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Opening Extract from...

Hey Presto!

Amazing Magic Tricks to
Confound and Astound

Written by Chris Stone

Published by Collins & Brown

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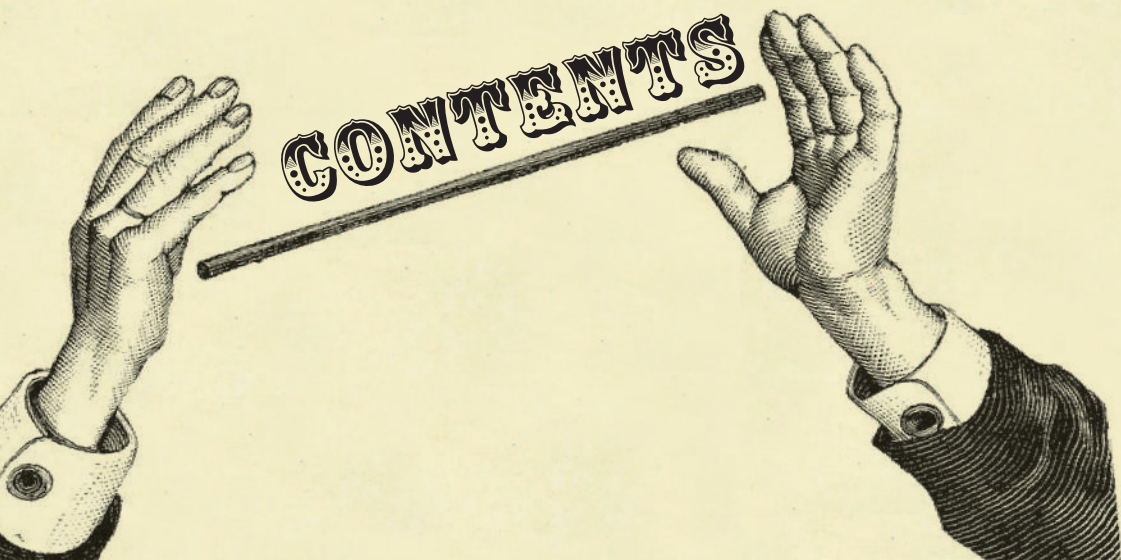


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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Magic tricks have amazed us for thousand of years. These days, illusions and advanced magic tricks are so convincing, so utterly compelling to watch, that they must be real, surely? As unbelievable as some tricks may seem — from the simple ‘wobbly coin’ trick to the most complex deck shuffle — what we are watching is not real, it is pure deception. Sleight of hand, tricks of the mind and a beautifully orchestrated system of bluffs with intriguing psychology and performance, convince our brains into thinking that all this magical majesty must be happening. Moreover — and this is the most magical part of all — we are all quite happy to be deceived, for the world of suspended disbelief is a beautiful world indeed.

The world’s greatest and most-celebrated magicians, conjurors and illusionists can make us believe the unbelievable, and the impossible seem possible. But, of course, just like everybody else, these conjurors had to start somewhere: they too had to learn the simple (but effective) card tricks, the easy (but imaginative) coin tricks and the basic (but totally mindboggling) sleight of hand tricks before advancing to more innovative, radical and daring performances.

Hey Presto! will get you started on your way. It is a book of simple tricks, to master, to perfect and then to perform. It should be your entertaining companion on your first journey into the world of illusion, distraction, trickery and magic. So, if you want all that and much more, then breathe deep, concentrate your mind, turn the page and read on.





IMPORTANT NOTES FOR THE MAGICIAN

**[Before you begin astounding people here are
a few do's and don'ts to be mindful of.]**

1 DON'T OVERDO IT!

It is always a mistake to do too many tricks. Four or five knockout tricks should be quite enough for one session. Leave them wanting more.

2 NEVER DIVULGE YOUR SECRETS!

If someone asks you 'How do you do it?' just answer, 'Very well!' or 'It's magic!'

3 NEVER REPEAT A TRICK

Unless you can create the same effect by using a totally different method, never repeat! Forewarned is forearmed — if an audience knows what is about to happen there is more chance that they will discover how it happens.

4 PEOPLE WILL BE WATCHING YOUR HANDS

Make sure your hands are clean (at the very least!).

5 PRACTISE MAKES PERFECT

Practice, practice, practice until you know the trick backwards and you can perform it in your sleep. The more you practise, the slicker you will become. Practise in front of the mirror so you can see how the trick looks from the spectator's point of view.

6 KNOW WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO SAY BEFORE YOU SAY IT

Your patter has to be practised as much as your technique. There is nothing worse than a waffling magician. You could write yourself a script or record it on tape to help you develop a smooth flow.

7 DON'T TRY TO MAKE YOUR AUDIENCE LOOK FOOLISH

Some people get annoyed if they cannot work out a trick. Explain beforehand that your object is to entertain them. If they knew how you did your tricks, it would not be worth doing them in the first place, would it?

8 TRICKS DO SOMETIMES GO WRONG!

It happens to the best of us! Figure out what went wrong and keep practising so that you don't make the same mistake twice.

9 SMILE!

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Before we go any further, let's take a minute to concentrate on the basic card skills any amateur magician should know to put on a good show. While the following overhand false shuffle and forcing (over the page) are technically tricks in themselves, they are used predominantly as a means to an end in the performance of several of the card and coin tricks that appear in this book. Brush up on these techniques first of all to hone your skills as a magician.

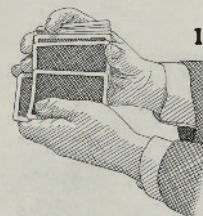
OVERHAND FALSE SHUFFLE

Almost everyone is familiar with the standard card shuffle (lifting sections of cards from the back of the deck and placing them at the front and middle of the deck). But this has the effect of mixing all the cards up: a disaster if, as a magician, you are trying to keep track of a particular card.

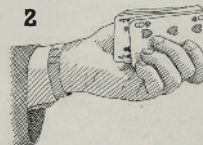
So, you must instead give the impression of a random shuffle, while in fact 'loading' the deck to suit your trick.

To practise this — you must practise this! — put the four Aces on the top of the deck, lift the bottom half of the deck upwards as normal (1, this is called 'undercutting'). Your left thumb now draws a card off the top of this half so that it lands on the top of the four Aces. At the same time slide it inwards so that it projects about 0.5cm (¼ in) over the edge (this is called the 'in jog'). Shuffle off the rest of the cards unevenly so that the fact that it is sticking out is a bit less obvious (2).

START

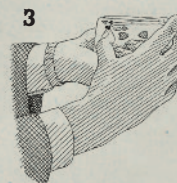


1



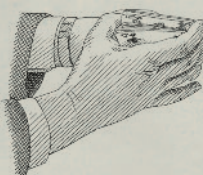
2

Draw off the top card into your left hand by dragging it there with your left thumb.

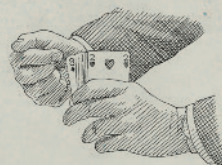


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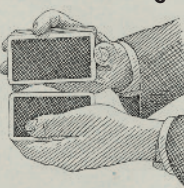
The card that was originally on top is now at the bottom.



4

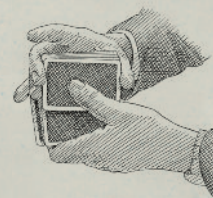


5



6

'Undercut' the bottom half of the pack before placing the original bottom card on the top.



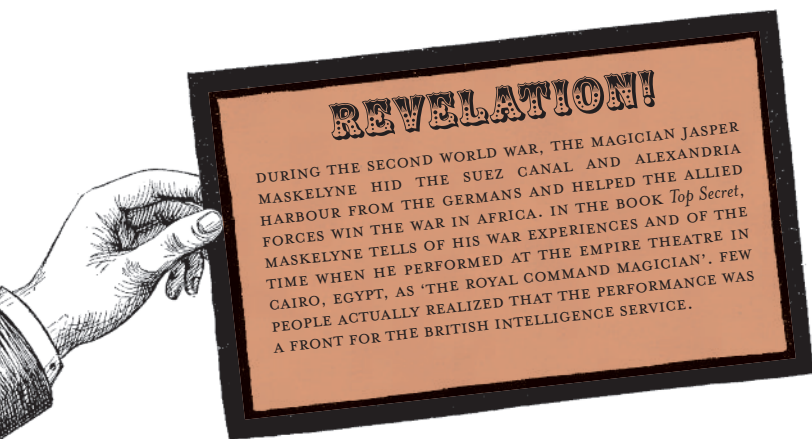
7

FINISH

Your right hand now undercuts the deck again by pushing upwards on the underside of the injogged card (3), grasping all the cards below it and throwing them (still in one block) back on top (4).

If a trick requires you to shuffle the top card to the bottom, hold the complete deck in your right hand in the shuffling position (5). Draw off the top card only into your left hand by dragging it there with your left thumb (6). Now shuffle off the rest of the cards on top of this card. The card that was originally on top is now at the bottom.

To shuffle the bottom card to the top, just start a normal shuffle by undercutting the bottom half (7). Hang on to the original bottom card until last and deposit it on top as you complete the shuffle.

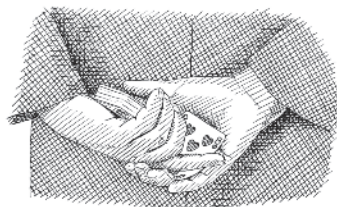


FORCING

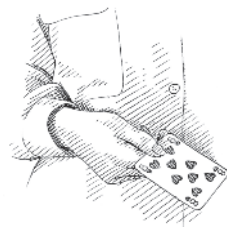
For certain effects it is necessary to force the volunteer to choose a specific card while apparently letting him have a completely free choice. There are several ways to achieve a force but the most relevant technique for the tricks that follow is the cross-hand force. When you perform this, do not forget to emphasize the fairness of everything to your volunteer and the audience: you cannot see the cards, the volunteer shuffles repeatedly etc.



First, false shuffle the cards (see pages 10–12), then put them behind your back in your left hand. As soon as they are out of sight slip the card to be forced off the top and slide it over into the palm of your right hand, covering it with the back of your left hand. Turn around so that your back is now facing the volunteer.

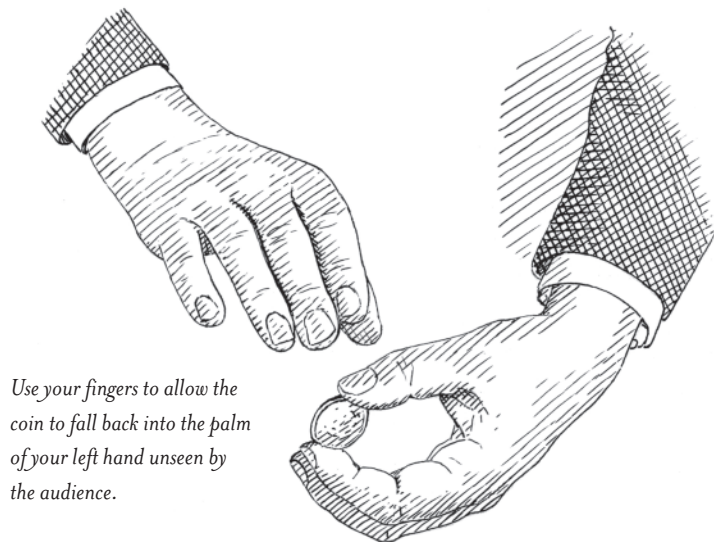


Ask the volunteer to take the cards and give them a really good shuffle before returning them to your hand. Once he has done so, turn around again and slip the forced card to the top of the deck. Then invite the volunteer to take the card at the top of the deck. Easy when you know how!



VOODOO COIN VANISH AND PALM

Hold a coin in your left hand. Your other hand travels forward to meet it, the right thumb going under and the right fingers going over the coin. Make as if to grab the coin but as soon as it is hidden from view by your right fingers, let the coin drop secretly into your left palm. Complete the grabbing motion with your right hand, closing it into a fist. Do not move the left hand – merely grip the hidden coin with the second and third fingers. The right hand is now slowly opened – the coin has vanished!



Use your fingers to allow the coin to fall back into the palm of your left hand unseen by the audience.

COIN FOLD

Place a coin on a square piece of paper. First, fold the paper upwards crosswise from bottom to top, and then fold the left and right edges behind the coin. Finally you fold the top flap down behind. The coin now rests in the little packet, which, unknown to the volunteer, is open at the top.

While apparently creasing the folds of the paper packet more firmly, manoeuvre it until the open end is facing downwards.

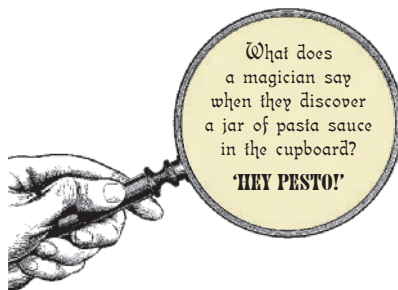
A slight squeeze on the sides causes the coin to slide out and onto your right fingers where it is palmed. The packet can now be burned or, at the appropriate time, opened up to show that the coin has gone.



Make the packet so that one edge is left open.

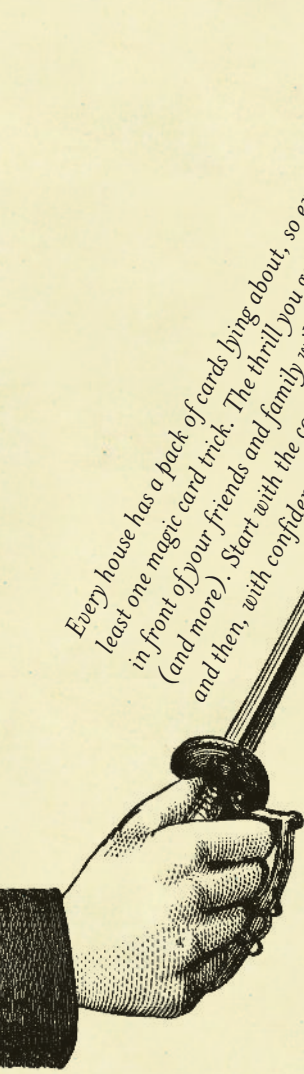


Holding the packet downwards, a slight squeeze will release the coin into your hand.



What does a magician say when they discover a jar of pasta sauce in the cupboard?
'HEY PESTO!'

Every house has a pack of cards lying about, so everybody should know at least one magic card trick. The thrill you get from perfecting a simple trick in front of your friends and family will hopefully entice you to learn more (and more). Start with the card tricks in this chapter, practise them, and then, with confidence, amaze your friends!



CARD

TRICKS

STICKY FINGERS

This unusual card trick will get you the attention you need to start your show. As if by magic a rosette of cards clings to your fingertips and remains suspended until the command is given for the cards to flutter to the floor.

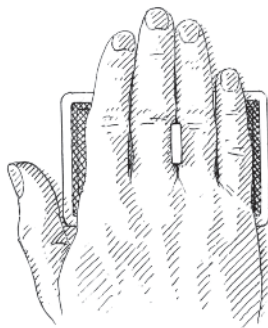
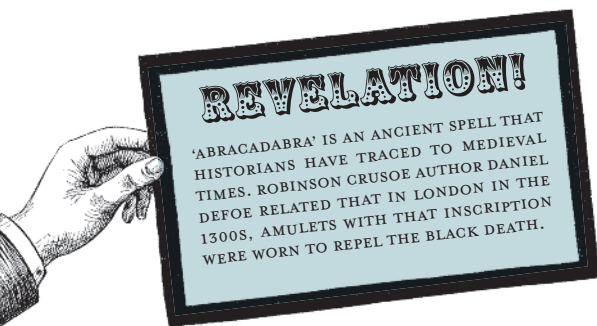
WHAT YOU NEED

A pack of cards; clear sticky tape.

THE SETUP

Cut a piece of sticky tape and stick it to the back of a playing card to make a tab about 1.3cm (1/2in) long. When you do the trick, hold the tab between the knuckles of your second and third fingers to form an anchor card.

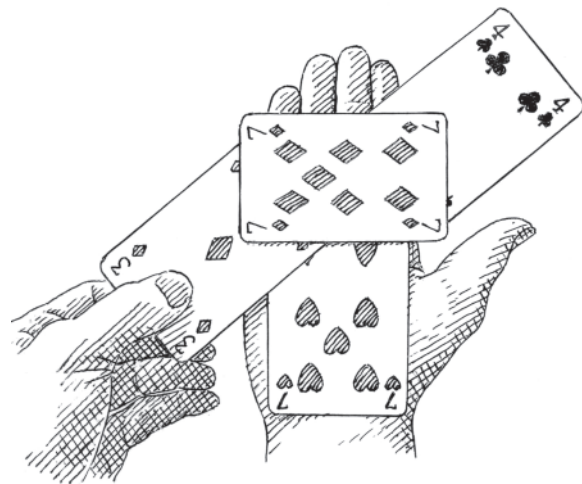
To maintain the impact of this flamboyant trick, make sure none of your careful preparation is spotted by your eagle-eyed audience.



A tab of sticky tape will allow you to hold the card firmly between your fingers.

THE PERFORMANCE

Secretly place the card and tab into position. Tuck the other cards under and around the tabbed card, which will anchor them in place.



Use about 12 cards in all until you have made a rosette of cards. Gripping the tab firmly between your fingers turn the rosette over to face your audience.

HEY PRESTO!

Hold the cards in the air and then command them to drop. Release your grip on the tab and the cards will flutter to the floor: and that's magic!