upward.

Now you catch the falling square with your empty hand. Continue with this sequence for a few seconds, then try some variations or even add a fourth square to the mix.

It is fairly easy to keep the squares jumping and to catch them because the squares float a little. You don't have to be as polished or nimble as the experienced jugglers who use balls, clubs and even axes.

Keep your routine short until you have worked out some variations that make it more entertaining for your audience.

A short routine like this needs a surprise finish. One that works well is to have another square with a small high-bounce ball sewn into it. Make sure that this square matches the color of at least one of the regular squares you use in your routine.

To finish, gather the squares together in one hand, then pick out the one with the ball with your other hand and wipe your forehead with it. "Accidentally" drop the square and your audience will be surprised to see the square fall, but then bounce back up so that you can catch it!

Beware the BLURT!

Collect these props to create your own B*L*U*R*T:
a medium sized envelope,
a piece of strong wire,
a large, thin rubber band and
a piece of strong cardboard that is about half an inch square.



If you have not bent and cut wire before, get help from someone who has. Always be careful. Learn how to do things safely the first time.

Make a semi-circle of wire to fit comfortably in the envelope; the width should be about one inch less than the envelope and the depth about one inch less than the height of the envelope. Use your pliers to bend over the ends of the wire. Your rubber band needs to be slightly shorter than the distance between the two ends of the wire semi-circle.

Draw a line on the piece of card across its center and mark two spots on the line, an equal distance from each side. Punch two holes on the marks. Thread your rubber band through the two holes and hook the band over the bent ends of the wire.

Now you print in large, colorful letters on the front of the envelope,

DANGER

BEWARE THE BLURT

Turn the piece of card as many times as you can so the rubber band is tightly twisted. Slip the wire and band in your envelope and fold the envelope flap inside.

Don't seal the envelope so that you can re-use your BLURT for years!
Leave the envelope where a curious friend or family member will see it when you don't seem to be about. They will be curious; open the envelope and you'll hear the "**BLU-R-R-R-T**"!

This might upset whoever opens the envelope. Never do it to anyone who is old, frail or very nervous. Most other people will want to help you use the Blurt to catch someone else!

Bill Roll

You will not impress anyone by pulling out a bag or a roll of coins to pay a bill. But you get instant attention if you pull your dollar bills off a thick roll!



You just need some currency that looks new, rubber cement ("the magician's friend!") and some pieces of paper that you cut to the same width as the money.

You start to assemble your roll of bills by gluing the edges of the pieces of ordinary paper with any glue that dries clear to make a continuous strip. You use these in the center so that your "money roll" looks fairly thick and more impressive.

Then you apply rubber cement to the very edge of your first note and press it against the end of your roll of paper pieces. Do this in turn with each note. Let the cement on each note dry completely before you put the next in place so that they do not all stick together in a lump when you roll them up.

The rubber cement should ensure that you can remove the notes easily when you need to.

Note Book With Real Notes

You can make a note book - with real \$ notes!



Put this together in the same shape as a standard check book. Cut your back and front covers from thin, colored card and use cloth tape; seal the closed end.

Put the back cover on your table, and then apply a small amount of rubber cement to the underside of the left edge of the first note. Press the note in place, parallel, but slightly to the right of the left edge of the back cover. Press the edge of the note down on the back cover.

Do the same with as many notes as you want to use in the book. If you decide to put some paper pieces under the notes to make the book look thicker, make sure that they are the same color and, of course, the same thickness and size as the real notes that you use.

You don't glue the edge of the front cover to the top note because you would not be able to tear out the note cleanly. Join the front and back covers with a strip of cloth tape, leaving enough loose tape between them so that it's easy for you to get at the stack of glued notes inside.

When you are with some friends and want to surprise them, take out your book of notes.

Hold the top right corner of each note as you tear (actually lift it) from the stack. If you rub your fingernail against the next note in the stack as you tear the top note out, you will get a reasonable imitation of the sound you hear when you tear a check from your check book.

You could say something like, "I love these new note-books" as you show the book around. Then say, "and I don't pay any charges like you do with checks!"

Some of your friends might even believe that the book is real!

FUN Pictures ...

Everyone enjoys cartoons in magazines and animated cartoons on television and the Internet. We're going on a different track with this ebook, showing you simple ways that even the most artistically challenged can have some fun with their friends doing simple, almost forgotten types of fun drawings.

You may be inspired to go on to draw greeting cards or television commercials.

Ezy Caricature

This is an easy way to make your friends into cartoon characters with just their picture.

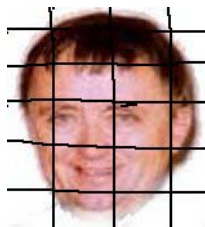
The quickest way to learn this technique is to use picture from a magazine. Anyone's face is fair game and the more that you practice, the more quickly you will reach a high standard that will impress your friends.

Make a copy of the picture.

We'll use a picture of me because we don't want to upset anybody by making a caricature of them for the book.



Draw a grid of squares, all the same size, on the copy.



Draw another grid on a fresh sheet of paper but with one important change; change the squares from all the same size to being wider at the top of the picture or maybe one side.

Try different ways, taking the shape of the person's head as a rough guide.

I made the sections smaller at the bottom of my picture.



Some friends would probably say I'm already a caricature, but your subjects are likely to be more handsome or attractive!

Use a pencil to copy the lines of the picture to the new grid, a segment at a time. If the line of the side of the nose goes from the top left corner of a segment to the bottom right corner, draw the line that way in the same segment on your distorted grid.

You should get some very funny results with a little practice.



Change the Picture

These pictures are very easy to do so you're NOT going to get lots of applause! But everyone will have some fun with your demonstrations.

Then you can start working out your own designs.

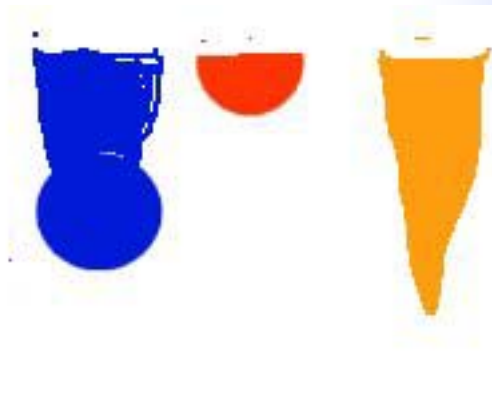
You can either pre-draw the first picture on a piece of card and make the additions that "magically" create the new picture or you can start with a blank card, draw the first picture, tell your friends what it is supposed to be and then add your changes.

This sort of picture reworking has a long, honorable history. Some magicians still do "Chalk Talks" professionally. Their pictures are carefully prepared and large enough for a big audience to see. They practice the words they say and match them to each change that they make to the picture.

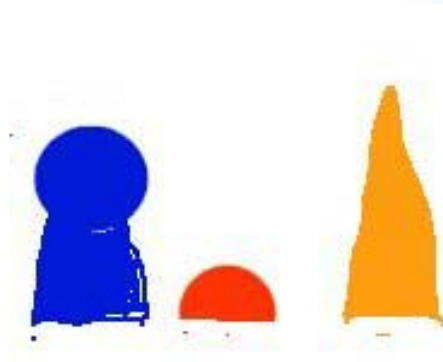
Three Tulips:

Say, "this is the result of my 3 years at Art School". Your friends may say that you need 30 years or other flattering (maybe flattening!) comments. Have fun. You probably can do the pictures much better than I do anyway! Successful comedians make fun of themselves. That's more likely to get your friends laughing with you than making fun of other people!

Show the first picture



"I went to Holland so I could
get the tulips just right!
Turn the picture upside down.



I can prove they're Dutch tulips". Add extra lines and turn the picture to make the large "tulip" a windmill. Add spikes to the semi-circle tulip so it looks a little like the sun.

"The third tulip is a dyke holding back the sea."

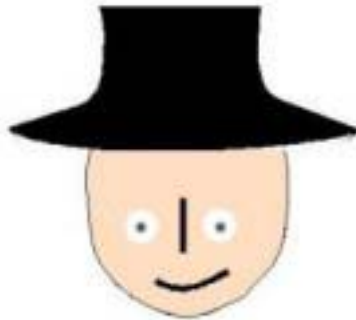


"If you look carefully you'll see the little boy with his finger in the dyke". Your friends will tell you he's not there! Look at your watch and say," It's lunch time so he's gone home for lunch!"

Magician's Rabbit

This is a very simple change and you will improve on my sample pictures with practice.

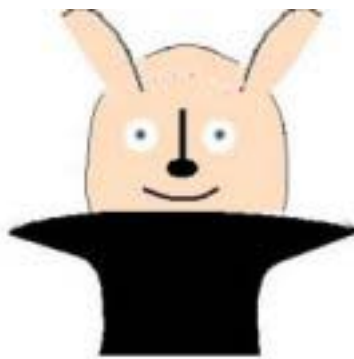
"This is my first portrait. It's my friend, Harry Haddock, who is a magician like me".



Everyone can see the picture is very amateurish. You want your friends to have fun so make your pictures simple.

You can, of course, make your drawings better than mine if you want!
"Harry will be a famous magician soon. He has a top-hat and everything, but poor Harry can't afford a rabbit. I told him I would help him out. I was going to sell this portrait and buy Harry a rabbit, but (pretend to be surprised!) no-one would buy it! I will have to do it a different way".

Add the extra lines and turn the picture round to make Harry into a rabbit in a hat.



Your Name Has A Bug In It!

Practice some different names before you show your friends the "*script-bugs*". They're good for crafts, screen-printing or fabric painting. Say to a friend, "Your name has a bug in it". You will certainly get their attention. Many would love to have their own "*NAME BUG*" on a t-shirt!

I'll use "Samuel" as an example. You have a head-start if that is your name but it is very easy. You will soon be scrawling bugs all over, but not on other people's property please! You could do the names and the transformation all on your computer but, at times, it's fun to get your hands dirty with real paper, pens and, yes, even messy old carbon paper!

Write the name in script (joined letters);



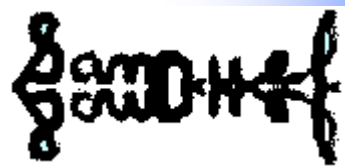
Make a mirror image too;

You could do the mirror writing with a mirror, slowly copying that image but it's easier to use carbon paper - there's still plenty around! If you can't get any, rub the back of the top half of the sheet with a soft pencil and press firmly when writing. This won't give you a real dark copy. Go over it again with your pen. Fold the blank sheet in half lengthways and put the carbon paper between the halves of the sheet. Make sure that the carbon side is on the bottom.

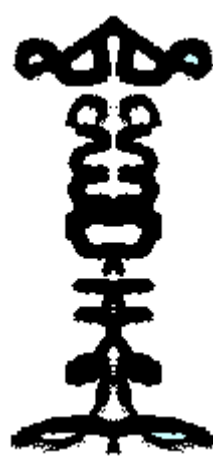
It would be no good if you carefully wrote your name on the top half but the impression appeared on the back of that same half because the carbon paper was upside down!

Write the name with a marking pen. Make sure that the bottom edges of the letters are right on the paper-fold. The carbon paper will put a mirrored copy on the other half of the sheet.

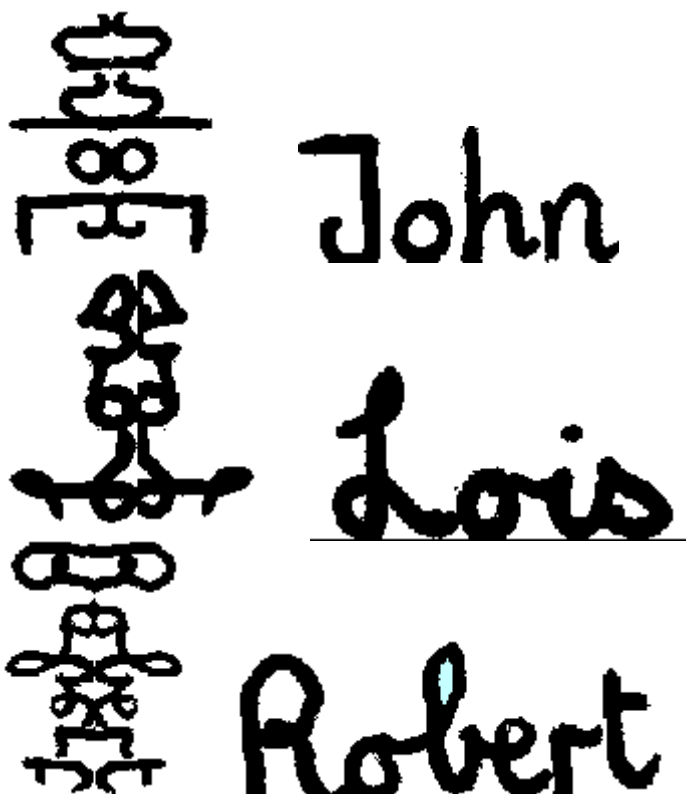
Cut out the 2 versions of the name. Glue them to another sheet with their bottom edges touching.



The next step shows your bug. Turn the sheet whichever way the lettering looks best to you. If you have a lot of imagination, like me, you might see the large loops on the S's as eyes and the two L's becoming feet. Of course, I also see shapes in clouds sometimes too.



Meet three bug friends of mine; John, Lois and Robert



If your bug doesn't look as good as you would like, then try writing the original name a little differently. You don't have to write your letters the same way every time because this is art and not regular writing.

I have taken a few liberties with the "J" of "John" here - well, it is my own name anyway.

FUN Puppets ...

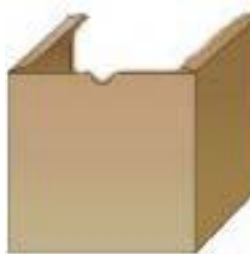
My Punch and Judy show was the first in Tasmania for years. Some of my original papier mache puppets are in my current show, 25 years later!

Interaction between puppets and children improve the children's social and physical skills. They love to express their ideas and beliefs and have a lot of fun at the same time. Shy children (and even adults) tend to come out of their shells when they express themselves through puppets.

Spend a lot of money if you have it and that's what you want to do, or produce your show with bits and pieces that you and your family can gather from around your home.

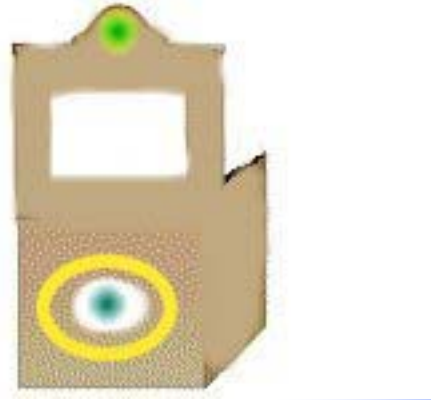
Your Puppet Theater

You could use a large cardboard box as a theatre. Even professional puppet stages (fit-ups) are usually simple in design.



I use an aluminum frame with traditional canvas to cover it.

Cut the front from another large box. You may be able to get suitable boxes from stores that sell washing machines and other appliances. Decorate it to make the stage area,



Many performers use colorful fabric. Some paint their theaters. That is probably the simplest way to decorate yours. Only use paint in a well-ventilated area and don't use your theater until the paint is completely dry.

Sock It To Them

Got too many pairs of socks for your feet? Start a career in puppetry! Some professionals demonstrate their skills by animating a sock - now it's your turn. Slide a new sock over your hand; the part on your arm is the body and you decorate the foot for a head. Push the end of the sock between your thumb and your fingers to be the mouth.

If you can't sew, maybe another member of your family might help, or you can glue pieces of fabric (and buttons for eyes) to the "head".

Why not make a giant version of this sort of puppet? It could be a great group project.

Make a tube of fabric almost as long as your entire arm. This tube will be the neck and head of your puppet. But this time, you add a body so your puppet is more impressive and capable of more varied movement which will add interest to your show.

You could make the body from a simple cloth bag that is the same color as the tube that makes the neck and head.

Sew the bag to the lower section of the neck. To give your puppet the best appearance, wrap the end of the bag around the cloth tube and then sew them together so it looks more like one piece.

A dinosaur could be made this way. This type of character is very popular with all ages.

Mr & Mrs Ball

Plastic or rubber balls have been used by professional performers as puppets for many years.

A famed Russian puppeteer used a ball on one finger of each hand. The balls were decorated with different basic shapes as noses and simple lines to indicate their other features. His high skill level captured the applause of audiences around the world.

You only need some colorful fabric and a soft ball about the size of a tennis ball to use his idea on a more modest scale.

Make a hole just slightly wider than your forefinger in the ball. Glue on shapes for its nose, eyes and ears. Drape the fabric over your hand and push your forefinger into the hole. Make puppets with different shaped eyes and other features, then use cloth with different patterns for their costumes.

Drape the fabric over your hand and push your forefinger into the hole. Another use for a soft plastic or rubber ball is as a ventriloquist's puppet! Terry Seabrooke, a British cabaret magician, has a fantastic routine with his talking tennis ball.

Tennis balls are hard to cut a "mouth" in. I recommend that you use a thin plastic or rubber ball.



Make the cut that will be the mouth; a shallow curve with the ends slightly up like a shy smile.. Get someone to cut the mouth for you if you have not done it before. **Keep safe!**

When you show your friends, hold the ball with the mouth away from your audience. Draw eyes with a marking pen just above the mouth. Outline the mouth so it stands out.

Turn the ball over and show everyone your ball-headed friend's face. Keep a hand on top of the ball with your thumb on one side and forefinger on the other. Squeeze the ball and the mouth opens.

That's all you need. Look at the ball when it "speaks". You'll find that your audience doesn't mind if your mouth moves.

They will notice those little errors much less if you have some jokes for your friend to say!

Most ventriloquists, even the late Edgar Bergen, moved their lips when their "friends" were speaking.

Make old Toys into Puppets

No-one would want to make a puppet from the doll or plush animal that had been their favorite toy when they were very young. But you could do it with any cast-off toys, especially if they are damaged to the extent that you don't feel it is worth donating to a charity.

Glue a tube into the neck opening. I have used stiff cardboard tubes but some people, especially smaller children, will be more comfortable with a flexible tube such as a finger from a rubber glove. If you use the soft tube, then you will have to pack the inside of the head with padding before you put the tube in place. If you do not do that, the tube and the child's finger will not have enough leverage to make the head bend during their performance.

Now you can attach a body that is suitable for the character of the puppet you are making. It doesn't have to be the original body of the toy.

The puppeteers and their friends can also decorate the heads to be different characters to what the original toy represented.

I only use these for demonstration in workshops. It is very important to remember that the designs of toys are some-one's property and you cannot use their characters in public performance without specific written permission.

FUN Puzzles ...

A puzzle is like the "skeleton" of a trick. Spectators have to think but they're not entertained.

These puzzles are difficult to work out unless you have seen them before. And it will make you very popular if you don't give away the secret if one of your friends shows a puzzle that you've seen here to your group.

Tiny Square

It's easy to make a square with four matches but this is doing it the hard way. Lay 4 matches on your table.

Put the plain ends of 2 matches end to end. Put the plain ends of each of the other 2 matches at the point where the first 2 matches meet.



Ask you friends, "Can you make a square by just moving 1 match?"

Make the square (the tiny square of our title) by pulling 1 of the first 2 matches away from the other.

A very small square is formed between the ends of the matches.



Two Rows of Four

You are ready to do this any time you have, or can borrow, 6 coins. You can use any small, flat objects instead of coins.

Put 4 coins on the table in a line.
Put one coin each side of the third coin in the row so that you have a cross.



Ask the spectators, "Can you move just one coin and make two rows of four coins?"

Let a few of your friends try, then it's your turn to show them. Ask a spectator who tried to do the puzzle to help you. This shows that you don't just want to show how clever you are.

Ask the spectator to pick up the coin at the short end of the cross and put it on top of the one that has a coin at each side.



Count from the bottom of the cross to the 2 stacked coins, "one, two, & two are four!" Count from one of the "side" coins to the other, "One & two is three, then one more is four!"

Bend To The Task.

This is not a fool-proof puzzle. You have to put your faith in an untested paper straw. I recommend that you only do this trick over a soft surface so that there is no damage if it doesn't work.

Show your friends an empty bottle and a paper straw. Stand the bottle on the table and then ask if anyone can lift the bottle from the table without touching it with anything except the straw. And it is against your rules (well, this is your puzzle!) to tie the poor defenseless straw round the neck of the bottle.

A few over-confident people may try, then you show them that it is really easy. Well, it is really easy, if you have read the Ezy Magic FUNBook!

You just bend the bottom couple of inches of the straw at a sharp upward angle to create a sort of hook.

Now you can push the bent end of the straw into the bottle and when the bent piece lodges inside the bottle, you can easily lift it off the table.

Optimists and Pessimists

With this puzzle, an optimist says, "It must be simple", but the pessimist says, "It's simply impossible!" The pessimist is right; you don't give them a chance to find the right answer.

Put 3 cups on the table. Each end cup is mouth down and the center cup is mouth up.



Grab the 2 glasses at the left, one in each hand. Turn them over. Cross your arms, then grab the glass at each end and turn them over.

Grab the 2 glasses at the left, 1 in each hand. Turn them over. All are now mouth up.



Now you get ready to let your friends try.

Turn the middle glass so that it is mouth-down, and then ask the spectators, "Can you do that?"



But this is the reverse of what you started with so they cannot end the routine with the cups arranged the same way that you did!

FUN Tricks ...

Everyone likes to see a good magic trick on television, on a stage or right under their noses. But you know that it is even more fun to do the magic yourself!

These tricks are simple to do and most are ready to use at any time. All the tricks give their best results when you give a little time and prepare beforehand so that you know the trick well. That way, you don't have to think about what comes next and can concentrate on giving your friends or audience the most enjoyment. Work as hard as you need to so that it looks easy for you to do things that your friends cannot do!

Audiences always want to see the person who gave them a good show again...

52 Cards and Thousands of Tricks

If all the playing cards on the planet disappeared, we would probably lose about three quarters of all the magic tricks that have ever been invented right there! Why do all magicians and most audiences love tricks with playing cards?

Playing cards are cheap, colorful, available almost everywhere and most people know the suits and values of the cards. Now, if the 15% who can't shuffle your pack without dropping some in their soup would learn a simple overhand shuffle, we would have no problems at all.

We should always try to be sure that groups of people that we show card tricks or any other kind of tricks do not have objections to them because of their beliefs. It's also a good idea to only do a couple of tricks at any social occasion and leave it for your audience to ask for more.

Any Card You Make Them Take

One of the easiest ways to know which card your friend picked is to make sure that they only take the one you want them to!

Magicians call this "forcing a card". Literally hundreds of methods have been developed. Some require heaps of confidence from considerable practice.

Fortunately, there are also some methods that require almost no practice and are good for building your confidence when you start learning a few tricks.

That's the sort I will show you here. You may keep using these methods even after you have learnt many more complicated methods.

A Clean Cut

This time you let one of your friends cut the pack but they still get the card that you predicted in advance! You can use someone else's pack even if it is so battered that you would not let your dog play with it.

Unless you really can tell what is going to happen in the future, you need to set things up first. You need a pack of cards, something to write your prediction with, and some paper or card to write the prediction on. That's not too hard, is it?

You also need to know what the top card of the pack is. That's also easy to do if you don't focus your friends' attention on the pack of cards too soon

Just pick up the pack with the backs to your friends and ask, "Who will help me with this next miracle?"

Ask one of your friends to pick someone else, " ... so there is no possibility that I have made some arrangement in advance".

You want everyone to concentrate for just a couple of seconds on your friend as they talk with the group about who will volunteer. That's when you secretly slide the top card about a quarter of an inch to the left so that you can see the value on its top left corner.

"While you pick the volunteer, I will write the name of the card they will choose on this paper and put it where everyone can see it before the card is chosen!" Write the name of the top card on your paper, fold it and put it on the table.

You ask the volunteer to cut the pack and put the two halves on the table. Ask them to confirm that there was no prior arrangement between you. Everyone's attention will be on them at that moment and you can easily put the original top half of the deck at right angles back on top of the original bottom half of the pack.

Now just ask your volunteer to pick up and show the card they selected. Since the deck is now separated in two halves, one above and at right angles to the other, your friend will assume that the top card must be the one they cut to.

This very minor miracle is bold but you could be surprised at the response you get with it. I suggest that you keep this trick for when you are asked to do a trick at someone else's home.

You can offer to do a trick with their pack "so there can be no trickery".

Diamonds are a Magician's Best Friend Too

In my first book, "Ezy Magic", I showed you how to reveal a card that your volunteer chose by cutting a picture of it from a folded sheet of paper.

Some people might have difficulty cutting out Clubs or even Spades, most would be able to do the Hearts with a little bit of caution and everybody would be able to clip out the Diamonds with just a couple of straight cuts.

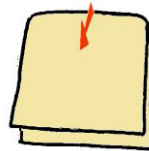
For completeness, I will show you again how to prepare and use a sheet of paper to reveal their card, and then we'll use the diamond design to make a totally different trick.

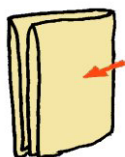
You can use any of the other symbols if you want to, but why make things harder for yourself when the effect on your audience is what really matters?

Clean Cut Revelation, For my example, I'll use the four of diamonds. That's a good card to use for "I'll find your card" routines because it is very easy for spectators to recognize from a distance. Many people might not be able to tell the eight of clubs from the nine of clubs, for instance, from that same distance.

I show the edges uneven in these illustrations to give you a better idea how to fold and where to cut. But it is important to match all edges up as evenly as possible every time so that you get the best possible results.

Get a sheet of A4 size paper and fold the top edge down to the bottom.





Fold the double edge on the left over to the right edge.

Fold the new top edge down to the bottom.



Get your scissors and cut a v-shaped piece from the longest folded edge of your paper.



Open out the paper and you will have a sheet with 4 diamonds cut from it. To perform, you just use one of the methods you use to force a card and let your volunteer "freely" choose the Four of Diamonds.

Pick up a fresh sheet of paper, fold it and cut away the "V" shape. Ask them to show everyone the card they chose as you unfold your paper to show the four diamonds.

Don't throw away the paper. We're going to use it to make a simple but showy prop that you and your audiences can have a lot of fun with.

That's what this book is about.

Put the paper aside while you read and try the other card tricks in this section or you can click over to "My Eye Test" right now.

The Cards Tell You

This is a simple trick where you tell your audience the truth, but not quite all the truth of course!



Some careful preparation is needed. Take a pack of your cards from its box and carefully cut a small square from the lower right corner of the front of the box (the flat side that does not have a playing card glued to it).

This needs to be just big enough that you can see the index of the card through the hole, but no bigger than necessary or it might draw attention.

When your friends are watching, take the pack from the box and let someone shuffle the pack. Ask them to get someone else to pick a card from the deck and show everyone, except you of course.

While the card is being shown around, you take back the pack in the hand that does not have the card box in it.

When everyone has seen the card, point the open card box to the person with the chosen card and ask them to drop their card in. You make sure that the card goes in the right way up so that you will be able to see its index through the hole. Now you return the rest of the pack to the box on top of the face-down chosen card and close the box.

Now you say that you will try to get "vibrations" from the cards and you raise the box to your forehead. This gives you ample time to glimpse the card index through the hole. Keep the box against your head for just a couple of seconds, then you can put it in your pocket and reveal the name of their chosen card in any way that you wish.

Mind Reading Cards

This time you are the Great Mind-Reader. You help the impression that you just use your superior mental powers rather than mere magician's tricks because you hardly even touch the cards.

It needs some preparation and practice, but the effect on your audience will make it worthwhile.

Pick up the pack of cards with one hand wrapped round the lower half of the pack. Stand in front of a friend or spectator and lift the hand with the cards so the faces are to the spectator.

"I will run my finger from the front to the back of the pack. Tell me when to stop. Just remember the card you can see when you asked me to stop."

Slowly draw a finger over the top of the pack. Pause when the spectator says, "Stop", then say, "Please remember that card. I want you to make your mind a blank, concentrating just on that card". You reveal the name of the chosen card! Now for the preparation. This might involve more time than with all of the other items in this ebook but, once you have done it, you will have a trick that you will use for years to come. And I am confident that you will agree that your time was well spent after you see the reaction that you get from your spectators.

Shuffle a cheap pack of cards and put them face up on the table. Turn over the first card and print the name of the next card at the top on the back of the card you turned over. Do this with each of the cards in turn.

You put a Joker at the top of the pack and, of course, you don't write the name of any card on the back of the Joker.

It is just there to hide the name of the bottom card that is written on the back of the next card in the pack.

When your friends gather round and ask you to show them "something different", that's when you draw out the pack you prepared earlier.

Pick up the cards and point the faces to the spectator who concentrates on them as you draw your finger back across the top of the deck. The spectator says, "Stop" and, while they concentrate on the face of their card, you glimpse the name of the card on the back of the next card! The rest is just acting.

Quick Card Revelation

Here is a method where you get a similar effect but you don't have to write on the back of 50 cards. In fact, you don't do much at all.

As always, you need some willing spectators - it wouldn't be much fun just doing tricks for your reflection in a mirror!

Ask someone to shuffle a pack of cards. Then you spread the cards and ask one of your spectators to point to any card.

When they point to a card, you ask them to take it and show the other spectators. It is important to do this so that you are covered if the volunteer forgets their card or says that they chose a different one when you show the card they actually chose.

While the spectator is showing the card around, you get a quick peek at the bottom card.

Your spectator puts their card face down on the top of the pack, you cut the cards and the bottom card will be right over the chosen card. You spread the cards, find out what their chosen card is and reveal it in any way you wish.

One in 52

This is a simple trick too, but use a little care when you handle the cards. Spread a normal deck of cards face-up on the table. Ask someone to point to any card they want.

Pull their chosen card from the spread deck and drop it on the bottom card. Pick up the deck and give it a couple of cuts. Now spread the deck, face down, and your friends see there is just one card with a different color back. You lift that card out and turn it over - that's right, it is their chosen card!

This is probably the cleanest trick in this ebook. The secret ingredient is a thin film of soap that you rub over the face of the card with the different color back. It is not the card they will choose, just any card from another deck. Put this prepared card on the bottom of the deck that you will use for the trick.

Spread the cards with their faces toward your audience. Don't tilt the cards so much that the light strikes the faces directly or they might see the sheen of soap on the face of the special card.

No matter what card is chosen, you just remove it from the deck and put it, face up, on the bottom, gimmicked card.

Then you pick up the deck and squeeze the cards slightly before you cut them a couple of times.

The chosen card will stick to the card that has the film of soap on it. Cut the deck again, then spread the face down cards on the table and show that the volunteer was clever enough to choose the only card with a different colored back!

If you are concerned that the two cards might not stick together, you can use a couple of dots of rubber cement (from any Art Supply store) instead of the soap.

Do it Backwards

You could reverse the previous trick by putting the soap (or rubber cement) on the back of the top card.

Let the spectator take out any card from the deck you spread in front of him. Get the card back and press it against the back of the glued card. Now you cut the deck a couple of times, then say, " Your card has completely vanished".

Spread the cards and theirs can't be seen. You know where it is; the double card is easy for you to feel as you spread the cards. You can, if you want to, separate the glued cards with your thumbnail after the volunteer says that their card has gone. Then you produce their card again from nowhere!

A Spectator Reads Your Mind!

This trick is extremely simple but can have a powerful effect on your audience. It is one that I use myself from time to time and you will have a lot of fun with it too. Don't ever tell anyone how you did it, except for that one spectator every time you do it. You will be surprised how jealously they will guard the secret! You ask one spectator to pick a card, then "hypnotize" them so their partner can read their mind!

You need a small disc or other flat object on a chain or cord and a pack of cards. I have discs that are decorated with fluorescent paint or prismatic plastic. You could even use a picture of a famous magician.

That's all that most of your audience sees, but there is a little bit of secret preparation and practice needed for best results.

You glue a piece of white card on the back of the disk. Write the name of the card that your spectator is going to "freely choose" in bold, thick letters on that piece of card.

Remember, this is not cheating, it's Magic!

If you have done a few of the other card tricks, you have probably worked out the sequence and you'll know how to make sure that the first volunteer chooses the card that you want them to.

But I will go through the whole sequence just for completeness.

This is a very easy and seemingly fair way to let your friend or volunteer select the card. It requires no special skill on your part except that, like the advertisement for salesmen used to say, "you must look honest".

Turn the deck face-up and spread the cards a little as you ask the volunteer to agree that there's "nothing special about it?"

You have done nothing to the deck except that the top card has the same value as you wrote on the piece of card on the back of the disc.

Turn the pack face-down again and cut the deck into two roughly equal sections. Put the two sections side by side and face down on the table in front of you, then casually cut each of those sections in half and put the new sections alongside the first two.

You have to keep an eye on where the section with the top card is. I never let that section end up at either end at this point, but that's just a personal preference. Ask your volunteer to point to two sections. If the sections that they point to include the original top section (with your card) then you say, "We'll use the two sections that you selected".

If they don't choose the original top section, just put the two chosen ones aside. Now ask them to choose one of the two sections left. If they choose the original top section then you say, "Okay, we'll use the top card of the section you chose". If they choose the other section then you say, "We'll discard that one as well and use the top card of this section (the original top card)".

"But", you continue, "this time I don't want you to show your card to your partner (only you will have found out the partner's name and use it here) because I am going to help them to read your mind!"

Make sure that they show the card to other people at the table so there is no chance that they say afterwards that it was a different card (some people are almost as sneaky as magicians).

Then you discard all the playing cards and ask the volunteer, "Are you worried about having your mind read?"

Listen to their answer, then put the cards aside and show everyone the disc and cord (only the front, of course).

Make sure that the volunteer's partner is across the table from them and lift the chain so that the disc is swinging slightly in front of the volunteer's face (fairly close).

Swing it gently and mutter some psuedo-hypnotic words like, "You are getting sleepy, very sleepy ..."

Of course, the partner will see the name of the chosen card on the back of the disc and it's up to the two of you to bring the effect to a mystifying conclusion. This trick has many good points:

It makes a spectator (the partner) the real mystery worker.

It gets two spectators deeply involved.

It gives everyone something to talk about later.

You may think that other spectators who see the writing on the back of the disc will give the game away?

That rarely happens, but it depends how well you "work the crowd". If you try to be "Mr. Mysterious", some will want to upset your show but, if you have put yourself over as a regular person who is genuinely trying to help everyone have a good time, then almost everybody will play along and enjoy the bafflement of their friend (your volunteer) themselves.

And Again!

This time you show the prediction before revealing the selected card. What could be fairer? Just about anything!

We use soap/glue again and one more thing - the card box. If the box doesn't have a blank side, cover one side with white paper. Write on it the name of the card that you will "predict". Glue that card very lightly, face out, to the box so it covers the prediction.

Show the boxed cards with the gimmicked side of the box down. Keep the box in your hand when you give the deck to a volunteer. Ask them to cut the deck a few times. Tell them not to look at the top card yet. Go through the steps that the audience saw - the cards shuffled and cut by a spectator. While you talk, put the

box on top of the cards and your thumbnail pries off the glued card on to the top of the deck. Raise the box to show your prediction, written before you started on

the underside and invite the volunteer to turn over the top card of the pack they shuffled and cut.

It's another small miracle!

Balloon Power

This needs some special props: an oblong box of thin cardboard, a long, fat balloon and a couple of wooden skewers. The skewers don't need to be sharp but must have points. You want your audience to believe that you push one of them through the inflated balloon.

The box should be just a little wider than the diameter of the balloon when that has been blown up. Remove the top and bottom of the box so you have a flat sided tube.

Decorate it if you want. Put a hole on either side of the box half-way down. The holes must be big enough to be able to push the skewer through from one side and out the other, but do not make them any larger than necessary. You don't want people to see in to the tube.

Reinforce the edges of the holes with adhesive tape on the inside and you will be able to use the tube several times before you need to replace it.

Show the tube and skewers to the audience. Let someone choose which skewer you use for the trick.

They can even blow up the balloon! Make sure that the balloon is not quite completely inflated or too big to go easily through the tube.

Push the balloon through the tube. Hold the tube up. Everyone can see that the balloon fills the tube. As you turn to your table to get the skewer, twist the ends of the balloon. This would be very difficult to do if the balloon was completely inflated, but it just twists in the tube because you left a little slack in the balloon. Push the skewer through the tube gently. Make sure that the skewer passes beside the balloon where it is twisted, then out the other side of the tube. Hold everything up and turn the tube, balloon and skewer around for everyone to see that you have done another miracle!

Cup of Plenty

This trick needs more preparation than most I have shown you, but the time spent in preparation can be worthwhile if it gets you a greater reaction from your audience or friends.

You need:

Tissue or crepe paper

2 paper cups

Scissors

Rubber bands

Small cardboard box to carry the cups ... and A magic wand (or you can use your scissors)

Something to "magically" produce from a cup.

I suggest you use a colorful cloth square as the item that you will produce. Cut the bottom half off one of the paper cups. You don't have to be too neat with this, as your audience will not see it. They should actually never even be aware that this cup exists. Glue a piece of crepe or tissue paper over the mouth of the shortened cup. This needs to be neat and not extend past the lip of the cup at any point.

Squeeze the cloth square inside the half-cup from the open bottom. The cloth should be large enough to fill the half-cup, but no larger. Do not fold the square, just crush it up loosely so that it will easily unfurl when you produce it. Cut a few squares of your crepe or tissue paper. Make them just a bit wider in each direction than the mouth of your cup.

Start your performance with the box on your table, the half-cup mouth down behind the box and everything else inside the box.

Take the full-size cup, rubber bands and some of the paper squares from the box.

Show everyone that your cup is empty. You can even let them examine it and the paper squares but I never do that.

Put a square of paper over the mouth of the cup and put a rubber band around the rim to hold the paper in place.

Now you start to look for your magic wand (or your scissors). That's the moment when you turn the paper cup mouth down and push it on to the half-cup that is concealed behind the box.

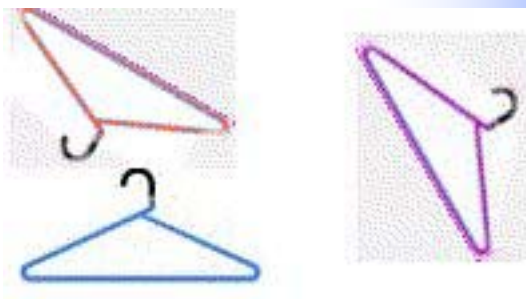
Bring your wand or scissors out of the box with your other hand, then lift the nested cups high in the air so that nobody can see that the original paper cover has been broken through.

Wave your wand or scissors around the cup, put the wand down and then push the thumb and forefinger of that hand through the paper cover.
Pull out the cloth square to tremendous applause!

Hang(er) Up!

This probably takes more preparation than any other trick in the book but you get something that is very unusual and colorful.

You show everyone a few coat hangers. Each one is covered with a different colored plastic.



Ask someone to help choose which one you will use for this trick. When the "lucky" coat hanger is selected, you wrap it in a large sheet of newspaper, wave your wand over it as your audience say the Magic word, then you suddenly crush the paper into a small ball!

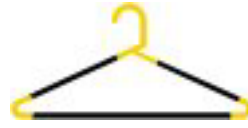
The coat hanger has vanished!

This would be very difficult to do with a real coat hanger, so we will make a special re-usable coat hanger with some plastic tubing and soft wire.

If you have not bent wire and/or hammered nails before, ask someone with experience to show you the best and safest way to do these things. You could save some bruises that would detract from your appearance when you are doing a show and you will also save hours of valuable time when you learn to do things the right way the first time.

Use one of the regular plastic coated hangers as a model and cut off the amount of plastic that you need. I said plastic because this coat hanger has very little wire in it. This makes it much easier to vanish!

You will use four fairly short pieces of wire; shown here in yellow



- 1] The first has to be shaped like the hook part of the regular coat hanger.
- 2] The second is a shorter piece that you wind around the upright part of the first piece to make it look like the top part of the real hanger.
- 3] The third and
- 4] the fourth are just short, straight pieces that you drop into your plastic tubing before you glue the ends of the tubing on to the false top of your special hanger.

You will need to carefully measure your imitation changer against the real one so that you know where you need to make the "shoulders" of the hanger. That's what the two pieces of straight soft wire are for. After you have measured the position of the "shoulders, slide one piece of wire to the point where you want each shoulder and gently bend them to shape.

You can make a good imitation of the real hangers this way, but one that is much safer to crush inside the newspaper.

I think that you will use this trick many times if you take the trouble to make the special hanger, so I suggest that you go one extra step. When you make your measurements, get a piece of thick board and mark them out. Then you can put nails sticking up from the board where the shoulders and the false top fit and you can use this template to quickly repair your crushed coat hanger after you have used it. You could also use this "form" to make one or two with different colored plastic for any occasion where you appear again in front of a group that has seen you do the trick with your first coat hanger.

The Floating Cup

I always try to include a trick that focuses some attention on my magic wand in my Magic Shows, as well as using it frequently to apparently make the Magic happen. There are a thousand tricks you could do with your Magic wand. This is one of them.

Use a wooden wand, not too thick. Drill a hole into one end of the wand. If you haven't drilled holes before, ask someone to show you how to do it properly and safely.

The hole only needs to be wide enough for you to push a nail into the center of the end of the wand. A headless nail is best for this as you want to have the top of the nail below the surface of the end of the wand. Then fill the hole with a dab of plastic wood, smooth it off and repaint the end of the wand.

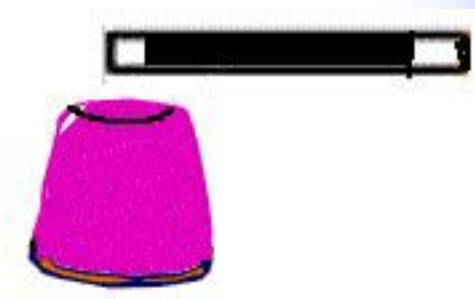
Now both ends of the wand should look the same. You're almost ready to magnetize a paper cup so that it sticks to your wand. You also need a paper cup that cannot be seen through and a small magnet.

Start with the cup lying on your table. The magnet is inside but your friends won't suspect anything unless you draw attention to the cup.

Show your wand to the audience, and then pick up the cup. Put the wand across the bottom of the cup, then slowly and obviously turn the wand as you slide the cup so that it is mouth-down underneath your wand.

Now you ask your friends to say a Magic word and you let go of the cup. You are demonstrating something that is impossible; a paper cup is sticking to a wooden wand.

Your audience will think that there is nothing in the cup because it is mouth down!



You can offer them any fantastic explanation you think up and they will probably believe it.

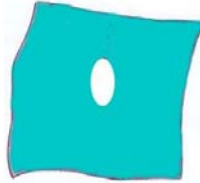
To finish this trick, I suggest you toss the wand up gently so that it loops in the air, then you catch it. That may take more practice than the main part of the trick, but it takes their attention away from the cup.

When you lift the wand off the cup the magnet will quietly drop into your other hand while everyone is watching the wand turn in the air. Don't let anyone examine anything at this point. Just crush up the empty cup but leave it where the audience can find it after your show so they will find ... nothing!

Hank the Hen

You might make this trick look like a miracle of modern science.

You are going to make a handkerchief lay eggs or plastic balls!



Get a large handkerchief, a small plastic egg or ball and some strong thread. If you didn't have the thread, you would need more eggs and real magic!

Sew, or have someone sew for you, one end of the thread to the center of one edge of the handkerchief. Make the thread just long enough to reach the center of the handkerchief. Put a small hole in the egg or ball, push the free end of the thread in and glue it in place.

You need a container for the eggs. Put a thick cloth in it so that your audience don't hear you drag the egg out from the container. It's Magic, not cheating! Hold the handkerchief up by one corner. The egg hangs down behind the folds. Grab a corner on the other side to where the thread is sewn. Lift the handkerchief and fold it in half with the egg inside. Tip the handkerchief over the container and your astonished audience will see an egg fall from the handkerchief into the container.

Spread the handkerchief on the container (Don't show the thread). Say that you do this to show the handkerchief is "ordinary". You really do it so that you can get the handkerchief where the thread is sewn and lift it to draw the egg up. Repeat the whole procedure just a few times until you have laid maybe five eggs, then put the handkerchief and egg aside.

Now you can lift the container and tip the opening toward your audience to show them that the eggs have vanished!

Hypnotized Coin

Get a large coin and a blunt toothpick. Lay the toothpick between two fingers with your palm up and slightly bent. Lay the coin on the toothpick. You may have to shorten the toothpick.

Try to borrow the coin when you perform. They will check it afterwards. Show your hand (with toothpick) but cup it so that no toothpick is seen. Put the coin over the toothpick and wave your free hand in a mysterious manner over the coin.

Straighten your palm and the coin rises on its edge (the toothpick pushes the coin up).

The spectators won't notice the movement of that hand while your free hand makes wider and slightly faster movements. This is one time that the hand really is faster than the eye.

Instant Handkerchief

This is the easiest way to get a handkerchief from thin air unless you really can just make things appear!

Wear a loose jacket that looks okay but is not too loose.

Before you start, squeeze a small handkerchief into a small ball. You could use either a proper magician's "silk" one or a lady's handkerchief provided it's a solid color. Make a crease in the inside of an elbow of your jacket. Don't fold the handkerchief up - it won't open properly when you make it magically appear. Bundle the handkerchief into the crease and make sure that it cannot be seen as you move that arm around.

All you have to do to make your handkerchief appear is to quickly raise your arms.

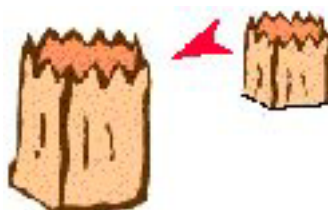
The fold in the jacket sleeve will straighten out and the handkerchief will rocket up into the air!



And Now it's Gone!

I am going to show you how to vanish a handkerchief too. Get 2 small, similar paper bags. Cut off the top few inches of 1 bag and throw the top away.

Poke small holes with a pencil in the bottom of the cut bag then glue it, mouth up, just inside the opening of the complete bag.



To vanish your handkerchief, put it inside the larger bag, secretly pushing it inside the cut-down bag. Squeeze the opening of the large bag almost closed and put it to your mouth. Blow in to inflate the large bag (that's helped by the holes in the bottom of the inner bag). Squeeze the opening completely together then bang your hands together to burst the bag.

The handkerchief stays hidden inside the smaller bag. Because the bags are the same color, the audience should not be able to see the smaller bag inside the remains of the outer one! Screw the whole thing up and toss it aside.

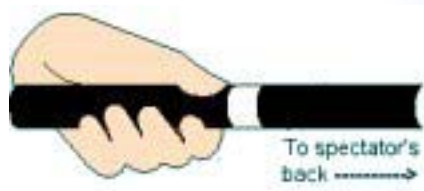
Remember to pick the up paper up afterwards. I lose more handkerchiefs that way ...

Painless Penetration

You may have seen magicians put their assistants in mortal danger with swords, saws and other sharp implements. It is a lot of fun, especially if you are the magician and not the assistant!

These illusions are carefully constructed and need much rehearsal or they won't work. Someone could even get hurt.

Here is a mini-illusion - you appear to push your wand into the back of a brave volunteer.



You need a little confidence, a brave spectator, your magic wand and a strip of strong white paper. Roll the paper once around the end of your wand. Cut the paper to match the width of the white end of your wand, and then glue the end of the paper.

You have a paper ring that fits fairly tightly round the wand. You must be able to slide the paper ring along the wand.

Ask your volunteer to turn their back to you. Wrap your hand round the end of your wand and the paper ring. Gently press the other end of the wand against your volunteer's back and push the paper ring along the first few inches of the wand.

Keep the outer end of the wand concealed behind your arm so the audience will think that the white paper ring is the end of the wand and you are actually pushing the wand into your friend's back!

Finish the routine by asking your volunteer to cough, and then gently draw the ring back along the wand. There is little chance for other spectators to see how you do the trick.

It's easy because your spectators are conditioned to accept what they see. People know what the end of a wand looks like. Their mind accepts that the paper ring is the "real" end of the wand, so they can suspend disbelief and "see" you push the wand into the volunteer's back!

Tear a Tissue

This is another inexpensive miracle, though you could use two one-hundred dollar notes instead of two tissues if you are rich!

Okay, back to reality.

Fold a tissue like a concertina - fold a small section forward, then fold the doubled part back on itself and so on. You end up with a small bundle that tends to spring open and you won't have to stand there, unfolding the "restored" tissue when the trick finishes.

Just stick one side of the folded tissue to the back of the other tissue. Put it at the top corner that is easiest for you to cover with one hand.

Show your friends the ordinary, unfolded tissue. Start to tear strips off it. Put each strip in front of the tissue. You end up with a wad of tissue pieces which helps to hide the bundle you stuck to the back.

Fold the torn pieces forward and together, then secretly turn the whole bundle over. Let the folded tissue slowly unfold - you have done another small miracle. I can hear you asking, "What if they want to examine the tissue afterward?"

There is never any reason to let them. Try to plant the impression with spectators that you only use ordinary items all the time.

If you pass something round that you used for one trick, then you might create the expectation that you don't mind if they pick up and examine any item that you use.

Sometimes, that impression might cause you some severe embarrassment!

Yarn

There is something about yarn! Almost every lady knits, or has at some time, so you will probably be able to find enough off-cuts from balls of differently colored yarn in cupboards for you to be able to prepare for this miracle.

You want about five different colors for this exhibition of your color-reading fingertips.



Buy or borrow the yarn and some small wooden or plastic blocks. The blocks must be different shapes - cube, pyramid etc. You only need 4 shapes. If you have enough blocks but 2 are the same shape, tap a short nail in each side of one of the duplicate blocks so you can feel the difference between them.

Wind one color of yarn around each block. The longest piece of yarn is simply wound on itself until you have a ball about the same size as the balls that have blocks inside them. Tie the ends of the balls so that they will not unravel and expose the blocks.

Show the audience your 5 balls of yarn and drop them in a cloth bag. Give the bag to a spectator. Let her shake the bag so the balls are mixed. The balls should not make any sound with the yarn around the blocks.

Ask her to hold the bag up by one corner. Put your hand in the bag and name the color of each yarn ball **before** you bring it out of the bag!
This is a real yarn wonder!

Invisible Serpent Servant

With some simple props and a little practice, you are about to perform your own special version of a very famous trick that was a favorite of several stage illusionists.

You need to be some distance from your audience for this trick, though there is little chance that your spectators will see what is powering the "serpent".

You need a large, colorful and soft fabric square and some black thread. You have to wear black trousers or a black dress.

Sew the thread to one corner of your scarf or whatever fabric you are using and put a black button on the other end of the thread.



To perform you lift the scarf and secretly let the thread with the button fall to the floor. Put your foot on the button. This will ensure that the serpent works properly.

Tie the scarf in a large loose knot and hold it up so that the audience can see there is "no trickery"!

Now, you just have to hold the corner of the scarf that is opposite to where the thread is sewn and lift.

The tension will cause the end that has the thread attached to crawl out of the loose knot. That is why this trick is called "the Serpent".

My Eye Test

It's fun to make Magic props yourself but it's really only worthwhile if you can get results that don't look home-made! After all, your audiences deserve the very best you can give them, don't they?

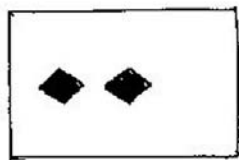
This is one prop that almost everyone can produce to a good standard, even if you decide to make the deluxe two color version that I will describe at the end of this section.

You need a piece of stiff card that cannot be seen through and a stencil. You can use the paper that you cut the diamonds out with. If you decide that those diamonds are too small, then just cut one larger diamond from another sheet of paper - the extra expense will be worth it.

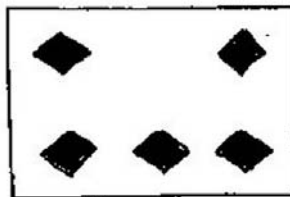
The diamond, or whatever shape you decide to use, can be any size so long as you can easily cover one design with the palm of your hand.

The piece of card needs to be large enough that you can fit two rows of three diamonds on each side with fairly wide borders around each of the symbols. But you will not be putting twelve symbols on your card, just seven altogether. It's the special positioning of those seven symbols that make this trick so effective.

On one side of your card, divide the length of the card into thirds with 2 faint pencil lines. Put one symbol in the center of the two left-most sections. Rub off your pencil lines.



On the other side, divide the length in thirds with 2 faint lines. Draw a line at the halfway point across its width. Put 1 symbol in the sections shown in the picture. Rub away your lines.



That's the most difficult part of the trick out of the way.

Look at the side of the card that has two diamonds on it. Put the palm of one hand over the blank end of your card. You will see that anyone could assume that there are three diamonds on the card, the third being under your hand.

Now put the same hand over the symbol at the other end of the card and you will see that anyone could think that there is just one diamond on the card, assuming that the area under your hand is blank like the other end of the card.

That's the basis of this trick.

To perform, you pick up the card with the "two symbol" side facing the audience and one hand over the end symbol. You tell the audience that you will test their vision "with the latest advance in cardboard technology"

Ask them, "Are the symbols big enough?". NEVER ask them "How many diamonds are on the card?" because there could be some joker in the audience who has seen the trick done before. If someone shouts out, "I can't tell because your hand is covering up something" then your trick is ruined!

Now you grasp the card with your other hand covering the center symbol and then turn the card over. Tell your spectators, "There are four diamonds on this side."

Now you say, "because of our highly developed pasteboard technology, we can test your vision and your memory at the same time!"

"You remember that there were three diamonds on the other side?" This time your hand covers the blank end of the other side of the card and your friends will

assume that there are three symbols on that side now. They probably think that surprise is the end of the trick but you have one more for them.

Your hand covers the blank space between the two diamonds on the other side of the card as you turn it over one last time.

"And I know those with perfect memories will remember that there were SIX diamonds on this side!"

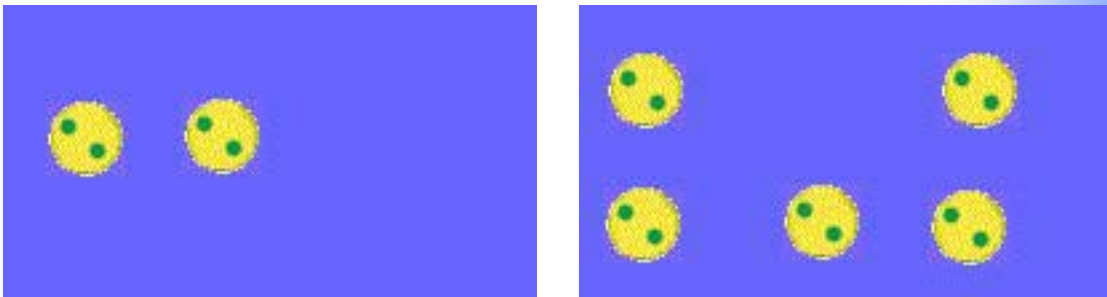
It's a great trick but you need to be careful how you finish. Make sure that you take the card down behind your table without changing the view that your audience has or they might see an extra blank space or a diamond and find out how this little miracle was done!

Creepy Crawlies

This is really a variation of the Eye Test trick but it's quite different and the extra bit of preparation is, in my opinion, going to repay you in more laughter from audiences for years to come.

You use circles instead of the diamonds or other playing card symbols you used for the regular Eye Test card. Make them a bright color and you can put little flecks of a contrasting color over the whole area of the circle as a rough representation of fur.

Now you put two small white circles on each of the larger ones and put a large colored dot in each of the white circles. These small circles will be the creatures' eyes.



You don't need to be very fancy with your decorations because small highlights will not be seen clearly enough by the spectators. It is important to make all of the creatures as near to identical as you can.

To perform, just pick up the card with the "two symbol" side facing the audience and one hand over the end symbol. You tell the audience that they are the first ... tonight ... to see a new bug, "Gaudy Cardboardus" that has Science's greatest minds, including you, baffled.

You don't ask them, "How many symbols?" this time either, so there is never a chance for anyone to shout out the secret!

"If I isolate one "Gaudy" on this side of the impenetratable cardboard shield" ... Now you grasp the card with your other hand covering the center symbol on the other side, and then turn the card over. Tell your spectators, "... and four Gaudy Cardboardus on this side."

Then you say, "With our highly developed pasteboard technology, we should be able to study them safely without them breeding, but ..."

You turn over the card with your hand covering the blank end of the other side to show there are "three" creatures on the other side! Your audience probably think that surprise is the end of the trick but you have one more for them.

Your hand covers the blank space between the two Gaudys on the other side of the card as you turn it over one last time.

"And they have already started to multiply on this side too!"

You show the five Gaudys on that side. With your hand covering the space, your friends will think there are six!

"So we must keep these creatures isolated in this radiation proof sleeve". Quickly push the card into an obviously ordinary large envelope.

This version gives a lift to the trick by using "creatures" which are obviously just painted on (so how do they multiply?) and also gives you a reason to put the card away quickly at the end of the routine.

Three Less One Equals Three

This is the last trick in the book and it is one worth learning to do well. You can do this trick almost anywhere that you can get some pieces of paper.

Carry a small notepad in a jacket pocket and one more thing; some small balls made from tearing one page of the notepad into quarters and then rolling them up separately. That's the main part of the trickery and you can do it well in advance.

When someone asks you to do a trick, look through your pockets for the notepad. You know which one it is in, but you want everyone to have the impression that you are unprepared and just thought of the idea to use the notepad for a trick.

When you take out the notepad and tear off one page, you secretly bring out one of the small balls hidden between the thumb and palm of one hand. This gives the most cover for the ball, but many magicians push the ball between two fingers instead, which gives them more flexibility when they are tearing up the fresh page.

Tear the new page in quarters and roll each piece into a ball. You could let your friends do some of this but they might make balls that don't look anything like the special ones you made earlier. All the balls that you use need to look as alike as possible.

Now you take one of the four visible balls and put it in the hand that has the concealed ball. Pick up another of the balls on the table and put it in that hand as well.

The audience think there are two balls in that hand but you know there are really three!

Pick up the first ball off the table and put it in your pocket. Bring out your hand but also bring out the ball, clipped in the same way as the one in your other hand.

Everyone would be looking at the hand as you bring it out of your pocket except that you open your other hand right at that moment to show there are now three balls in it!

Drop the three balls on the table. Your friends will see that your hand is empty. Now you can do the same sequence again, and one more time if you like. Three is a good number when you are deciding how many times to do something like this routine - enough to confuse and amaze your friends but not so drawn-out that they become bored.

Leave the paper balls where your friends can look them over later but never offer to let them examine anything.

That might make them think that you sometimes use special props!

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