



Magic 101

Discussion Document

Types of Magic Overview

Prepared by Steve Finkelstein

Comedy Magic

Comedy magic is a genre of performance art that combines elements of magic and comedy to entertain an audience. The primary goal is to create a sense of wonder through magical illusions while simultaneously eliciting laughter through humorous dialogue, jokes, and comedic situations. Comedy magicians use a variety of techniques to achieve this blend, including:

- 1. Visual Gags:** Incorporating physical humor and visual jokes into the magic tricks.
- 2. Patter:** Delivering funny, often improvisational, commentary and banter while performing tricks.
- 3. Audience Interaction:** Engaging with audience members in a playful and humorous manner.
- 4. Unexpected Outcomes:** Creating surprise endings or twists in the magic tricks that are funny.
- 5. Character Play:** Adopting humorous personas or characters that enhance the comedic effect.

The combination of these elements results in a unique form of entertainment that captivates and amuses the audience by merging the astonishment of magic with the joy of comedy.

Comedy Magic

Comedy Magic		
Close-up	Parlor	Stage
Card Tricks – e.g. The next card I turn over will be your card.	Insurance Policy	
14 of Spades	What's Next	
Ambitious Card	Cut-Restored Rope	
Card to Wallet	Baby Gag – Yes/No, Bar Code, Calendar, etc.	
Egg Bag	Spineless Book Test	
Chop Cup	Comedy Escapes – e.g. ropes, hand cuffs, etc.	
Saltshaker thru Table	Props – folding chair, breakable tray	
Props –e.g. Break-away wand, No Cut Scissors, etc.	Silk to Egg	
Comedy Escape – e.g. thumb cuffs	8 Foot Appearing Straw, Pencil	
Sponge Balls	Sponge Balls – Multiplying, from mouth, etc.	
Squeakers, Bounce-no Bounce Balls, etc.	Linking Rings	

Example Comedy Magic Effects

Comedy Card Tricks:

- **Invisible Deck:** The magician pretends to shuffle an invisible deck of cards, asks an audience member to "select" and "shuffle" a card, and then reveals that exact card from a real deck.
- **Six-Card Repeat:** The magician repeatedly counts six cards, discards some, and yet always ends up with six cards again, all while providing humorous commentary.

Sucker Tricks:

- **Disappearing Bottle:** The magician makes a bottle disappear in a tube but comically "fails" multiple times before finally succeeding in a surprising way.
- **Vanishing Bandana:** The magician follows instructions from an audio tape to perform a trick, but hilariously misunderstands "banana" for "bandana," leading to a messy and funny routine.

Mismade Magic:

- **Mismade Flag:** The magician attempts to make a flag appear from a scarf but ends up with comically incorrect pieces (e.g., wrong colors or shapes) before finally producing the correct flag.
- **Linking Rings:** During a routine with linking rings, the magician comically struggles with the rings getting stuck, falling apart, or behaving unexpectedly.

Audience Participation:

- **Assistant's Revenge:** The magician invites an audience member to assist in a trick but comically makes them the "victim" of silly and harmless gags.
- **Comedy Rope Trick:** The magician performs a standard rope trick (like cut and restored rope) but with humorous commentary and unexpected twists, such as the rope pieces turning into different objects.

Prop Comedy:

- **Egg Bag:** The magician makes an egg appear and disappear from a cloth bag, with funny "mistakes" and surprising outcomes that keep the audience laughing.
- **Multiplying Bottles:** The magician and an assistant (real or imaginary) struggle with multiplying bottles that keep appearing, disappearing, and changing places, leading to a chaotic and humorous routine.

Mentalism with a Twist:

- **Comedy Book Test:** The magician humorously pretends to struggle with mind reading, making exaggerated guesses before finally revealing the correct word or phrase in a funny way.
- **Prediction Gag:** The magician makes a big deal about a sealed prediction, only for it to humorously reveal a silly or unexpected outcome that still amazes the audience.

Physical Comedy:

- **Levitation Gag:** The magician pretends to perform a levitation trick but instead creates a series of comical mishaps before achieving a surprising and funny conclusion.
- **Comedy Escape:** The magician performs an escape act (like from a straitjacket) with exaggerated difficulty, funny commentary, and unexpected twists before finally escaping in a humorous way.

Mentalism

- Mentalism is a performing art that focuses on the demonstration of highly developed mental or intuitive abilities. Mentalists appear to possess supernatural or extraordinary mental powers, but their performances are based on a variety of techniques including psychology, suggestion, misdirection, and sleight of hand. Key aspects of mentalism include:
 1. **Mind Reading:** Seeming to read the thoughts of audience members.
 2. **Prediction:** Foretelling future events or outcomes.
 3. **Telepathy:** Appearing to communicate thoughts or information without using the five traditional senses.
 4. **Psychokinesis:** Creating the illusion of moving or manipulating objects with the mind.
 5. **Memory Feats:** Demonstrating extraordinary memory capabilities, such as recalling vast amounts of information or specific details.
 6. **Intuition:** Displaying heightened intuition or perception, often through cold reading or hot reading techniques.
- Mentalists often use a combination of observational skills, knowledge of human behavior, and theatrical presentation to create the illusion of possessing special mental powers. Their performances are designed to mystify and entertain, leaving audiences questioning the boundaries between reality and illusion.

Mentalism

Mentalism		
Close-up	Parlor	Stage
Book Tests		
Drawing Duplications		
Two-Person Telepathy Act		
Predictions		
Audience Participation		
Math Magic Effects – e.g. Magic Square		
Principles – one ahead, etc.		
Thought of Card – Rising Card		
Mentalism Props – e.g. Mental Epic		

Examples Mentalism Effects

Mind Reading:

- **Book Test:** An audience member selects a random page and word from a book, and the mentalist reveals the chosen word.
- **Drawing Duplication:** An audience member draws something in secret, and the mentalist duplicates the drawing without having seen it.

Prediction:

- **Envelope Prediction:** The mentalist writes a prediction and seals it in an envelope. Later, the prediction is revealed to match an outcome chosen by the audience.
- **Newspaper Prediction:** A headline or significant event in the next day's newspaper is accurately predicted.

Telepathy:

- **Telepathic Transmission:** The mentalist and an audience member both draw a picture without seeing each other's work, and the pictures match or are very similar.
- **Two-Person Telepathy Act:** One performer appears to telepathically send information to another performer, who accurately reveals details about objects or thoughts.

Psychokinesis:

- **Bending Metal:** The mentalist bends spoons, keys, or other metal objects with apparent mental effort.
- **Moving Objects:** Small objects, such as matchsticks or pencils, appear to move without being touched.

Memory Feats:

- **Memorization:** The mentalist rapidly memorizes a list of random words, numbers, or objects provided by the audience and recalls them in order.
- **Mnemonics:** Demonstrating the ability to recall detailed information, such as names and dates, after only brief exposure.

Cold Reading:

- **Personal Details:** The mentalist reveals personal information about an audience member without prior knowledge, often using subtle cues and general statements.
- **Psychological Profiling:** The mentalist describes an audience member's personality or experiences with high accuracy.

Divination:

- **Psychometry:** The mentalist holds a personal object belonging to an audience member and provides detailed information about the object's history or the owner's life.
- **Tarot Reading:** The mentalist performs a tarot card reading, providing insights and predictions based on the selected cards.

Close-up Magic

Close-up magic (also known as table magic or micromagic) is magic performed in an intimate setting usually no more than 3 meters (10 feet) from one's audience and is usually performed while sitting at a table.

Close-up Magic is a type of magic performance that is conducted in an intimate setting, typically just a few feet away from the audience. This style of magic often involves small props such as cards, coins, rings, or other everyday objects. The close proximity to the audience allows for a more personal and interactive experience, emphasizing sleight of hand, dexterity, and audience engagement. Key characteristics of close-up magic include:

- 1. Proximity:** The magician performs tricks within arm's reach of the audience, often at tables or in small groups.
- 2. Intimacy:** The intimate setting fosters a more direct connection between the magician and the audience, enhancing the sense of wonder.
- 3. Sleight of Hand:** Close-up magic heavily relies on manual dexterity and skillful manipulation of objects to create illusions.
- 4. Audience Participation:** Active involvement of audience members is common, adding to the interactive nature of the performance.

Everyday Objects: Use of common items such as playing cards, coins, rubber bands, and other small objects makes the magic feel more relatable and astonishing. Close-up magic is often performed at parties, restaurants, weddings, and corporate events, providing a unique and engaging form of entertainment that captivates audiences through its blend of skill, creativity, and personal interaction.

Examples Close-up Effects

Cards	Coins	Gambling	Mentalism	Other
Sleights	Sleights	3 Card Monte	Bank Night	Cups & Balls
Self-Working	Matrix	Poker Deals	Math Magic	Dice Stacking
Packet Tricks	Coins Across	Cut to the Aces	Book Test	\$100 Bill Switch
Story Tricks	Coins thru Table	3 Disk Monte	Memory	Sponge Balls
Gimmick Decks	Gimmick Coins	Endless Chain	Props/Gimmicks	Every Day Objects
Spelling Effects	Bend Coins	Dice Effects	Psychokinesis	Thumb Tips
Math Card Tricks	Coin in Bottle	Blackjack Deals	Mentalism with Cards	Chop Cup

Examples of Close-up Magic

Card Tricks:

- **Ambitious Card:** A selected card repeatedly rises to the top of the deck no matter where it is placed.
- **Triumph:** A deck is mixed with some cards face-up and others face-down. With a magical gesture, all cards are found facing the same way except for the selected card.
- **Four Ace Trick:** The magician produces the four aces from a shuffled deck in a surprising and visually impressive manner.

Coin Tricks:

- **Coin Vanish:** A coin disappears from the magician's hand and reappears in an unexpected location, such as behind an ear or under a cup.
- **Coins Across:** Several coins magically travel from one hand to the other, often in a visually stunning manner.
- **Coin Through Table:** A coin seemingly passes through a solid table and is caught underneath.

Everyday Object Tricks:

- **Rubber Band Magic:** Rubber bands penetrate each other, jump from finger to finger, or perform other visually impossible feats.
- **Sponge Balls:** Sponge balls multiply, vanish, and reappear in the magician's and audience members' hands.
- **Cups and Balls:** Balls appear, disappear, and travel between cups in a classic and versatile routine.

Close-Up Illusions:

- **Pen Through Bill:** A pen is pushed through a banknote or a piece of paper and removed without leaving any hole or damage.
- **Floating Ring:** A ring borrowed from an audience member appears to float up and down a pencil or finger.

Small Props Tricks:

- **Color-Changing Knives:** A pocket knife changes colors in the magician's hands, sometimes multiple times.
- **Cigarette Through Coin:** A cigarette or pen is pushed through the center of a solid coin and then removed, leaving the coin intact.

Everyday Magic:

- **Signed Bill in Lemon:** An audience member's signed bill vanishes and reappears inside a lemon, an egg, or another unlikely place.
- **Ring and String:** A borrowed ring magically knots and unknits itself on a string or cord.

Mentalism Effects:

- **Peek Wallet:** The magician divines a secretly written word or drawing from a wallet.
- **Centre Tear:** The magician reveals information written on a piece of paper that was torn up moments earlier.