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Please send suggested corrections and additions to:
jl@learn-great-magic-tricks.com

The alt.magic FAQ is archived at:

<http://www.aaronjones.com/alt-magic>

<http://www.bestiary.co.uk/altmagic/default.asp>

(This site has the five FAQ files available for download as a single zip file, and has web site URLs converted to hyperlinks for ease of access.)

<http://www.repromagic.co.uk/resource/faq.html>

<http://www.learn-great-magic-tricks.com/magic-newsgroup.html>

(Note: Other sites appear to carry older, out of date, versions of the FAQ. The above sites are sent those parts which have been amended, near the end of each month and *should* be current.)

For those who do not have a web browser, individual parts of the five part FAQ may be obtained from an auto-mailer. Send blank e-mail to: altmagic@aaronjones.com for details.

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Topics:

Part 1

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I. GUIDELINES/ETIQUETTE FOR POSTING

alt.magic is a public newsgroup with an estimated readership of 41,000+ ALL postings should be made with this in mind.

Q) What is the purpose of this group?

A) This group is for the discussion of magic as entertainment, including but not limited to close-up, sleight of hand, platform, stage, and illusion magic. For discussions of pagan, occult, and spiritual magic try alt.magick (note the "k"), alt.paranormal, alt.divination, or alt.pagan. There are also alt.skeptic, alt.hypnosis, and alt.paranormal for other non-magic discussions. For discussing "Magic" the card game try "alt.cardgame.magic".

Q) Why not alt.conjuring, alt.prestidigitation, or alt.magic.tricks?

A) Because escape artists are magicians who don't partake in "conjuring". Illusionists don't partake in prestidigitation (sleight of hand). And many magicians (myself included) don't like to refer to magic as tricks or trickery because of the negative connotation that you are out to "get" the audience. The emphasis should be on entertainment, not merely a puzzle, etc. (From: jason@nock.com (Jason Y Nocks))

Q) What topics should -not- be discussed in this group?

A) Since this is a public forum some of us would prefer not to openly discuss the secrets behind the workings of magical effects. The following are some of the reasons given to support this policy:

- 1) You ruin the illusion for others.
- 2) Magic as an art only exists when the performance appears impossible. Focusing on "how it is done" reduces the art to a puzzle.
- 3) Magic as an art exists to entertain. To allow an audience to focus on the performance and not the gimmick is the ENTIRE REASON for the performance. The curiosity you feel when you're fooled by magic is part of the entertainment. When the curiosity is removed, so is some of the entertainment.
- 4) Although the public thinks it wants to know what we are doing they are disappointed when they find out.
- 5) Some folks count on the elements of surprise and subtlety in their techniques to feed their kids and pay rent.
- 6) The secrets are not yours to give. The creators of certain effects have typically written books or produced effects in order to 'stake their claim' and to be compensated for their

work.

Q) What topics should be discussed in this group?

- A) All the other aspects of magic. For example,
- 1) Magic as entertainment
 - 1a) Showmanship
 - 1b) Delivery
 - 1c) Presentation
 - 1d) Philosophy
 - 2) The performance of magic
 - 2a) Embarrassing moments and how to handle them
 - 2b) Views on borrowing/imitating
 - 2c) Putting together a show
 - 3) Magic performances
 - 3a) Upcoming
 - 3b) Performances you may have seen
 - 4) Favorite effects
 - 5) Magicians
 - 5a) Favorite magicians
 - 5b) Yourself and your performances
 - 6) Where to learn more
 - 6a) People willing to teach
 - 6b) Books, tapes, magazines, clubs
 - 6c) Magic dealers
 - 7) Magic as a business
 - 7a) Booking
 - 7b) How to advertise
 - 7c) Openings

Q) What other sources are available on-line to find out more about magic?

- A1) Many of the subscribers to this list are willing to further discuss magic via e-mail with anyone expressing a sincere interest.
- A2) There are hundreds of pages on the World Wide Web devoted to magic and magicians.
- A3) MagicNZ is a FirstClass Graphical BBS in Auckland, New Zealand
Web Site: <http://www.magic.gen.nz/>
- A4) For those wishing to buy/sell magic the newsgroup alt.magic.marketplace has been created. For those whose ISPs or online services don't have access to alt.magic.marketplace, try using the <http://groups.google.com/> site.

Q) How do I get into the Magic Castle to see a show ?

- A) The Magic Castle is a private club for members only and their guests. Visiting magicians (out of town and members of IBM/SAM may also be admitted)

Q) Is there a possibility this news group could be altered in some way so that people wouldn't accidentally keep posting things that belong in alt.magicK?

A) It is easiest to just ignore these articles. Many newsreaders have a feature called a "kill-file" which will mark articles containing certain patterns as having been read or delete the article.

Q) Hasn't it been proven that most of magicK is actually magic?

A) Many magicians have become involved in debunking charlatans who claim to have supernatural powers, most notably Houdini and more recently The Amazing Randi. Magicians can duplicate almost any miracle.

There is a branch of magic that has blossomed in the last 20 years that uses occult science as a theme. Some of the material is strong enough to start a new religion.

Here is one effect that gives you an example....

It is an occult altar. A young novice wearing a robe steps up to the magi. Several occult steps are performed. After building up to a climax, the magi takes a ceremonial dagger and raises it high in the air. He quickly plunges the dagger down, and the novice screams. The robe then falls to the floor, empty. The novice has vanished. If you were at a coven meeting and saw this, you would certainly be affected. Smaller/simpler miracles are much easier - of course. When someone describes a paranormal event, a magician knows how trivial it is to fool someone. Of course he/she is skeptical. (Example from: Bruce Barnett)

See also alt.skeptic.

Q) Can experienced magicians give some tips on how to read a magic catalog? How can we spot tricks that are over-advertised?

A) It's amazing what people will say for money. The trouble is that you'll find a lot of misleading but correct ads in a strict legal way. Look for reviews of the items before you buy. Go and watch a demo, and then, if the demo looked wonderful, you need to have someone tell you whether this can be done by someone at your skill level. Suggested questions: Do you really need this item? Is it useful in more than one way? Or is it limited to the effect described? Will it gain in value over the years? Is it a limited edition? Will it help you in your act? Do you plan to USE it?

Q) Do you believe that it is detrimental to the art of magic to post "insider" information pertaining to the methods used to achieve a magical effect?

A) POLLING RESULTS: compiled by Hans Masing.(HCM100@PSUVM.psu.edu)
There were 48 responses within the allotted polling time. 35 were magicians, 13 were laypersons.

The average age of magicians in the poll is 32.2 (mean of 26).
The typical layperson is 31.7 (mean of 27).

For magicians, the average experience is 12.9 years, however there were a few outliers with more than 30 years that skewed the results. Eliminating these outliers, the average experience drops to 2 years.

Of the 35 magicians who responded, 46% of you say that methods should not be revealed, 43% say that they should, and 11% are undecided.

Not surprisingly, of the 13 laypeople who responded, 33% said that it is detrimental, 54% said it is not detrimental, with 13% undecided.

Q) What is the best kind of magic? Who is the best magician?

A) As in every other area of human endeavor, those with personality would prefer that the quality of magic were measured by personality. Others would prefer that it were measured by technique, creativity, success, humor or originality. Of course, it is always the mechanically adept that would prefer technique to be the ultimate criterion, the successful (and their lackeys) who would prefer that success was the measure, etc.

Perhaps we could take a break from the polarizing polemic, and recognize that making magic is a difficult business. Good illusions, good parlour and good close-up magic all have roughly equivalent wonder-generation. A good close-up artist will cause an exquisite level in wonder to a very few, while a good illusionist will create a more modest degree of wonder in a large crowd. If you want to optimize for money, of course you'd prefer the large crowd. If you want to optimize for entertainment, I'd guess parlour magic has got to be the winner. (From: Doug Peters)

Q) What advice do successful magicians have for aspiring magicians? A)

A)From: TELLER

1. Read everything about magic that you can get your hands on. My favorite basic texts (and I consult them to this day) are, THE AMATEUR

MAGICIAN'S HANDBOOK, and LEARN MAGIC by Henry Hay; CLASSIC SECRETS OF MAGIC by Bruce Elliot; THE ROYAL ROAD TO CARD MAGIC by Hugard and Braue; and THIRTEEN STEPS TO MENTALISM by Tony Corinda. Chase them down.

2. Learn to do the cut and restored rope. Polish it so that you can absolutely mystify people with it. This is a great, great trick that will stand you in good stead. I still use it in our show (in a new form).
3. Learn some version of the Cups and Balls (there is a wonderful one-cup routine in the Bruce Elliot book above). #2 and #3 formed the basis of the act I did for years.
4. Wait 10 years before doing the Linking Rings. It's overdone just at this time in our history.
5. Learn a powerful trick for the ending to your show. Warning: production tricks are really hard and eat up all your time folding silks and fake flowers.
6. Remember you are a kid. You look like a kid. Don't think you'll fool people into thinking you are an old sage from the Himalayas.
7. Do a short act. Don't worry about getting paid yet. Do six minutes that is wonderful and amazing. You will be able to handle longer stunts as the material develops.
8. The "Miser's Dream" is a really easy trick that's really hard to learn to do in a concise, entertaining way. Learn it. Learn to vary your methods. Learn to do it fast. Lots of coins, quickly, then a beat of comedy. Then more coins, then more comedy. Then an ending. Get hold of a videotape of Al Flosso doing the Miser's Dream. Watch how entertaining that old coot is.
9. Perform as often as you can. You will never get good until you stand on stage for a zillion hours and learn how to do it for real. It's nice to daydream about grand effects, but if you get out there -- by whatever means you have to use -- and perform, perform, perform, you will improve.
10. Behave towards your audience with sincere respect. You are not superior because you know a few tricks. They are the people you OWE a wonderful show to.
11. No matter how badly a show goes, remember it's just a show. Tomorrow there will be a different show and you can redeem yourself.
12. Make sure you remember all your ideas. Maybe some stink now only because you don't yet know enough to make them good. Ideas are precious. Keep notes.
13. Stick with it. If you truly love what you are doing, you will love rehearsing, laboring, getting stage fright, wasting money, even failing. Love magic and your audience so powerfully that you are locked in the jaws of its love. When the cub scouts throw things, love the pain; it will teach you. Stick with it. Getting good takes, not weeks, not months, but years. Years. Be prepared.

(From Ray Haddad)

Q: Can I make commercial posts in alt.magic?

A: Technically, you can make any post you wish in an alt.* heirarchy however as a courtesy to those who frequent the newsgroup, it is requested that you add the following to the beginning of a subject line:

AD:

If you are simply posting an advertisement, use the AD with a full colon after the letters.

FS:

If you are selling something, use this to indicate an item For Sale.

FA:

When you are posting an item for auction or link to an item for auction, use this to indicate that it is For Auction.

FT:

Use this if you are indicating an item that you are posting is For Trade.

If you use the full colon after the letter combination, those who want to filter out based on FA:, FS:, FT:, or AD: won't miss any posts with subject lines containing words that have those letter combinations without the full colon such as FAilure, soFT, ADmit, and others.

Example:

AD: Just Released - Porcelain Cups and Balls!

Q. Where can I find information on quick costume change methods?

A. One source is a book by:

Monique Monros, PO Box 2683, Toluca Lake, CA 91610,

Tel: (818)762-4755

E-Mail: MonicaMonros@webtv.net

<http://costumemagic.netfirms.com> and <http://www.magicmonros.com>)

Q. How do I make flash paper/cotton/string which I find to be expensive in magic stores?

A. Many answers posted to this question border on the sarcastic or extreme. The short answer is, "you don't"! Manufacturing of these products requires sophisticated methods, equipment and a sound knowledge of chemistry. Owing to the potential hazards to life and property, it is much more prudent and less expensive to buy it from a magic or special effects dealer. In some places a pyrotechnics license is needed to buy and use such products.

Q.I'm doing my Junior Research Paper on "The History of Magic in America". Can anyone point out any websites or books that may help me?

A. Here are few great resources.

(From Ray Haddad)

Magical Past-Times

<http://www.uelectric.com/pastimes/index.html>

The Little Egypt Gazette

<http://littleegyptmagic.com/magic.html>

Magic Audio Archives

<http://www.noonco.com/audio/>

The Learned Pig

<http://thelearnedpig.com.pa>

Magic! Archives

<http://www.questx.com/magic!/>

Jon Racherbaumer's Home Page

<http://www.jonracherbaumer.com/>

Aside from those pages, try the Library of Congress page and do a search on magic, magician, conjuror, Houdini, Fu Manchu, or other names you find from the above pages.

<http://www.loc.gov/>

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/rarebook/>

Don't overlook the ever expanding magic history resources found at Project Guttenburg.

<http://promo.net/pg/>

There's also the E-Text Repository at the University of Virginia.

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/uvaonline.html>

The University of Pennsylvania also has a nice collection of e-book texts that you can search from one source.

<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/>

This should get you started. Add this link for some interesting web pages that have historical sites sprinkled throughout.

<http://allmagicguide.com>

From: "Houdini 26" (houdini26@aol.com)

I would go with The Annals of Conjuring by Sidney Clarke, The Magician on the American Stage(?) by Charles Pecor, Illustrated History of Magic by Milbourne Christopher and Magic by David Price.

From: "sanscan" (sanscan@4dcomm.com)

And for the other magic.....

http://www.sideshow-freaks.com/sideshow_discussion1/default.htm

Due to the very large number of posts on our site(5000 approx) it was necessary to archive them, so after about 5 years of life, the Discussion Group looks sparse.

Thanks to the awesome work of "Sideshow Bennie," (www.sideshowbennie.com) most of the pertinent posts, comments, and stories are available. Whether you are new here or an old timer, please feel free to ask for information, "secrets," look for friends or history or just pull up a bale and share a jackpot. We'll make every effort to help. Many thanks to Joe Bates for the creation and maintenance of this site.

Q. What substitute can I use for roughing spray?

A. (From Ray Haddad)

There are three substitutes for roughing fluid that I have personally used and recommend.

The first is Testors Dullkote 1260 which can be bought in hobby shops where plastic models are sold. This is the same exact product that is sold in magic shops using a different label. The cost is about the same as magic shop prices so the label is the only difference. You can get about 10 decks with one can.

Krylon Matte Finish Clear is another perfect substitute. Any hardware store selling Krylon brand paints will have it. You can get as many as 25 decks from one can.

Photo Fixative Matte Finish Clear Spray in nearly any brand works great, too. Any photo shop, frame and picture mounting shop, craft shop, artist supply shop or hardware store should have some of this. The number of decks per can will depend on the size of the can. (In the UK, Letraset 107 (green can) has been suggested. - JP)

Some tips: Spray light coats, not heavy coats and wait until the paint is completely dry between coats. Have patience. If you touch the cards while the paint is wet, you'll leave fingerprints and smudge the ink on the cards. The ink dissolves when the paint is wet. If you wait, the ink will dry again and no damage will be done to the cards.

After dry, look carefully at each card to make sure the entire surface is evenly sprayed. The shiny finish on cards should not show through at all or the action will not be right.

Use only fresh, new decks when spraying the coat on. Any debris or dirt on the cards will be there for eternity if you spray over it.

The more care you take in preparation, the less fumbling you will have to do in performance.

(From John LeBlanc):

- > Dirt is the enemy of roughing fluid and when the cards do in fact
- > start to lose their "stick" , the trick that magic dealers don't
- > want you to know is to take a clean piece of felt and rub it one
- > way along the roughed part of the card. That WILL rejuvenate and
- > bring back the "stick".

Something else to consider: finger oils and sweat on the smooth side we transfer when spreading the card pairs is also an enemy of rough-smooth pairs. On every rough and smooth deck or set of cards I have, I also wipe the smooth sides with a polishing cloth with just a light mist of car wax. LIGHT mist. In fact, for the cloth I've used for the last two years, I've misted it once. The result is a deck that spreads like new deck of cards and I find I can handle them like a regular deck instead on holding them with Grasp Of Death Grip.

No, it's certainly not necessary, but it is a step I take to remove any chance that I flash the hidden card of the pair. And one less thing I need to worry about extends my lifespan.

Q. How does one invent magic tricks?

A. (The following posting from Mitch Leary may be of help. Mitch is

a most inventive thinker.)

This is it, the Master List of Magic Inventor's Principles. For the most part this list is primarily geared toward the inventor of close-up and parlour magic. Learn as many of these secrets as you can if you would like to invent your own tricks. The list is in no order but I'll be breaking the list into groups of ten or so principles.

Each of these principles has been carefully analyzed, each has been chosen because of its potential. I find it much easier to visualize each principle when associated with an actual trick. Example: If I were to explain a hinged box with a load chamber in the lid, that's hard to see in your mind. On the other hand, if I were to call it the Flip Over Rabbit Box Principle, and you knew what that was, then it will be much easier to convey the idea, extract the principle and use it to invent more tricks based on that principle.

This list is by no means the last word on magic principles, but it will put you well beyond the goal post in your knowledge of magic. There may be some overlapping of principles and ideas, but that comes with the territory. Example: I may simply list Magnetic Principles, then further down list the Enigma & Magnetic Thumb Tip Principles/Gimmicks.

That said, here is the list:

- Paddle Move
- Thumb Tip Principle/Gimmick
- 2-Card Monte Move
- Elastic Pull Principle
- Coin Slide Principle
- Mirror Glass Principle
- Devil's Hank Principle
- Zombie Gimmick/Principle
- Napkin Roll Switch
- Looped Coin Principle (Now-U-C-It gimmick)

- Bottomless Glass Gimmick
- Magnetic Principles
- Magician's Choice Force
- Flip Stick Move
- Mirror Box Principle
- Spirit Cloth Principle
- Tip Over Hat Loading Principle
- Chinese Compass Principle
- Dove Harness Principle

- Clear Forcing Bag Principle

- Cigarette Catcher Principle
- Coin Tray Principle
- Flash Silk Appearance Principle (in elbow)
- One-Ahead Principle
- Hooked "Hoo" Principle
- Double-Sided Tape Gimmick
- Color Block Principle
- Buddah Papers Principle
- Center Tear Principle
- Invisible Thread Gimmick/Principle
- Invisible Elastic Thread Principle

- Bill Tube Principle
- Dye Tube Principle
- Coin-Thru-Hank Principle
- Looped Hank Ball Principle
- Haunted Matchbox Principle
- Card Sword Principle
- Dye Box Principle
- Secret Markings Principles
- Rising Pencil Principle
- Marked By Sight, Touch, Weight, etc.

- Duplicate Object Principles
- Extra Piece Principle
- Okito Box Flipover Move/Principle
- Pull & Holdout Gimmicks/Principles
- Gaffed Envelope Principles
- Rising Ring on Wand Principle
- Invisible Wire Principles
- Hole in Back of Tube or Box
- Silt in Bottom of Hat Principle
- Rising Wand Principle (Elastic or thread)

- Cling Principles
- Rattle Box Principle
- Shell or False Front Principles
- Wonder Mouse Principle
- Clear Sewing Thread Gimmick
- Card Flap/Latex Dental Dam Gimmick
- Roller Blind Principle
- Identity Switch Principles
- Cylinder & Box Gaffing Principles
- Gaffed Wallet Principles

-Gaffed Wallet Principles Applied to Envelopes

-Card Forcing Principles

-Number Forcing Principles

-Hot Rod Gem Force Principle

-Card & Deck Switching Principles

-Locator Card Gimmicks/Principles

-Card To Envelope Principle

-Card To Wallet Principles

-Mis-calling Principle

-Three Card Monte Throw Principle

-Trick Deck Principles (Long & Short Cards, Rough & Smooth, Forcing Decks, etc.)

-Enigma & Magnetic Thumb Tip Gimmicks

-Mental Epic Principle

-Periscope Mirror Principle

-45 Degree Angle Mirror Principle

-Sphinx Table Mirror Principle

-Heavy Air Tube Principle

-Camouflage Principles

-Black Art Principle

-Small Scale Black Art Principle (black shirt, close-up mat)

-Animation Principles (wire, thread, elastic, rubber band, spring, magnet, etc.)

-Shadow Box Principle (silhouette trickery)

-Simulation Principle

-Simulated Form Beneath Hank

-Change Bag Principle

-Bill or Billet Switch with Thumb Tip

-Torn & Restored Principles

-Cut & Restored Principles

-Burnt & Restored Principles

-Destroyed & Restored Principles

-X-Ray Envelope Principle (concealed light source allows contents of envelope to be seen secretly)

-Rope Gaffing Principles (magnets, clasps, snaps)

-Under Arm Concealment Principle

-Plate Lifter Principle (secret tilting)

-Object on Wand Under Arm

-Devil Dollar Principle

-Dancing Handkerchief Principle (thread across stage)

-Full Wine Glass Production (rubber ball holds in liquid)

-Thread From Finger to Object Inside Coat

-Blackstone Birdcage Vanish Principle (Incredi-Go Gimmick)
-Tip Over Tray Principle (double sided suction cup holds object to tray--used with simlation beneath hank)

-Fickle Nickle Principle
-Foo Can Principle
-Bengal Net Principle
-Lion Cage Priciple
-Buddah Screen Principle
-Mentalist's Impression Clipboard
-Reel Utility Gimmick/Principle
-Gravity Wand Coin Producing Principle
-Rising Card Principles (usually thread)
-Tip Over Trunk or Box Principle

-Flip Over Rabbit Box Principle
-Egyptian Water Box Principle
-Devil's Cannister Principle
-Piece Simulated as Whole Object
-Ink To Goldfish Principle (colored celluloid insert)
-Milk Pitcher/Salt Shaker Principle (clear celluloid insert)
-Simulation of Weight, Substance, Presence, Sound, Lack of Weight, etc.
-Simulation to Fool Vision, Hearing, Touch
-Bevel & Hollow Base Principles (mostly major illusions)
-Object Made of Different Material Than is Obvious (sponge, rubber, color copy as real object, foam rubber, balsa, etc)

-Slush Powder Principle
-Genii Tube Principle
-Drumhead Tube Principle
-Phantom Tube Principle
-Large Dye Tube Pinciple
-Hindu Beads Principle
-Block-O Principle
-Deck Shell Principle
-Mirror in Clear Tube Principle
-Crystal Silk Chamber Principle

-Topit Principle
-Servante Principles (behind table or chair, inside pants)
-Blackstone Knife-Thru-Coat Principle
-Raven & Bat Gimmicks/Principles
-Flesh Art Principle (China Change, etc)
-Long Thread Across Stage Animator
-Imp Bottle Principle (rod weight)

- Double-Ended Billet Switching Wand Principle
- Nesting Principles (real object nests inside shell, two or more objects held as one, etc.)
- Chinese Prayer Vase Principle (vase, little rubber ball & rope)

- Paul Harris "Peeler" Principle
- Clip-Clip Want-Ad Principle
- Tape Palming Principle
- Secret Adhesive Principles
- Back-Palming Principle
- Down's Palm Principle
- Coin Switches (with coins and other objects)
- Dirty Hands Gag Principle (inside-out cloth)
- Camouflage Ring (material glued to bottom of ring matches the mat it's setting on)
- Sankey's "Paper-Clipped" Card Switch (or done with clipped beneath writing pen pocket clip)

- Ash Revelation on Arm or Paper (white crayon, soap or wax message invisible on paper until ashes are rubbed across it)
- Book & Magazine Test Principles
- Trick & Legitimate Blindfold Principles
- Billet Knife or Pencil Injection Principles
- Principles of Reading Sealed Messages
- Bottomless Coin Envelope (object or message drops into hand then envelope is burnt)
- Thumb Tip in Coin Envelope (delivers or retrieves slip of paper in envelope)
- Double Compartment Envelope (for either-or predictions)
- Secret Slit in Envelope (allows you to secretly insert prediction, signed card, message written after the fact, or remove same).

Well kids, this list should keep you busy for some time to come.

Enjoy!

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Although the list is in no order I cannot overstate the importance of the first 30 principles. I listed them first because for me they have been the most fertile. If you can only afford to buy those tricks and learn those principles you'll have enough material to play with for decades. Those principles are pregnant with possibilities for the magic inventor workshop tinkerer.

Look at this list as an addendum to Fitzkee's most marvelous book, THE TRICK BRAIN. That's what I had in mind when I wrote it. The list may look simple, but it took me decades buying tricks and collecting magic knowledge of learning to prepare it. It is, hands down, the most important thing I've ever contributed to alt.magic and alt.magic.secrets.

My advice to you would be to get a large shoebox or two and start throwing random items inside it. Then, when the box is fairly full sit down at your kitchen table with the list of Magic Inventor's Principles and Fitzkee's book and begin to toss around ideas inside your head and try to invent magic tricks. Here are some items that you'll want to have in the box:

MAGIC INVENTOR'S KIT

- Regular Playing Cards (several decks)
- Pinochle Decks
- Double-Sided Scotch Tape
- Regular Scotch Tape
- Elmer's Glue
- Small Boxes of Wooden Matches
- Books of Paper Matches
- Clear Sewing Thread
- Drinking Straws
- Black Elastic Cord
- Latex Dental Dams
- Heavy Back Carpet Thread
- Soft Cotton Rope
- Blank White Index Cards
- Colored Index Cards
- Ruler (preferably an Architect's Scale)
- Cheap Business Card Wallet
- Drawing Paper & Pencil (graph paper)
- Your own Inventor's Notebook (college rule)

- Thin Cardboard or Card Stock
- Colored Card Stock
- Scissors
- Cigarettes
- Post-It Notes (various colors)
- Opaque Handkerchief
- Colored Markers
- Rubber Bands (plain & various colors)
- Exacto Knife & Extra Blades
- Chop Sticks (square & round)
- Sand Paper

- Small Metal Rings
- Thin Steel Piano Wire
- Bell Wire
- Copy of the book GETTING STARTED IN ELECTRONICS, available at Radio Shack. At the very least learn how to make a complete circuit.

- Radio Shack Catalog
- Heat Shrink Tubing
- Ball Bearings
- Empty Playing Card Boxes
- Clear Wide Mailing Tape
- Coat Hangers
- Empty Soup Can
- PVC Pipe & Couplings
- Hacksaw Blade
- Needle-Nose Pliers
- Solder
- Black Construction Paper
- Kite String & Colored Cord
- Thin Clear Fishing Line
- Arts & Crafts catalog
- Hobby Shop Catalog
- Aluminum Foil
- Sharp Knife

- Balloons, balloons, balloons
- Balloons of all sorts
- Plastic Drinking Glass
- Silver Adhesive Muffler Tape
- Mylar Film, Adhesive & Non-Adhesive
- Popsickle Sticks (great for paddle tricks)
- Clear Acetate Paper
- Colored Pencils
- Regular Pensils
- Small Fishing Weights
- Adhesives & Glues of All Sorts
- Coins, Washers & Poker Chips
- Small Blocks of Wood, Scraps, etc.
- Misc, Plastic Boxes
- Empty Pill Bottles, Labels Removed
- Scraps of Metal
- Beads
- Magnets, magnets, magnets. All sorts of magnets and thin magnetic sheeting for making magnetic cards, etc.

- Dollar bills

- Small Liquor Bottles
- Old Keys
- Small DC Motors
- Batteries
- Mirrors, mirrors, mirrors
- Small Compasses
- Pipes & Tubes, Scrap
- Rods, dowels, wires
- Small Switches
- Music Box Mechanism
- Small Rubber Tubing & Hoses of various lengths & sizes

- Paper Sacks
- Dictionary
- Mousetraps
- Small Empty Containers
- Springs
- Pen Light
- Bobbie Pins

You get the idea, keep adding your own items.

Next, grab an item and ask "How can I gaff this?" or "How can I turn this into a magic trick?" The best tricks are done with everyday objects that everyone recognizes. The next time your wife drags you to a store where you don't want to be learn to exploit the situation.

Look at the various objects on the shelves and hanging from the walls and ask yourself how this object could be used for magical purposes. "Can I make a trick out of this or can I use it to make some sort of new gimmick or gadget?" Women's products are full of unexplored territory, few men ever take the time to look at these things in new ways. Look at an object but think something else. Example: Thin sponge rollers could be made into fake cigarettes, batteries, Chapstick which could be loaded into a thumb tip. A sanding block, normally used for a manicure, is positively great for making your own gaffed playing cards, the ink sands right off. I sand the air-cushioned finish off the back edges of high value playing cards, then use the deck to cheat at card games. No one would dream of this in a million years.

Buy two of the same object, then use the second one to make gimmicks and gaffs for the first object. Example: You buy two bottles of Coke.

Cut the neck off of the second one to make a Bottle-Thru-Table gimmick. Or cut the second one in half lengthwise to make a shell

for the other one.

Buy yourself a book or two on creative thinking, these books will help you learn how to think like a genius. Apply what you learn, make it a habit to be constantly inventing. Look at objects in a whole new way.

Ask yourself how someone else would look at the same problem. Creativity is juxtaposing unlikely information. Think up more than one answer for each problem you're working on. What if the object were made of a different material? You have to give your mind something to chew on.

Emergency substitutes for regular Invisible Thread:

-Black Fishnet Stockings. This is where your magic dealer extracts it from. One \$3.00 pair of Fishnet Stockings will produce about \$800.00 worth of retail IT. Use a crochet needle to extract--and this is why it retails for eight hundred bucks because almost nobody knows how to do this correctly.

-Danskins Leotards. These are expensive but jam packed with Invisible Thread.

-UN-waxed Dental Floss. Pain-in-the-ass to unwind, but in a pinch it will yield as much IT as you need. Million dollar tip: Take a black magic marker and make dashes along the white thread. This breaks up the contrast and makes it very hard for the eye to follow (it's an old booby-trapper's trick for hiding trip lines).

-Kevlar Fishing Line. I have never tried getting IT from this source, but some say it works. Kevlar is stronger than standard IT sources.

-Women's Pantyhose. You can extract individual fibers from women's pantyhose. You've got to watch your lighting a lot more carefully than with most IT, this source has a tendency to shine under lighting. When using IT in general you should never have lighting behind or directly above your performing area.

-Invisible Elastic Thread. This stuff can also be extracted from pantyhose. The waistband and toe contain the most. Use a safety pin to snag the individual fibers. Get the Michael Ammar Invisible Thread tapes, he gives explicit details on doing this.
for IT

II. MAGICAL EVENTS

Send your list of ongoing magical events including: brief description, location, cost, and admission requirements to jpoulter@islandnet.com
Upcoming events and one time showings merit separate postings in the alt.magic newsgroup and should not form part of the FAQ.

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Clubs for magic:

Magic Castle
Hollywood, CA

<http://www.magiccastle.org>

This is a members only magic club. Probably the best place to watch magic since they have 3 different magic venues, large stage, platform and close-up.

Phone (213) 851-3313 for current admission requirements of visit the web site listed above.

Magic Island
Houston, TX
(713) 526-2442

Features include dinner, a live stage show with two acts, and two close up shows. Without a tourist coupon, prices vary, depending on what you order. \$50 per person is probably a reasonable minimum estimate, but they may have gone up. The food was good, and the entertainment ranged from fair to excellent.

Other places to see magic, or meet with fellow magicians:

New York

Cafe Edison

"The New York Magic Table" meets daily, M-F (except Wed.), from 12 noon to 2 p.m. in the cafe of the Hotel Edison, 228 West 47th Street, off Broadway, in New York City. Visiting magicians are welcome.

Reuben's - Now extinct. Replaced by:

Maui Tacos, 330 Fifth Ave. (at 32nd Street) Saturdays, 2 - 5 p.m

Colorado

Tower Magic Bar -- Closed April 12, 2003.

Massachusetts

Cambridge (near Bah-stan)

The guys from the Green Street Grill have been performing in a new venue since June 3/02, every Tuesday: the Comedy Studio inside the Hong Kong Restaurant in Harvard Square (1236 Massachusetts Ave.)

Close-up starts at 7:00 p.m., Stage at 8:00 p.m.

Performers include: Steve Kradolfer, Jon Stetson, Mike Bent, David Oliver, Alexander, Bob Riordan Eric Rochelle and guest appearances by some of the best names in magic.

Phone (617)661-6507 for reservations.

More details at: <http://www.mysterylounge.com/>

Theatre:

Monday Night Magic

New York, NY

NEW LOCATION:

The SoHo Playhouse

15 Vandam Street, NYC

One Block North of Spring, Just West of 6th Avenue

24 hr. Hotline: (212) 615-6432

MNM Production Office: (718) 575-1349

Mon - Fri (10 AM - 6 PM) Sat (12 PM - 3 PM) Sun (12 PM - 3 PM)

We Have Shows Every Monday at 8 PM!

Contact us at Monday Night Magic regarding questions about the show or to book some of your favorite performers from Monday Night Magic for an upcoming event.

Email to: info@magicalnights.com

Web site: www.MondayNightMagic.com

Le Grand David and His Own Spectacular Magic Company

286 Cabot St. (Theater)

Beverly, MA 01915

Tel: (987) 927-3677

This world-renowned magic company has been enchanting audiences for over 20 years in downtown Beverly! Le Grand David's 30 member resident

company perform on weekends in two beautifully restored theatres —

The Cabot and The Larcom. Experience what Yankee Magazine calls "The Best Magic Show in the World." A delight for children of all ages!

In Las Vegas NV:

The Las Vegas magicians' round table is held on Wednesday nights. You never know who will show up in the land of magic. All magicians are welcome. Just call any of the magic shops when you're there and they'll fill you in on location and time and "dark" nights.

There are many magic shows in Las Vegas.

* N.B. Shows are subject to change.* Check with sites below or on arrival in Las Vegas to find out what nights are "dark".

Possible sources of info for who is playing currently in Las Vegas may be found at:

<http://www.vegas.com/shows/?f=m1hp&t=mshows>

<http://www.lvol.com/lvolog/lvshows.html>

(These sites may be outdated but are the latest ones checked.)

Some long-running shows are:

AFTERNOONS

Illusionary Magic of Rick Thomas - 2 & 4 pm,(Dark Sun.), Stardust.

Mac King Comedy Magic Show - Harrah's.

Ronn Lucas and Friends (Vent) - The Man Who Can Make Anything Talk - Rio.

EVENINGS:

Amazing Johnathan - Sahara (Starting May 6, 2005)

Dr. Scott's Outrageous Comedy Hypnosis Show. Monday nights - Riviera.

Jayden LaCross - TGI Fridays (Wednesdays - Sundays).

Jamie Porter's Radio Side Show - every Saturday @ 5 am, KLAV FM 1230.

La Femme - Various magicians - MGM Grand.

Lance Burton, Master Magician - Lance Burton Theater - Monte Carlo.

Larry G. Jones - Man of 1002 Voices - Plaza Hotel & Casino (6 pm).

Michael Close - Houdini's Lounge - Monte Carlo, Tuesday - Thursday.

Outback Steakhouse (Green Valley) - Erik Allan, Friday & Saturday.

Penn & Teller - Samba Theatre - Rio.

Richard Muna & Co. - Fox City Show - Tropics Lounge, Tropicana.

Scott Lewis (Hypnotist) "Mindblowers" - Riviera's Le Bistro Theatre

11:30 p.m. Mondays.

Showgirls of Magic - San Remo.

Simon Winthrop - Casino Royal.

World's Greatest Magicians - Greek Isles Hotel.

In Reno, NV:

Kalin, Jinger - Reno Hilton

Historical Sites.

From: "Myrna T. Aylett" [maylett@cgocable.net]

Newsgroups: alt.magic.history

Because magic has such a grand and glorious history, magic museums have been cropping up -- and are worth a visit if you're in town.

The Houdini Historical Center (Appleton, Wisconsin, 920-733-8445, www.foxvalleyhistory.org) houses the largest collection of Houdini memorabilia for public viewing. You can see all manner of Houdini-owned straightjackets, handcuffs, and milk-can escapes, plus videos of his performances. You can even hear the only existing recording of his voice. The Center also makes a resource library available for serious students.

The American Museum of Magic is in Marshall, Michigan (616-781-7666). Founded by avid magic collectors Bob and Elaine Lund, this museum is open by appointment only. It's the home to over 12,000 books, 40,000 negatives, 500 antique magic sets, and original magic equipment from Houdini's and Blackstone's show.

Finally, there's The Magic and Movie Hall of Fame in the American capital of magic -- Las Vegas, Nevada (702-737-1343). This 20,000 square-foot museum houses memorabilia collections that pertain to magic, ventriloquism, automata (mechanical dummies), and movies -- a collection worth \$4.5 million. Many of the pieces on display were donated by celebrities, including Shari Lewis and Siegfried & Roy.

Paris, France

Message from Yosi Notkowitz (Israel)

I just returned from Paris-France. There I visited a small & nice magic museum: In the museum: old magic tricks exhibition, posters, magic items to be tried, magic show, a small magic shop.

Opening time: on Sunday, Wednesday, Saturday between 14.00-19.00.

Metro 1, St Paul station.

Musee Magie

11 rue St Paul

75004 Paris, France

tel 01 42 72 13 26

The museum belongs to George Proust and there is also a magic shop included in the museum, with a section for serious magicians.

III. MAGIC ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations exist to promote magic and further its development. Each produces a magazine and sponsors local club meetings.

International Brotherhood of Magicians
11155C South Towne Square
St. Louis, MO 63123-7823
Tel. (314) 845-9200
Fax. (314) 845-9220
E-mail: no1inMagic@aol.com
WWW: <http://www.magician.org>

Society of American Magicians
Richard Blowers, National Administrator
P.O. Box 510260
St. Louis MO 63151
(314) 846-5659
E-mail: rmblowers@aol.com
WWW: <http://www.magicsam.com>

Magic Clubs/Societies

France:
Societe francaise de Prestidigitation
Tel +33 (0) 4 93 60 83 38
Fax +33 (0) 4 93 65 53 30
E-mail : sfp@francemagie.com

UK:

The following web site lists magic clubs in the United Kingdom:
<http://www.repromagic.co.uk/society.html>

The Magic Circle (not to be confused with The British Ring)
The Magic Circle is located in central London, England. Further information may be obtained from their web site:
www.themagiccircle.co.uk

IV. ELECTRONIC MAGIC

There are hundreds (thousands ?) of magic related Web sites and most of them have pointers to other magic sites. Here are a few to get you started:

Robinson Wizard's All Magic Guide
<http://allmagicguide.com>

The Linking Page
<http://www.linkingpage.com>

Magic New Zealand e-zine

This FREE electronic newsletter is aimed at Kiwi and overseas magicians who are interested in what is happening in New Zealand and internationally.

The Magic New Zealand E-zine encompasses the latest news items from around the world, coming lectures, conventions, touring magic shows, magic TV shows, notification of unwell magicians and recent bereavements.

To subscribe or unsubscribe from the Magic New Zealand e-zine:
<http://www.watson.co.nz/ezine.html>

MagicNZ Web Ring - www.magic.gen.nz

The MagicNZ Web Ring, features New Zealand magic organizations and New Zealand resident and internationally based Kiwi magicians.

Magic news in the U.K.

<http://www.magicweek.co.uk/>

World of Illusion CD-ROM is published by Alan Ran Multimedia Group
Contact Ed Pierce edpierce@interaccess.com

V. COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

Guy Savoie wrote in message...

"Someone (and forgive me, there are so many good people around here) suggested a while back picking up a copy of the Intellectual Property version of the Nutshell series of books. My wife works at a college

with a full law program, so this book was in stock in their bookstore.

"Frankly, it's great. It is written in basic legalese, so it is still understandable. :-) This book goes a LONG way to explain fair use and what might constitute copyright infringement.

"One of the tests for fair use that I particularly relate to is if the copy is designed to serve as a functional duplicate, it might not be covered under fair use. So, if you were using a copy to illustrate a point on, say various versions of the egg bag, it would be fair use. But, if the basic function of a section of Tarbell is to teach a specific trick, and the scanned copy serves the exact same function, well, it might be infringement. There are lots of other tests, but this one helps me to keep it straight in MY head.

"The funny part is, if he had asked for help in constructing a Malini Egg Bag, he probably would have gotten some good references. Instead, he asked us to scan out of a book that WE bought. No thanks."

From: Ray Haddad (rhaddad@iexpress.net.au)
Subject: Copyright Information for U.S. Copyrights
Date: Fri, 05 Nov 1999 18:59:34 +0800

The US Copyright laws have been in a state of flux until recently and with the inception of GATT and NAFTA, have solidified significantly. Most countries worldwide have adapted US style laws to best suit their needs and a list of countries who recognize and defend US Copyrights are located at this site:

<http://www.loc.gov/copyright/>

There is also lots of information there for you to browse. The FAQ is particularly interesting since it answers all of the questions that have been posed during a recent thread on copyrighting. The FAQ can be found at:

<http://www.loc.gov/copyright/faq.html>

Regarding the question of legal court documents, here is what is said in the FAQ:

14. Why should I register my work if copyright protection is automatic?

Registration is recommended for a number of reasons. Many choose to

register their works because they wish to have the facts of their copyright on the public record and have a certificate of registration.

Registered works may be eligible for statutory damages and attorney's fees in successful litigation. Finally, if registration occurs within five years of publication, it is considered prima facie evidence in a court of law. See Circular 1, section Copyright Registration and Circular 38b on non-U.S. works.

Basically, you will find that the moment you create the work it is copyrighted by the author. That includes even this message to you all.

You may quote it for the purpose of clarification but you may not

publish it without permission. That's the legality of copyright. On the other hand, it is not worth my while to pursue you if you do publish what I just wrote here. You have to value your work before you decide what to do.

There are several ways to establish a publication date for legal means and none of them include mailing them to yourself. Read the information in the copyright basics page at:

<http://www.loc.gov/copyright/circs/circ1.html>

Information there will tell you what forms and fees are required and how much you can quote without permission from the author. They explain that ideas and concepts can't be copyrighted but if they have drawings and plans with them, they are. This is contrary to information that has been posted here. Refer to the section on what is and is not copyrightable for that information on this page.

Fees have gone up to \$30.00 for filing. Filing is not required for a copyright but it will prove beyond a doubt when you filed if it is in the Library of Congress. If you have to prove your date of copyright, it can be the best \$30.00 you have ever spent. I personally hold more than 100 copyrights but I have never had to defend even one. Why? Because I don't mind being quoted and most authors who do quote me, contact me for permission which I freely grant.

For information on patents (in USA) see:

<http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/doc/general/>

In part, it says:

The right conferred by the patent grant is, in the language of the statute and of the grant itself, "the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling" the invention in the United States or "importing" the invention into the United States.

What is granted is not the right to make, use, offer for sale, sell or import, but the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, selling or importing the invention. Once a patent is issued, the patentee must enforce the patent without aid of the USPTO.
