

**DAVID BLAINE'S  
MAGIC TRICKS  
REVEALED!**

The purpose of this text is not to abruptly reveal David's tricks; any good magic fan will certainly be able to understand most techniques used by the performer. It is mainly to remind people that David Blaine is not some kind of new super hero but simply a good (and yes, a very good) entertainer working to perform good magic tricks and only tricks, but he sometimes (often?) forgets to say it. Needless to say that he is working with a team and has counsellors that counts amongst the best illusionists, mentalists & cardicians in the world. Most of the tricks revealed can be found in magic shops or in the many magic books sold throughout the world.

*"I love this kid; I taught him everything he knows!"*

Tarko The Great

## Preface

According to Mike Close in his "Marketplace" column in the June 1997 issue of Magic Magazine, "... all the current self-levitations have their basis in two articles published by Karl Fulves. The first titled "Impromptu Levitation" can be found in the July

1974 issue of the Pallbearer's Review (Volume 9, Number 9, page 755.) Ed Balducci is credited in the article, but he explains that he was shown the method by Erwin Levine, who was one of the Harmonicats. Mr. Levine had no idea who the originator was."

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## A Quick Note About David Blaine

As mentioned above, David Blaine is not the originator of this illusion. He has made the illusion popular, once again, with his recent television special, "David Blaine: Street Magic." The unfortunate reality is, however, that we never really get to see Blaine performing the Balducci Levitation. We watch several times as Blaine performs it for others, but we never get to see it for ourselves.

For the television special, Blaine performed the Balducci levitation in front of several different groups of people, and the camera was there to catch their reaction. The method he used for this is the Balducci method, described below. While videotaping these various performances, the producers keyed in on the audience members with the most visual reaction. After the Balducci levitation, the producers of the show had these same people stand by for another taping of the illusion - this time the camera would shoot from behind the audience members to get a

clear view of Blaine in action. The audience members were told that this second performance was to show them how magicians could use wires to levitate. **And this is exactly what happened. A small harness and rig (just out of camera view) was set up and Blaine performed a standard wire-suspension.**

What Blaine did was a camera trick - known as a post-production edit. The audience at home watched the second (wire suspension) levitation performance, with the audience reaction of the real levitation edited in. It was said, in the television special, that no strings or wires were used to perform Blaine's levitation. This is true, no wires or strings are required. Unfortunately, we never got to see Blaine's real levitation:

**WE SAW A WIRE-SUSPENSION !**

**:-(**

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## Balducci Levitation - Description

The Balducci Levitation is an illusion that can be performed almost anywhere, anytime. It uses no wires, strings, rigs, camera tricks, etc.

The illustrations at the right show you the audience point-of-view.

This is a highly restrictive, angle-sensitive trick. You have to practice your angles over and over to get used to them. One bad angle or position and the illusion is blown!

In the television special "David Blaine: Street Magic" they show everyone having 'cows' over Blaine's levitation. What they don't show you are the countless times Blaine screwed the trick up. It is easy to get a bad angle - even more so when you're performing for several people.

Figure 1 shows the start of the illusion. Stand about 8 to 10 feet away from the audience at a 45° 'backward' angle (as shown in figure 1). You pause . . . and then slowly start to float (figure 2). You rise 3 to 5 inches off of the ground before you suddenly "crash" back down to the ground.

When performed correctly, this is about as close to "real" magic as you'd ever want to get.

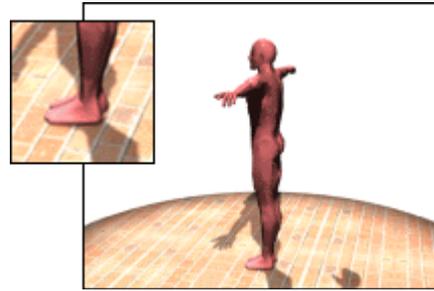


Figure 1

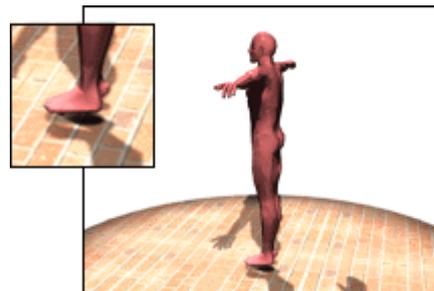


Figure 2

## Balducci Levitation - Solution

All you do is pretend to "float off of the ground while you tippee-toe on just one foot (the foot furthest from their view) as shown below. Believe it, or not, this looks GREAT! The small audience can not see your supporting foot because it is hidden by three things: your pants, the angle of the trick and your closest shoe (which hides their view of the foot being used to "levitate" you.) You might only rise 3 or 5 inches off of the ground, but **it's all in the presentation!** You will want to slowly rise off of the ground . . . wait just one second and then drop fast. Stay up too long and they will probably figure it out.

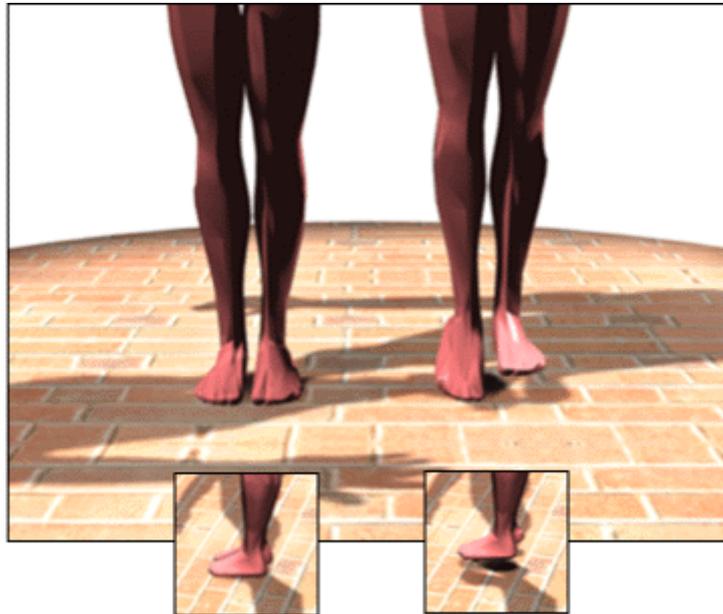


Figure 3

This is what the Balducci Levitation looks like during performance. The position on the left is the start of the illusion. The position on the right shows the climax of the levitation.

Another thing. Don't just walk up to someone and say, "wanna see me float?" You must first show them, say, a bunch of card tricks. This will let you know if you can perform the Balducci Levitation for them, or not. If they tend to grab at the cards or seem to go out of their way to make magic life difficult for you, then you do not want to show them this trick. They will blow it for you, and everyone else. The Balducci Levitation requires a respectable, responsive audience - people that like, and want, to be entertained. Part of being a good magician is knowing who **not** to show a trick to - no matter how much you want to show it to them. You show them a few card tricks first (or something of the like). This establishes a "magical" mood, lets you see if they are 'in the mood' and sets them up for the big one. After seeing a bunch of "small" stuff they will never

suspect a levitation. This is what blows them away! After a few card tricks, simply have them stand together and then set up for the illusion. "Can everyone see my feet?" is something good to say at this point. "Everyone watch me while I float!" is probably the crappiest thing you could say. Never tell them exactly what to do (this way, they won't be trying to figure it out before you even get started).

Practice in front of a mirror, or better yet, in front of a video camera on a tripod. Set the camera at eye level and perform for the camera several times. This will help you learn your angles much faster, and better than a mirror. Better yet, let a friend in on the trick and have him/her videotape your performance.

Good luck.

# Twisting Arm illusion

Original effect by Shinkoh

Unleash the power of illusion with this unique free discovery which allows you to master the secret of arm twisting 360 degrees made famous by David Blaine , with incredible results .

## EFFECT:

After asking a spectator to copy the action of you putting your hand on the table, you are able to twist your arm a full 360 degrees while others look at you in disbelief

## PREPARATION:

Just a long sleeve shirt. everything else is impromptu.

## METHOD:

**THE SECRET MOVE (WITH THE RIGHT HAND):** on the table, have your fingers pointing towards your body. this may seem a bit uncomfortable, but the effect is well worth it , now, you should have your fingers pointing to the left , now turn your palm up (still having the fingers pointing left) but keep turning the hand over the same way until it is face down again.

With a long sleeve shirt, it looks as if your hand is just turned sideways to the left ( in reality, it's twisted 270 degrees to the right).

## METHOD:

Hand on the table (or sidewalk... wherever you want to perform). Tell him to do exactly what you're doing and start slowly twisting your arm COUNTERCLOCKWISE.

When your fingers start to point to the left, distract him from what you're doing , say something like

"you're doing it wrong; do exactly what I'm doing!" or "maybe you should back up a bit to get a better view of my directions."

With that , point to his hand or push him away a bit with your other hand , and do the **secret move** while his eyes are concentrated on himself. When you have the secret move done , it's a simple matter of him trying to do what you're doing again. but little does he know you're simply UNTWISTING your arm instead of twisting it like himself.

By putting a plastic cup or hard cellophane tucked under your armpit , you can make a bone crunching noise by pressing gently as you twist your arm to add to the effect.

This trick is very clearly explained in the Twisting arm illusion video of Meir Yedid which can be ordered online. It will allow you to perform this fantastic illusion to great effect very quickly.

The pictures below show the hand movements for this trick . Please note that you cannot show your arm while performing to your audience as this would give away the secret to the trick .



## CIGARETTE THROUGH THE COIN TRICK

### **Effect**

David Blaine again used this impressive trick where he pushed a cigarette through a quarter.

**Method:** This trick uses a very clever gimmicked coin where the middle temporarily opens to let the cigarette through and later closes so the hole is virtually invisible to the spectator.

This coin is available through all good magic suppliers

## PSYCHO KINETIC TIME

### **Effect**

A watch is borrowed, the magician does not carry anything! After showing the watch to those nearby who notice the current time, you place the watch face down in the spectator's hand. His hand is closed over the watch. The magician doesn't touch the watch again. The magician then asks the spectator to name a number and then to concentrate on that number and the watch. He opens his hand, turns over the watch and sees that the hands of the watch have moved that many minutes! This trick does not require any gimmicks.

**Props:** Someone wearing an analogue watch (*a watch with an long stem that's easy to manipulate quickly. i.e.: SEIKO watches*)

**Preparation:** You need to wear a watch of your own with the wrong time.

**Method:** Ask your victim for his watch with an excuse like, "I think my time is wrong can I see yours for a second?"

Borrow the watch for a minute and examine it look at it, state what time it has, and say, "is this the right time, I need to know."

Now glance at the time on **YOUR** watch, and draw attention to it by setting its time. While they looking at you, set the time on **YOUR** watch. Your other hand is moving their stem so **THEIR** time moved forward 25 minutes. Now have them sandwich their watch between their hands, and ask them to pick a number from 10 through 30. Most people will pick 25 if they pick 20, they won't notice it's off by five minutes when you reveal that the hands of their watch have moved forward in time.... If they pick something below that number, tell them to make it harder, and pick a higher number. It gets them everytime... just remember to give a great patter when doing this trick.

**TIPS:** I recommend trying to do this on nervous or shy people so they don't know what you're doing. The key to this trick is **misdirection** , but it's very easy to get caught.

## COFFEE TO COINS STREET MAGIC TRICK

**Setup:** get one of those coffee machine dispensed cups that have the “personal solitaire” graphics on the side. Remove the bottom of the cup with an X-acto knife and place it back, stack the cup three quarters full with odd coins.

Pack the coins in and make it tight, and then pour in a little coffee. Enough to cover the coins completely. Coffee works best because it's so dark.

**Performance:** Comment on how the cards on the side of the cup (graphics) are magic.

Grip the cup from the bottom and push up on the bottom, and shake the cup.

As the coins “unsettle” the coffee will spill between the cracks and the coins appear.

## ACE SHAKE

This trick was performed in David Blaines second special where he made the spectator sign a card , the card was put back in the pack and was made to appear from between two aces.

**Secret:** Give the spectator , the two **red aces** and tell them to hold them.

Fan out the deck and tell the spectator to touch a card. Square the deck up leaving their card stuck out to be signed and shown.

This is because you secretly put the card into "**palm position**" when you square up the deck so you can easily palm the card when you want to.

**It must stick out of the lower corner of the pack meeting your inner thumb .**

Let them sign the card and then hand them the deck , secretly palming their card.

After they are convinced that the card is well lost in the deck , ask for the two aces and sandwich the face down palmed card between the aces , showing only the aces face up.

Tell them to hold the deck openly and start to shake the aces directly over the pack , tell them to watch their card rise from the deck into the two aces , shake a little more loosely and the card will appear to their amazement .

## **PAUL XENON TAX DISC REMOVAL SECRET**

**Effect:** The magician invites a spectator to stand near a car , he then asks the spectator to check that the car tax disc is inside the windscreen.

The spectator agrees , the magician then places his hands over the disc and pulls it out through the solid glass.

**Preparation:** This trick needs a long piece of fishing line , two identical tax discs , a car and a spectator.

**Method:** Attach a piece of fishing line to the tax disc inside the car and run it out to the trunk and out to the back of the car. Have your assistant ducking down behind the back of the car holding the line, where the spectator cannot see him.

Palming the duplicate disc, the spectator is asked to check that the disc is inside the car.

With the disc in your right hand, cover the tax disc with your hands .

This is your cue to the assistant.

He pulls the line and keeps pulling until the disc is ripped of the windscreen and pulled right inside the trunk at the back and out of view of the spectators. Meanwhile , you pretend to struggle to pull the disc from inside the car , hand it to the spectator and casually walk off.

It is good to really look like your putting a lot of effort into getting the tax disc through the windscreen.

## **COIN BITE AND RESTORED COIN**

David Blaine performed this extremely effective trick where a coin was bitten and a piece removed.

The coin was restored when the missing piece was seemingly spat out at it.

This trick was used using a very cleverly engineered coin which is available from a lot of good magic suppliers and is switched for the spectators coin.

You can do your own version of the trick by making your own trick coin by looking at the coin trick section of this site.

## STRING MAGIC TRICK

**Effect:** This trick was performed very well by David Blaine. The magician is seen to roll some thread into a ball in his fingers. The thread is then placed in his mouth and he appears to swallow it. The magician appears to be in pain, when he bares his stomach and visibly pulls the thread out from it.

**Items :** Thread, you will need two pieces of the same coloured thread.

"New skin" latex clear paint for covering cuts and grazes or other brand of latex paint. This liquid paint is normally available from pharmacies. Make up

**Method :** You need to paint a one to two inch square area on your stomach with the latex. When it dries you can pull it gently away from the skin to form a pocket.

Place one piece of thread in the pocket, leaving a small piece sticking out.

Cover the latex pocket with make up to match the colour of your skin.

The latex pocket can alternatively be made by attaching a piece of skin coloured latex that has been cut from a halloween mask. This could be attached by using the latex paint as glue.

The performance is done by the magician rolling one of the pieces of thread into a ball and then either pretending to place the thread in his mouth, retaining the thread between his thumb and finger or the thread can be placed between the gum and cheek. Then he pretends to swallow the string.

The rest of the trick depends on acting, the pain enhancing the illusion that the thread has pushed its way through the magicians stomach.

The thread can then be pulled from the latex pocket.

## FLY RESURRECTION

**Effect :** You are walking down the street and casually pick any spectator. You ask them to come with you to a nearby car and pick a dead fly off the windscreen. You hold it in your hand do a few passes with the other hand and appear to be really concentrating and the fly slowly comes back to life to the surprise of the spectator.

**Preparation :** Freeze the fly

**Method :** You need to catch a fly and freeze it which puts it in a temporary coma, this can be done by swatting the fly hard enough to immobilise it then placing it in a small container in the freezer.

The fly then needs to be quickly taken to a suitable windscreen **IN THE SHADE** and placed there. It is important that the car is in the shade to prevent the fly from defrosting too quickly. Then go and find a spectator and take them back to the car which should appear to be randomly picked. The heat of your hand will revive the fly which should soon start to move.

Freezing the fly with dry ice or even one of these aerosol canned air products for cleaning computers is a better way of freezing the fly as it is quicker and causes less damage to the fly.

## DAVID BLAINE MIND READING STYLE TRICK

1. "Think of any card," it's a wild guess but a spectator will almost always think of the Nine of diamonds, Ace of spades, Queen of Hearts or the Six of Clubs. Have each of those cards on you in one way or another and reveal.
2. "Pick a number between 50-100 with even different digits." Answer: 68
3. "Pick a number between 1-1,000" Answer: 333
4. Fan a set of cards with one royal and the 4H in the center, nine times out of ten the spectator will pick the four because it's in the center and it appears uncommon. (i.e. 7C,AD, 4H, KH, 9D)
5. Borrow a coin from someone, switch it and have them hold your coin in their hand, they bend it with their mind! Just stick your quarter in a vice and bend it ahead of time.

**Say things to help your magic like:** "Let me show you something strange, I'm going to try something, I've never done this before, It's bizarre, Do you (Did you) feel that? That's crazy, That's scary, Can I try something with you ?"

## THE POP-UP CARD (FRUIT LOOPS)

**Effect:** Incorporated into David Blaine's 'Ambitious Card' routine. A signed card is placed into the centre of the deck - with a snap of the fingers the cards returns to the top. The card is again placed into the centre of the deck, another snap of the fingers and once more the card returns to the top.

The magician now takes the end of the face-up signed card and proceeds to bend it almost double, he turns the bent card face down, cuts off the bottom half of the deck and holds the deck at eye level where the bent card can be clearly seen on top. Still holding the cards at eye level the magician places the cut portion on top of the bent card, sandwiching it at the centre.

The magician holds his right hand above the cards, a snap of the fingers and the bent card passes up through the deck and pops-up on the top, it is displayed and seen to be the signed card !

**Method:** Fan the deck face-up and have your volunteer select a card by touching it. As you close the fan, cut the deck one card below the chosen card and take that portion to the top (bottom).

Turn the deck over and Double Lift the top two cards displaying the chosen card. Have the chosen card signed on the face. Turn the 'double' over.

Openly lift off the top card and have the volunteer cut off half of the deck - place the chosen (?) card onto the bottom portion and ask the volunteer to place his half of the cut deck on top.

Ask the volunteer to snap his fingers - turnover the top card to show that the signed card has returned to the top !

Place the signed card to one side.

You now have two problems.

One: You must lose the card in the centre again.

Two: at the same time you must control the chosen card to a position second from the top (in order to perform the Pop-Up card effect).

**Both problems can be solved with one move.....**

Hold the deck in the dealing position with a little finger break under the top card. The deck is then held (left hand) with the deck almost at right angles to the floor, in this position use the left thumb to split the deck halfway saying "That looks like about halfway doesn't it ?" The break held by the little finger should be hidden by the base of the thumb.

Pick up the signed card and bring it in from the rear, giving the appearance of returning the card at the halfway split - it is actually returned into the break held by the little finger - beneath the top card. [This move requires much practice in front of a mirror.]

Once the card has been returned, the hands/cards are brought back to a level position.

Have the volunteer snap their fingers and with some flair and a riffle, 'double lift' the signed card and place it out-jogged (face-up) on top of the deck.

Take the outer-end of the face up ('double') signed card with your right hand and bend it almost in half, then turn the 'double' bent card face down (leaving it bent).

The right hand now cuts the deck (Biddle grip) and the left thumb openly slips off the top bent card onto the bottom portion of the deck as the right hand (with the top portion) is withdrawn to the right.

The right index finger must keep pressure on the bent signed card which is on top of the half held in the right hand.

Hold the left hand portion at eye level where the bent card can be clearly seen. Still holding the cards at eye level, place the right hand portion on top of the bottom half, sandwiching the bent card in the centre.

The left hand thumb and index finger must now take control the deck and hold down the bent signed card, ensuring that it doesn't pop-up prematurely.

The magician holds his right index finger above the cards and asks the volunteer to snap his fingers, at that moment the magician releases the pressure on the top card and up it Pops !!

Turn the card over, to reveal, once again, the signed card.

## TWO CARD MONTE

**Effect:** (This trick requires a complete mastery of the double lift). The magician shows the spectator, the queen of diamond son top of the deck. He then tells the spectator to hold the queen face down between his fingers.

The performer then shows the next top card the other red queen. After several fast sneaky switches of the cards, the spectator is told to guess which card is where?

When he turns over his hand , he realises he is holding no aces at all.

**Preparation:** This trick is done with a regular set of cards. Before performing the trick, put the black ace on the bottom, preferably the ace of clubs, it is less conspicuous. On the top of the deck, place the queen of diamonds, then the ace of spades, then the queen of hearts.

**Performance:** With the deck set up as above, first show the spectator the (actual ) top card. Tell them to hold it between their fingers, face down.

Then tell them to look at the card they have, so they are sure that there was no fancy moves in play.

Using this as misdirection, prepare to double lift the next two cards once they have looked at their card.

Perform the double lift and show them the queen of hearts with the ace concealed.

Put the cards back on top of the deck, then remove the ace without showing them the face of the ace.

Then pretend to switch the cards, once or twice.

After this say "OK I'm going to teach you how to do this"

This time, perform the "switch" very slowly, actually switching the cards.

(Make sure that they do not look at the ace in their hands)

Then, very quickly, making sure that they do not notice what you are doing , take the queen of diamonds you are holding and put it on top of the deck.

Then steal the card off the bottom of the deck (Ace of clubs) and give it to them.

Then ask them to tell you where the card is.

After you hear their guess, have them turn over their hand and be amazed.

## VOODOO ASH

**Effect:** A name is written on a piece of paper on a notepad by the spectator , the paper is torn off unseen by the magician, crumpled up and placed in an ashtray.

It is then set alight.

The ashes are then rubbed on the magicians arm and the name of the person written on the paper mysteriously appears.

**Preparation:** You will need a small notepad , pen , ashtray , lighter and a small piece of soap or wax.

**Method:** The spectator is asked to write the name of a person or favourite anything of theirs on a notepad.

Then too tear of the sheet of notepaper, crumple it up and place it in the ashtray, where the magician then sets the paper alight.

The magician takes the notepad of the spectator and should be able to see the imprint of the name written on the paper above in the next sheet of the notepad.

Looking at the pad should not be made obvious and some misdirection carried out while he carefully takes the small piece of wax or soap and writes the name on the imprint on his arm or hand (this will not be visible to anyone ).

The magician can then take some ash from the ashtray and rub it over the wax where it will stick and create an impression of the spectators word to their amazement.

This is a great trick but depends on the magician creating an atmosphere with an entertaining routine and patter about black magic to enhance the effect and create misdirection to allow him time to pull off the trick.

## COUGH COUGH

**Effect:** The magician has a card selected and signed. The card is then shuffled into the pack by the spectator and it is the magicians job to locate it. Unfortunately , the magician cannot seem to get it right , but after a few attempts , the magician seems to actually regurgitate a tightly folded card. It is the spectators card , with their signature.

**Preparation:** You need a pen and a deck of cards

**Method:** Have the spectator select a card from the deck and show it to the audience.

After the card is signed, control it to the top of the deck by means of a Hindu Shuffle control or a revolving pass.

The deck is now held in the standard dealing position in the left hand (with the chosen card at the top)

Get a finger break under the top card and palm it with your right hand immediately.

Flourish the rest of the deck with a one hand cut, or one hand shuffle with your left hand and offer it to a spectator to simply mix up the cards.

Make sure the spectator starts to shuffle because some stubborn people start to shuffle through the deck looking for their card.

Then turn your back making this move seem natural to show at there is no possible way that you could know where the card is .

At this time you are folding the palmed card into eighths (The smaller the better) This is easy as your back is turned you can use both hands to do this and then slip the tiny package in your mouth between your cheek and gum.

Turn around to face the audience as the card is folded so tightly in your mouth, you can talk normally.

Take the cards and act as if you messed up.

Turn over a couple of cards to reveal what was supposed to be their selection.

Do whatever you want , just make yourself look, bad .

As soon as people start to laugh at you , act as if your hurt , as if something inside of you is wanting to get out.

Make the audience curious , and have the suspense build up.

As soon as they reach their peak , work the card out of your lips and and slowly spit the card out onto the palm of your hand.

Unfold it , and watch the audience scream at the chosen signed card. It looks as if you somehow swallowed the card beforehand and regurgitated it back up again.

## CARD IN BOTTLE

**Effect:** The spectator is asked to sign a card and the card is placed back in the deck. and the cards are shuffled.

The magician throws the cards at a bottle behind the spectators.

The signed card appears in the bottle.

**Method:** David Blaine showed the spectators a different trick before this one involving the same spectator signing a card of the same number and suit that is forced when showing the card in the bottle trick following after the card trick.

He then keeps the card and does another trick not involving cards and slips the card to one of the camera men or lights crew. The guy then puts the card in the bottle while David distracts the audience with the trick.

Then he goes on to perform the card in the bottle trick and the card is forced, signed, and the trick is done.

He then throws the cards at the bottle and the card that was recently signed is held on to.

He then tells everyone to look at the bottle and the card is slipped in his pocket.

## COIN VANISH

David Blaine was seen in his TV special to visibly vanish a coin that was on a spectators outstretched palm, without touching the spectators palm and by waving his hands above the spectators palm.

This looks very impressive and is performed by using a gimmick called "**The Raven**" which is available from good magic suppliers and is a worthwhile purchase for those of you interested in street magic.

## DAVID BLAINES CARD THROUGH WINDOW TRICK

**Effect:** The performer asks the spectator to pick a card without him seeing the face and replace it in the pack. The pack is then shuffled and the performer is apparently unsuccessful in locating the card.

After a few attempts, the cards are thrown against a window in a fit of rage, on looking at the window, the chosen card is seen to be sticking to it, even more surprising is the fact that the card is on the inside of the window.

**Preparation:** You will need two identical packs of cards and a willing helper.

### **Method:**

This trick should be performed in an area with a large window nearby and with the spectator facing away from the window.

The spectator is asked to choose a card from a pack, memorise it and without showing you, replace the card in the pack.

The pack is then shuffled and a couple of attempts at "is this your card" tried followed by a look of disbelief when the spectator tells you that it is not their card (this is all part of the act as you don't and don't even need to know the card).

After a few attempts you fake an angry outburst and making sure the cards are squared up, throw the pack broadside at the window, where they will hit the window and fall to the ground except the chosen card which is sticking to the window.

Your helper was already positioned behind the window and spectator and had an identical pack of cards. He was able to see the chosen card and took the duplicate from his pack.

A small piece of looped sticky tape or magicians wax was attached to the duplicate card and it was stuck to the inside of the window.

The helper should then have walked away from the window.

This trick creates a real surprise but it is important to pick up the fallen cards quickly and to pocket the original chosen card.

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