

# Three Magic Tricks Your Kids Will Love Performing

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Do your kids love to perform and put on a show?

Are they looking for a way to amaze their friends or cool act for the school talent show?

Abracadabra! The answer is to stage a magic show.

In this article, I'll show you how your kids can **perform three quick tricks that will impress any audience**, silence all skeptics and thrill your budding young magicians.



## Why a Magic Show?

Kids love magic.

All children go through a “[magic](#)” phase. Perhaps you bought children a [magic kit](#) that they played with enthusiastically for a day or so before getting frustrated and hiding it away in the closet where it now sits, forgotten.

Maybe they [put on a show](#) for you and your spouse. You sat politely and applauded... then encouraged them to take a closer look at a career in accounting.

I'm a professional magician.

I've done hundreds of shows for thousands of children and I'm saying you—yes YOU and your children—can **put on a magic show that's fun for them, helps hone memorization skills, emphasizes the value of practice and actually amazes your audience!**

I'll show you how. It's easy—no magic wand required.

## The Plan

You and your child are going to **put on a short and simple magic show together**. It will be themed, high-energy and entertaining.

You'll wow your audience, whether it's grandma and a few friends in your living room or a large crowd filling an auditorium. Your young magician and you, the lovely assistant, will become a power combo that has everyone asking, "No, really, *HOW* did you do that?"

And you'll spend less than \$20.00 for materials.

This magic routine is designed to be fun and have a huge payoff at the end—a floating ghost!



Amaze your audience with a ghost that floats.

## You Will Need

- A cloth napkin 1' x 1' (30 cm x 30 cm) in size with hemmed edges
- A piece of heavy wire 2½" (6.5 cm) in length (a bit from a wire hanger works well)
- 2 matching coffee cans 10.5 oz (310 ml) in size
- Can opener
- Black foam board at least 1' x 1' (30 cm x 30 cm) in size
- White glue
- 2" (5 cm) Styrofoam ball
- 3 black craft balls

- 5 straight pins
- 2 white identical cloth “singles,” 18” x 21” (45 cm x 53 cm) in size

### Preparation Time

10-30 minutes (mostly some simple cutting with scissors and making a ghost)

### Activity Time

5-10 minutes (The show itself is designed to be short. If you were watching a neighbor’s child put on a show, wouldn’t you like it to be quick and to the point?)

### Location

Anywhere (You can do this in your home, at grandma’s house or at a local [talent show](#). All you need is a table to place your props upon.)

### #1: Magic Show Summary

Here’s a quick description of what your magic show will look like to the audience:

The dashing young magician (your child) and the lovely assistant (that’s you—mom or dad) enter the stage, ready to save the day. You’ve heard that there’s a pesky, peevish poltergeist around that needs some policing.



Our magician is now ready for the stage! Image source: iStockPhoto.

The magician will make a trap and capture the invisible ghost. The audience will be in awe when they see the trap magically fill as the ghost enters.

The benevolent magician gives the ghost its very own home (a can) and something to wear (a white handkerchief).

The magician uses great powers of persuasion to encourage the ghost to leave its home and make itself visible. Listen to the crowd gasp in disbelief when an ordinary, flat cloth is draped over the ghost, revealing its shape and proving its existence.

As a finale, the magician will show the ghost floating through the air with nothing holding it from below or suspending it from above, to the excitement and applause of all onlookers.

The magical duo will take a bow and revel in the success of the show.

## #2: Prepare Your Magical Props

Your incredible floating ghost magic show will take a little bit of simple preparation and practice to pull off, but the results will be astounding.

In this section, I'll reveal the secrets behind the magic tricks you'll perform, so it's important to take the [magician's oath of secrecy](#) before reading any further:

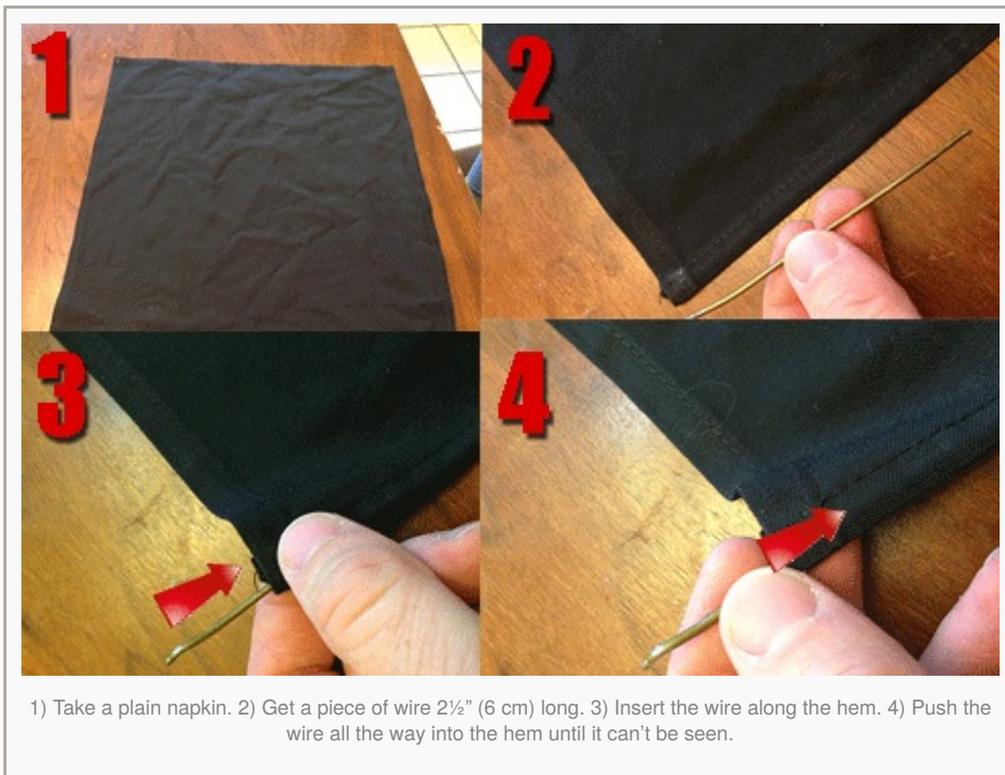


“As a magician I promise never to reveal the secret of any illusion to a non-magician, unless that one swears to uphold the Magician’s Oath in turn. I promise never to perform any illusion for any non-magician without first practicing the effect until I can perform it well enough to maintain the illusion of magic.”

Let’s make some magic...

### First, Make a Ghost Trap

A cloth napkin with hemmed edges will become your trap. Slip a 2.5" (6 cm) length of heavy wire (you could use a piece of a coat hanger) into one side, making it stiff along that corner.



## Second, Make Your Ghost's House

Wash out an empty 10.5 oz (310 ml) coffee can. (It can be a different size can or even a box, as long as it has double lids and looks the same with either end up.)

**Remove the bottom with a can opener and take off the label.** If the label is printed directly onto the can, either spray paint the can or cover it with paper. You don't want any words or images with a distinct top and bottom to show.



**Trace the end of the can onto your black foam board. Cut out the circle and place it in the middle of the can. Use a few drops of white glue on the side to hold it in place.**

**Place the lid from a second, identical can on the open side** of your modified can.



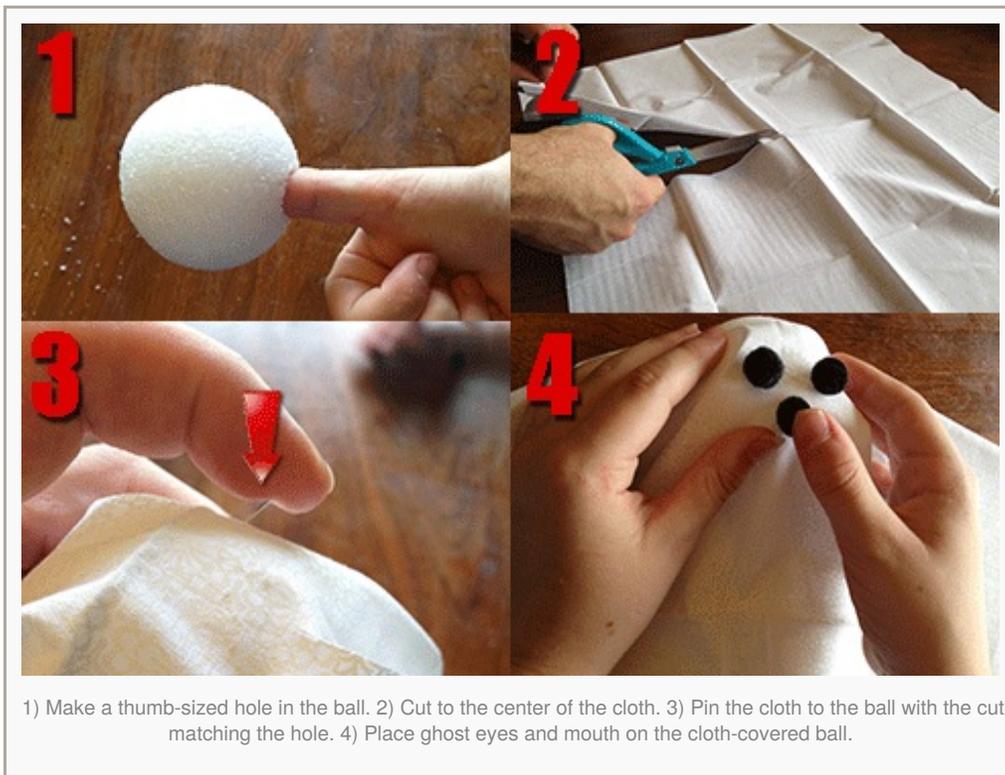
Both lids on top and bottom make it impossible to tell which side is up!

Your finished ghost home should look like the image above—an empty can with lids on the top and the bottom.

### **Third, Make Your Floating Ghost**

**Have your child dig into the Styrofoam ball with his or her thumb until it can rest inside snugly** (you may need to dig it out a bit with a pencil).

You should have two identical white cloths. **Cut one white cloth from the middle of one of its sides to the center of the square or rectangle** (see photo #2).

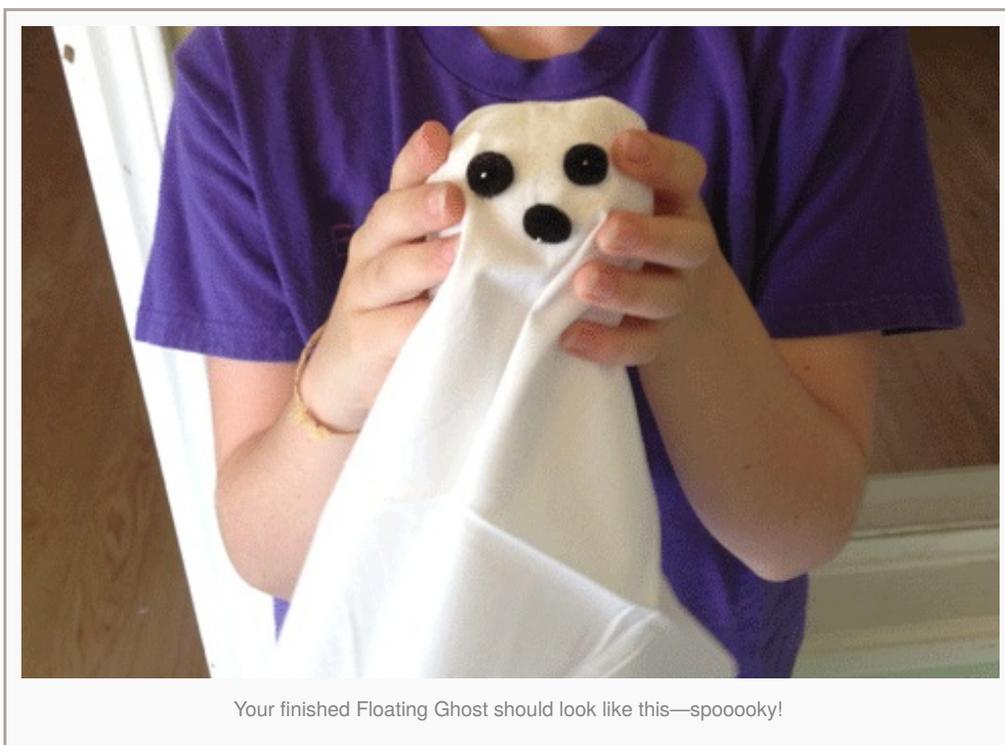


**Drape the cloth over the ball** so that the cut in the fabric gives access to the thumbhole in the ball.

**Place two straight pins on top** to hold the cloth in place.

**Use a bit of glue to stick the black balls on the front, making the ghost's face**. Push a straight pin through each of the black balls to keep them from falling off.

Make sure none of the pins poke into the thumbhole—ouch!



**Have your little magician practice making your ghost “float”** by placing a thumb in the hidden thumbhole and

lifting all of the other fingers away from the ghost. Use a mirror to make sure it looks convincing.

Your props are ready for the show.

It's a good idea to **do a dress rehearsal to make sure everything is in place** and magicians know their cues before the performance.

Ready?

### #3: It's Showtime!

#### *Trick #1: The Ghost Trap*

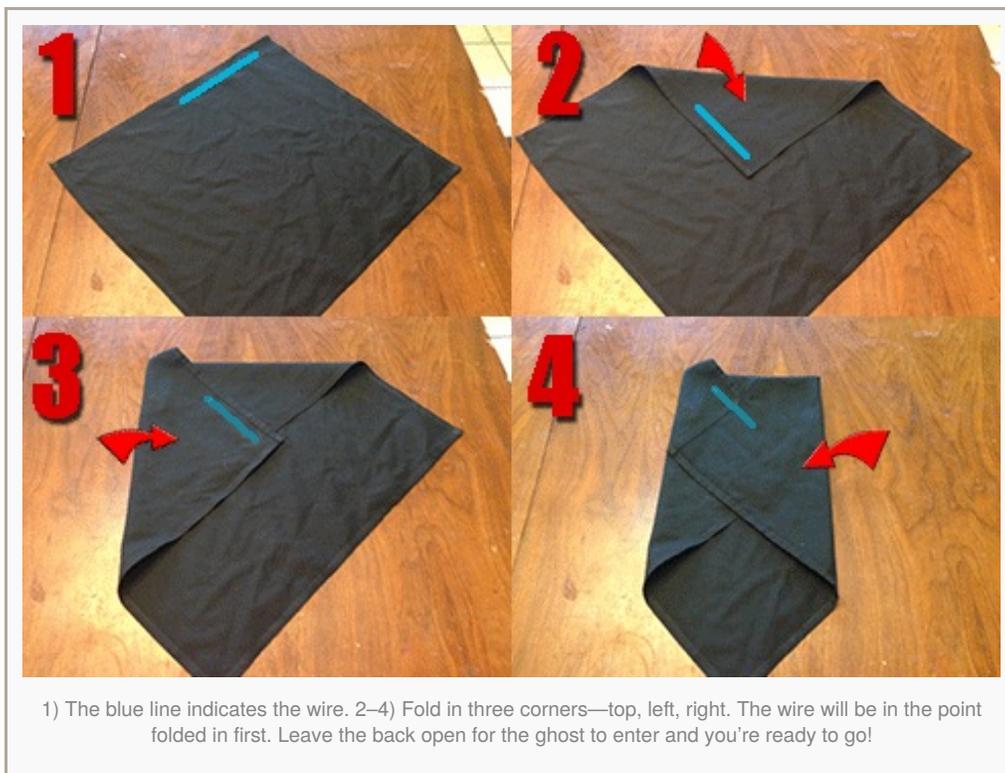
**The Effect:** A simple cloth napkin fills with a mysterious presence!

**The Performance:** Tell the audience that there is a ghost in the room that needs to be caught, just like in [Ghostbusters!](#)

It's fun to **have the audience name the ghost first**. Call out suggestions. If you offer the name "[Casper](#)," they'll almost always choose it.

**Tell the crowd you intend to trap Casper** with this (hold up the napkin). Spread the napkin flat on the table in a diamond shape with the wire end furthest from you (the wire is indicated in the photos below by the blue line).

**Tell the audience you're creating the trap for the ghost** by folding the top, left, then right sides leaving the back toward you open (see illustrations) for the ghost to enter.



Your trap is set. Now have a blast catching the ghost. You and your child should **run about the audience pretending to chase the ghost toward the trap**.

When one of you finally "catches" the invisible specter, hold it in your hand and then insert it into the opening at the back of the ghost trap.

As you do, lift up the wire end inside the trap. Remove your hand and close the back flap. Place your hand on top of the trap. The wire will make a tent pole, creating the illusion of a form trapped inside the cloth.



Let your hand rock in slow circles to show the movement of the ghost in the trap. Prove something in is in there!

Now lift the trap and with a fling, snap it open to reveal the cloth is empty!

Oooh—magic!

You've just made a ghost appear in a trap and just as mysteriously disappear! You've also set up the next trick, Ghost in a Can.

### ***Trick #2: Ghost in a Can***

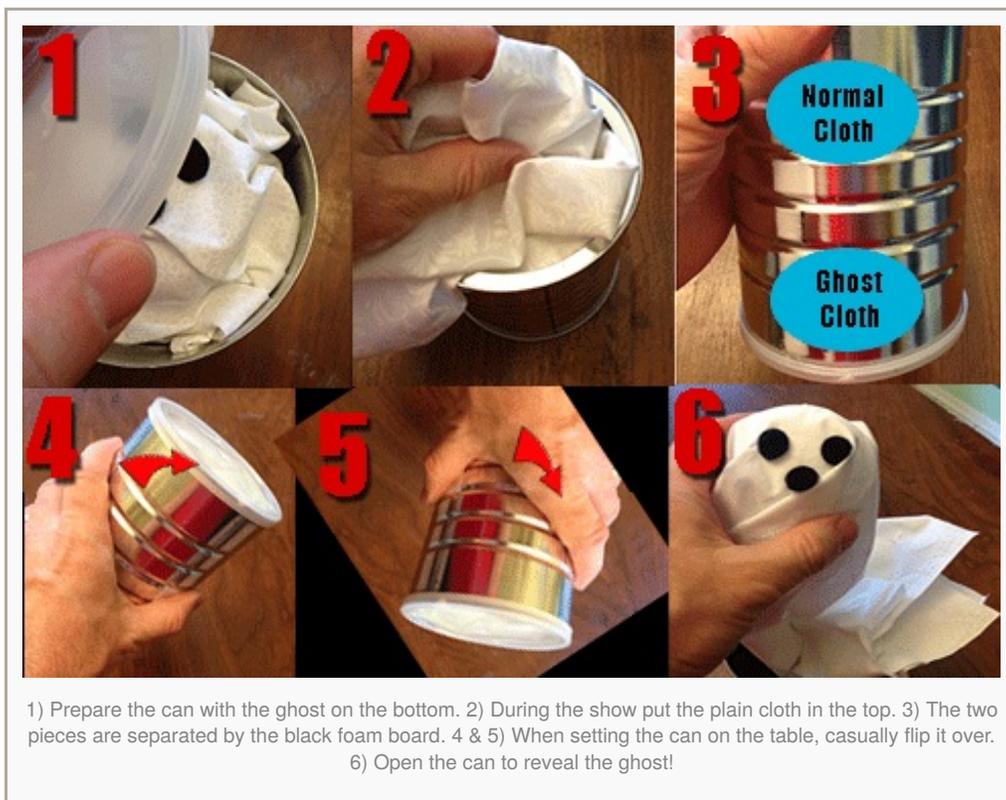
**The Effect:** A simple white cloth becomes a ghost right before your eyes!

**The Performance:** Tell the audience ghosts love napkins, blankets or anything to hide their real form. That's how you were able to trap it earlier.

Now you want to see if you can **get the ghost to reveal its true self.**

Hold up the can you prepared earlier. **Show the audience that the can is empty** and call out to Casper, asking him to get inside. The little magician should **hold up the white cloth to show that it is flat and empty** and then **stuff it into the can and replace the lid.**

Now have your child **say some magic words** and try to persuade the ghost to show itself.



While everyone is watching your child making up the silliest words possible you (the lovely assistant) **put the can down, secretly flipping it to the other side.**

Don't make a big deal out of this. It's a simple, natural gesture and no one will notice unless you call attention to it.

When the magician's magical, persuasive incantations are complete, **open the can to reveal the cloth has become a full-fledged ghost!**

Ta-dahhhhhh!

### ***Trick # 3: The Levitating Ghost***

Few things capture people's imagination more than [levitation](#). It's often what comes to mind when you discuss REALLY amazing magic. You're about to perform a classic act of levitation!

**The Effect:** A small ghost floats right before the audience's eyes.

**The Performance:** Here's your child's chance to REALLY shine.

Give your child the ghost while you **explain to the audience that this ghost is shy**, but wants to do something special, if you can all help encourage him.

**Have audience start chanting, "Casper... Casper... Casper!"** (Or whichever name was chosen in the beginning). This serves two purposes. One, it will get the audience engaged and excited that something big is about to happen. Two, it will hide the sound of your child secretly inserting his or her thumb into the Styrofoam.

The key to this trick is to not get too crazy. **Move your fingers slowly around the ghost, then slowly pull them away** for the big reveal. Alakazam—your audience will be amazed when you **show them that the ghost is floating!**



Turn to the audience and shout, “Can you believe it! The ghost is floating! Give Casper and (your child’s name) a big hand!” This will prompt the audience to give thunderous applause, which will once again hide the sound of your child removing his or her thumb from the thumbhole.

Have the magician **put the ghost back into its “home” in the can** to rest. This will keep others from examining it after the show.

Now both of you come to the front, take a bow and enjoy one more round of applause.



Take a bow and give your little magician a hug for putting on a great show. Image source: iStockPhoto.

You captured a ghost, made it appear before spectators’ eyes and caused the phantom to levitate! You’re both amazing magicians!

## Some Final Thoughts...

A magic show is a great activity to do together. I hope you all had fun and that your kids are encouraged about their ability to perform a spectacular show.

I shared these three simple themed tricks to help your family **entertain others and give your young magicians a sense of pride and accomplishment** that they may not have achieved with a more confusing and overwhelming commercial magic set.

If your child expresses an interest in doing more magic, **here are some great books to check out**:

If you do put on a show, make sure to record it. Your kids will love to watch it again later and [share their show on YouTube](#).

**What do you think?** I'd love to see your performance! If you have any questions on a part of the act, feel free to comment below and I'll be happy to help. Please leave comments and pictures below.

Images from [iStockPhoto](#).



**Tags:** [floating ghost trick](#), [ghost trap](#), [indoor activity](#), [kids magic show](#), [kids magic trick](#), [levitating ghost](#), [magic project](#), [magic routine](#), [magic show](#), [magic trick](#), [michael corley](#)