



TURNING THE CUPS

The props: Three cups

The magic: You leave the cups right side up—your friend can't do it!

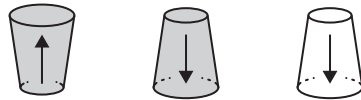


- Put three cups in front of you as shown, with the middle cup facing up and the other two facing down.



- Tell a friend, "This trick is a study in observation. Watch closely as I turn two cups at a time. After I turn the cups three times, all the cups will be face up. Then you can try."

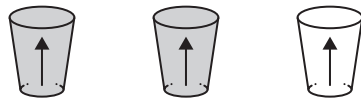
- Then turn over the two cups on the left, one in each hand. They'll look like this:



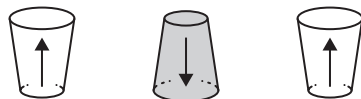
- Then turn over the two outside cups.



- Turn over the two left cups again. All three cups will be facing up.



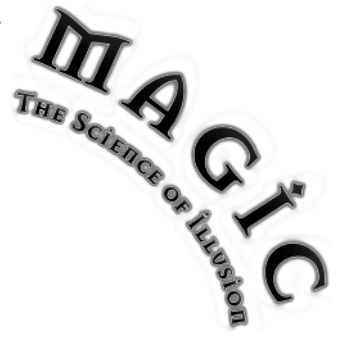
- Tell your friend, "Now you try. Remember the order I did it in," and casually turn the middle cup *upside down* and don't draw attention to it. (In this trick, all cups will end up the way the middle cup starts.)



- After they've tried and failed, say, "I'll show you again." Turn the middle cup right side up, and tell them, "Pay more attention this time."

Look on the next page to find out why this trick works!





THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE MAGIC

Why does it matter how the cups are set up?



This trick has two ways to set up the cups: one that works and one that sets people up for failure. And hardly anyone notices the difference.



Setting the cups up for success has the middle cup turned up.



You're turning the cups two at a time, one in each hand. After you follow the steps, you've turned the middle cup twice (down and back up again), the left cup three times (up, down and up again), and the right cup once (up). All three cups are turned up.



When the cups are set up for failure, that same sequence will turn all three cups down.



The middle cup is turned twice (up and down), the left cup is turned three times (down, up and down again), and the right cup is turned once, ending upside down. As long as you're turning two cups at a time, you'll never get all three cups right side up from the starting position for failure.



What may be most surprising about this trick is that most people don't notice the two different setups. People get too caught up in the act of turning the cups over. As a magician, you can take advantage of what people don't see.



**Real magicians learn their tricks by heart,
so practice this trick to improve your performance.**

