

French Elbow

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The Effect: A coin is plucked out of thin air and then pushed into the elbow. The hand which held the coin is shown empty, and the other hands move suspiciously, seemingly hiding something. The audience believes that the coin is actually hidden in one hand while the other is showed empty, but the magician opens all his fingers in the end to show BOTH hands empty! The coin is then plucked out of the elbow again and shown to the audience, completing a short but amusing miracle.

What you'll need: A coin! That's all there is to it. Use something the size of a US quarter or an English 25 pence piece or larger. Do not use a coin that is too tiny or you'll dilute the effect. Also, you can choose to borrow the coin from a spectator and sign it if you wish, just leave out the first action of plucking it out of thin air and go straight into the "Elbow" vanish.

The Sleights: First, we'll need to explain the various sleights involved. This trick consists of 3 basic coin sleights: The Fingerpalm, the French Drop, the Ramsay's Subtlety and the False Transfer. Let us begin by showing you how to execute these sleights.

The Fingerpalm

The Fingerpalm is simply a method of concealing a coin when it is being held in the hand. The hand hiding the coin should be in a casual and relaxed grip. The coin is held between the joints of your middle and ring finger as seen in Fig. 1. Keep your fingers together to avoid flashing the coin from the front, but do not clench the coin or your fingers too tightly. Practice by holding a coin in Fingerpalm and holding a pen or a small glass using your thumb and index finger of the same hand.



Fig. 1

The French Drop

The French Drop is a classic method of vanishing a coin. To begin the French Drop, pinch the coin by its edges with the tips of your thumb, index and middle fingers. Execute the French Drop by pretending to take the coin with the other hand, while at the same time allowing it to drop into Fingerpalm position while the other hand apparently pinches the coin (See Fig. 2,3 and 4). To the audience, you have just showed a coin, and picked it up with the other hand.



Fig.2



Fig. 3



Fig.4

Here's a tip: Try to pinch a coin normally, then mimic exactly the same movements when you are performing the French Drop. You should not flinch, nor stiffen your fingers. Everything should look as if you are REALLY pinching the coin. The fingers which will be holding the coin in Fingerpalm should remain completely still as you execute the French Drop. The French Drop is an easy sleight to do; it is making it realistic that requires some practice. Remember to practice in front of a mirror till you get it right.

The Ramsay's Subtlety

The late John Ramsay was the inventor of this brilliant display known as the Ramsay's Subtlety. It is the fundamental use of a Fingerpalm to display apparently empty hands. With the coin in Fingerpalm position, turn the hand palm down and stick your index finger out. In Fig. 5, the coin is actually hidden in the magician's left hand, but because the Ramsay's Subtlety allows the audience to see the back, and if you tilt it higher, the palm of that hand. It is thus assumed to be empty. When performing the Ramsay's Subtlety, do NOT call attention to that hand. Don't say "Look, this hand is empty." Just execute the sleight and let the spectators use their visual senses to fool themselves. As with the same rules as the Fingerpalm, keep the fingers relaxed and the hands natural.



Fig. 5

The False Transfer

This is a utility coin sleight that can be used in various coin tricks. The purpose it serves in this effect is to give the assumption that the coin is being tossed from one hand to the other. In actuality, the coin is already hidden in one hand, while the other hand merely pretends to toss it over. Let's look at this in detail:

In Fig. 6, the magician actually has the coin in his left hand, Fingerpalm position. The audience thinks he has the coin in his right hand.



Fig. 6

In order to show the coin, the right hand pretends to toss it into the left hand while the left hand rotates palm up. Practice, the inertia from the left hand's rotation guided by a very slight tossing action from the left ring and pinky finger can actually propel the coin away from the left hand. The audience will visually see the coin dropping into the left palm, adding to the false illusion that the coin is being tossed from the right hand. (See Fig. 7 and 8). This "tossing" action was actually captured on the demo video, but it isn't really visible due to the demo's frame rate. Also, it isn't compulsory to do a False Transfer with the toss...it just makes it more convincing. You can try performing without the toss first, and practice it after you are more familiar with the sleight.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

The Method: Ok! Now that you have gotten the sleights down, it is time to get into the routine. We'll explain this to you in 10 easy steps!

Note: All instructions will be explained for right-handers. Please reverse the handling if you are left-handed. We would advise you to practice all the sleights listed above with both hands if possible. This will help greatly should you wish to perform more advanced coin magic in the future.

Step 1: Hold coin in right hand Fingerpalm. Execute Ramsay's Subtlety if you like, although it's not necessary. To produce the coin, reach out to the left with your right hand, pull back slightly and at the same time, slide the coin from Fingerpalm

position to the tip of your index finger with your thumb. Show as much of the surface of the coin as possible to add to the visual appeal of the production (See Fig. 9)



Fig. 9

Step 2: Hold the coin by the edges with the tips of your left fingers. Do the French Drop (Fig. 2, 3 and 4).

Step 3: Raise your left arm up so that your right hand's fingertips can touch your left elbow. Your left hand, unknown to the audience, is in a very good position to get rid of the coin. As you are seemingly pushing the coin into your elbow with your right hand, ditch the coin by placing it on the nape of your neck. The area where the neck curves to your shoulder will allow the coin to stay in place (Fig. 10 and 11). Don't worry about getting caught with this one. Everyone's attention is on your elbow!



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

Step 4: Prove that the coin has "penetrated" into your elbow by showing your right hand empty. Now, your left hand is also empty, but keep it closed in a fist as you lower your left arm (Fig. 12). This is to prepare for the "sucker" move later on.



Fig. 12

Step 5: Keep your left fist closed. Even though it is empty, ACT as if you are hiding the coin in there. Fumble a little bit, hurriedly pretend to place something in your right hand before opening your left hand, and vice-versa (Fig. 13, 14 and 15). The spectators will think that they have caught you hiding the coin in your hands.



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

Step 6: Boy, were they wrong! Slowly open both hands and show both of them empty! See Fig. 16.



Fig. 16

Step 7: Raise your left arm up again. Reach for your left elbow with your right fingers and pretend to pull, with much difficulty, the coin out of the skin. Use this opportunity of misdirected attention to get the coin back from your neck (See Fig. 17 and 18).



Fig. 17



Fig. 18

Step 8: After you have “plucked” out the imaginary coin from with your right fingertips, drop the left arm down while holding your right hand up. Keep your right fingertips closed in a position as if you are really holding a coin (Fig. 6).

Step 9: With your left hand to your side, let the coin fall naturally into fingerpalm position. Or, let it fall to the tips of your fingers as shown in Fig. 20. This allows for an even more relaxed grip because the coin is merely being cradled by the fingertips. This is known as the Fingertips Rest position. Either way will prepare you to execute the final move.



Fig. 20

Step 10: Perform the False Transfer, pretending to toss the coin from right hand to left palm. Bring up the left hand and rotate, at the same time the right hand mimics a tossing action. Display the coin to end the routine (Fig. 7 and 8).

Have fun with this effect! Remember to practice in front of a mirror till you are completely familiar with all the moves and are able to execute them properly without hesitation. Follow the magicians' code: Remember not to reveal the secrets of ANY effects to non-magicians! Share this effect with your magic buddies if you wish. Do email us at contact@AlphaMagic.com if you have any questions, feedback or suggestions pertaining to this trick.

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