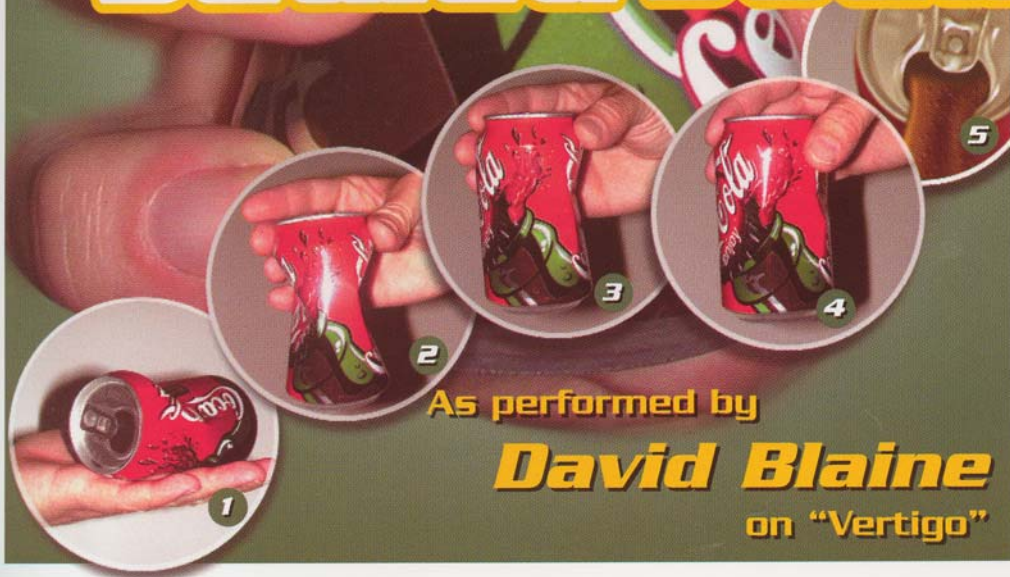


A miracle by
Anders Modén
Sweden

Healed and Sealed Soda



As performed by

David Blaine
on "Vertigo"

Effect:

You show an opened, emptied and crushed soda can. Upon your command the can slowly restores itself, making noises as all the dents disappear.

Your magic hands heal the hole in the top, so that the can is once again Sealed and Healed and looks like new.

Now you open the can with a pfzzzt! and the filled can is emptied into a glass with the real and original soda!

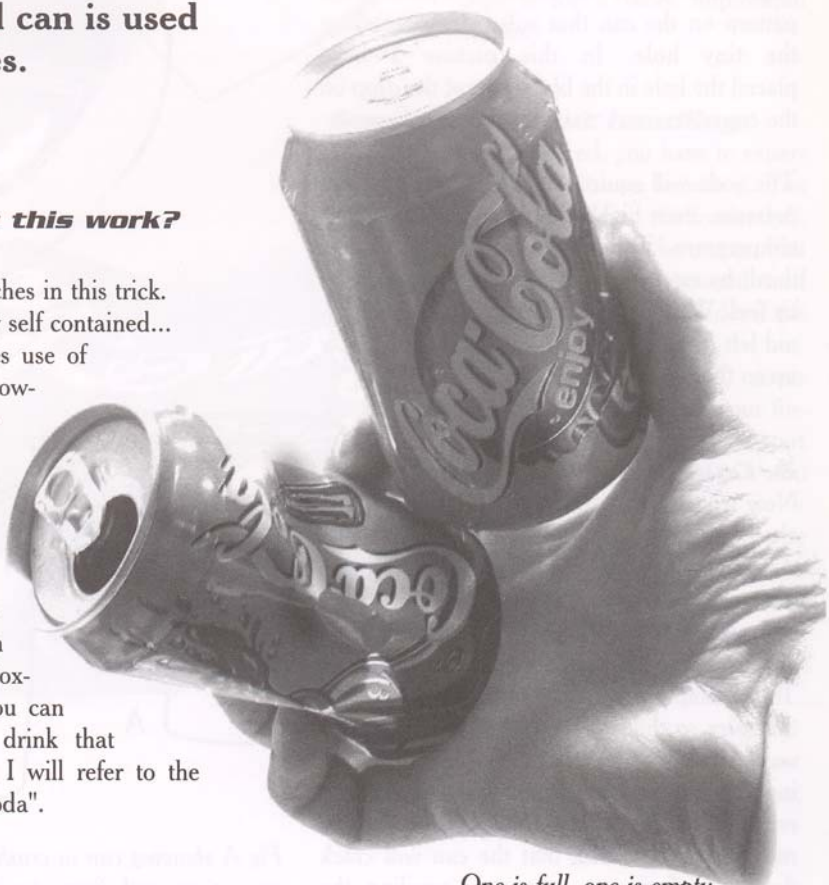
One normal can is used
- no switches.

What makes this work?

There are no switches in this trick. The can is entirely self contained...

The trick makes use of the tremendous powers of carbon dioxide found in soda.

I use Coca-Cola or Pepsi, because this is the soda I have found to contain the most carbon dioxide, but maybe you can find some other drink that works as well, so I will refer to the drink simply as "soda".



*One is full, one is empty.
Can you tell which is which?*

Preparation:

1. Emptying the can

Hold a normal full soda can upside-down in the kitchen sink. Make a small pinhole approximately 10mm (1/2 inch) from the top of the can with a needle, pushpin or the tip of a sharp knife (the top meaning where you normally open the can). See figure B for approximate placement of hole.

Try to find a place that hides the hole as good as possible. There will mostly be a place in the pattern on the can that will help camouflage the tiny hole. In this picture I have placed the hole in the black part of the drop on the can.

The soda will squirt out of the can with high pressure, even higher pressure if it is at room temperature. Try to empty the can by one third, by emptying it into a measuring cup, or by feel. When there is about two thirds of liquid left in the can, turn it gently the right way up so that it stops squirting.

2. Crushing the can

Now squeeze the can so that it looks crushed and the soda fills the can up to the needle hole. You want to make the dents in the can as soft as you can, so that the power of the carbon dioxide does not crack the can later when you restore it. Try to simply press the can together by the sides so that it gets a "waist". The waist should be clearly seen when holding the can with the opening to the audience. If you make the folds in the can too rough, there is a risk that the can will crack during performance, not only spoiling the effect, but also your clothes.

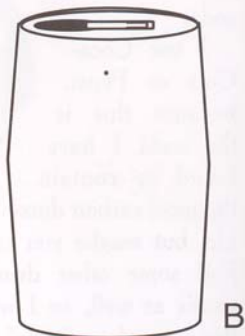
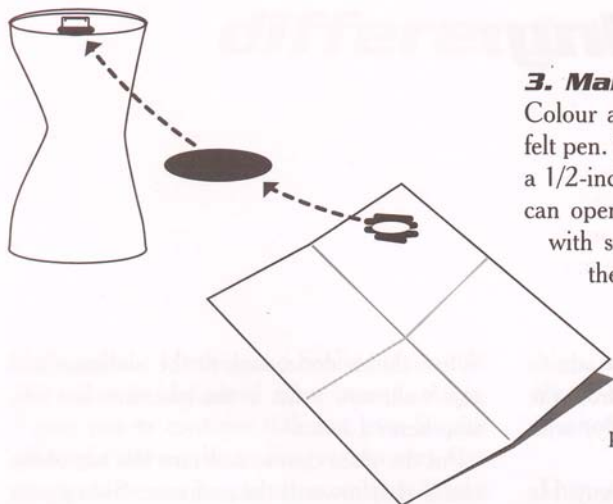


Fig A showing can in crushed state from audience view, with finger positions—thumb covering pinhole. Fig B side view showing pinhole.



3. Make it seem opened

Colour a piece of paper napkin black with a felt pen. Use one layer of the napkin to cut out a 1/2-inch circle (or whatever shape your soda can opens with) and attach this "black hole" with some water (or other fluid) to where the hole would be if you opened the can.

The can now looks opened, emptied and crushed! (See note 2 on page 8 for a more impromptu preparation)

Something about handling:

When the can is prepared, you have to experiment a bit with how you can handle it. You must be able to handle it "effortlessly".

It is supposed to be empty. You can swing it around and even lie it on its side, if the hole is upwards.

DO NOT cover the hole with your fingers. This will start the expansion too soon.

Also, you might be thinking about sealing the hole after preparing the can to avoid dripping. **DON'T.** The slightest movement will then start the expansion.



Example for patter and working:

Enter with a glass filled with enough soda so that it will be assumed it must come from the "crushed" can you are holding (gently) with your other hand.

"You know, coming in here I met this guy. He asked me if I was the magician, and I said yes. I had just poured this soda, and he took the empty can from me and said: "Well Mister, look what I can do", and crushed it against his forehead. He left me with a laaaaarge grin on his face. Well I am not the one to judge, but I think there are better things you can do with an empty soda can. Hey, these days we recycle these things, and when they are mangled up like this, they won't fit in the machine!"

With these words you adjust your grip of the can so that you hold it by the top with the thumb covering the pinhole. If you now tense your arm so that the soda starts to shake with a small movement (looking like you are concentrating really hard), the carbon dioxide (believe it or not) will expand the can to its original state, or close to it! Hold the thumb tightly against the pinhole, or you will probably get a squeaky noise.

When this is done, look at the audience and say: "well, now it fits in the machine, but why stop here? Look..."

Put the glass down, and turn the top of the can slightly towards the audience. Sweep your second and third finger across the "open" hole and sweep the minimal piece of napkin away, making it look as if you have healed the hole! You can, at the same time, snap the pop-up ring with your thumb to make a mystic "click".

Now you actually open the can (for real this time) with the "pfzzz" sound (you have to remember to hold your thumb over the pinhole) and emptying it "once again" in the glass.

Give the can away to someone from the audience. No one will find the pinhole. Actually, I strongly recommend that you give the can to the audience, or they will make up their own Sci-Fi explanations for this miracle. When they see that it is a normal can (or they see that you give it out to someone else, they accept it as a normal can and the impact of the trick is even higher)

Example of a different approach:

Although the Healing and Sealing of a can in full view is definitely very strong magic, I urge you to consider different uses for this principle and maybe making it your very own magic. Here is a couple of examples to maybe let you understand what I mean:

1: Transposition of cans.

You have two spectators on either side of you. They are each holding a paper bag upside down in a way that you can easily reach into both bags at the same time. Show *two* prepared cans (see picture at page three). One can is crushed but really full. The other *looks* full and unopened, but is actually completely empty (via a pinhole - shake and shake and all fluid will come out).

Now do a transposition effect: Hold the “full” can in left hand and go into the bag. Under the bag - open the can with one hand and squeeze it together. At the same time, go into the right bag with the “crushed and empty” can, remove the black hole and expand it.

The audience will probably wonder about all the noise.

Now, first (and slowly) remove your left hand showing that the “full” can is now empty and crushed. Let it drop to the floor.

Then, slowly pull out the Healed and Sealed can, open it and pour.

This is a now a totally different effect, a transposition. So use your imagination. Maybe you can make a penetration? I bet there are a million different uses for this, and that applies to all magic.

2: Transposition of soda.

What about not using the bags at all? Just stand on stage holding one full can in one hand, and one empty and crushed can in the other. Now squeeze the full can. As the full can slowly crumples the empty can slowly expands. Now you have transposed the soda from the one can to another! The full can is now crushed and opened. You drop this to the floor. Then you open the other can and pour. I will leave you to figure out how to prepare the “full” can so this can work.

Notes:

Important hints, variations and alternative handling

NOTE 1: Usually I perform this in seemingly "impromptu" and non-formal situations by loading a prepared can somewhere, well in advance. Like in the wastebin at the office. That allows me to casually walk by some time later and "discover" the can, shouting: "Wow! A recyclable can!". As the eyes turn towards me, I pick it up and continue: "Oh, it's almost destroyed, this might not work..." Then I do the effect, and afterwards I look surprised at the reactions, asking: "Well, how do you recycle then?"

Carbonated drinks will stay carbonated for a surprisingly long time, as long as they are allowed to be perfectly still. So it's possible to load the prepared can way ahead of time, in any location you know that you will walk past again. Like beside a trashcan outside, in a bush in a park, beside the foot of a stair etc.

NOTE 2: Regarding the black art preparation of the opening of the can, there are several alternatives. At first I tried a black non-permanent marker, but rejected it as the black art hole became too "shiny" and did not look like a real hole. However, judged by Tim Ellis success with my effect I have recently been forced to revise my opinion; it seems like that method works excellent on a stage. But since I mainly do this in "impromptu" close-up settings, it is necessary with a duller black art

hole that doesn't reflect any light. I feel most comfortable with the dull black surface that a blackened napkin provides. So, I carry several pre-cut "black holes" in my wallet (and in my organiser), so I can prepare for the effect anytime and anywhere. All I need besides that is the can itself and a small sharp object (a thumbtack, a needle, a pin, a small penknife etc.) **Axel Rutstam**, Sweden, came up with an easy way of making the can look opened. Simply turn the can upside down and hold the flame from a lighter at a small distance from the can. There will be soot collecting in the "opening". (Do this before emptying the can). Wipe the edges clean with your fingers or a napkin, and there you have a convincing matte black hole. It's easy to wipe this away with your fingers when "re-sealing" the can.

NOTE 3. **Tom Cutts**, of the magic magazine AM/PM does this at a dinner table. His great idea is that you only empty the can as described above, but *do not* crush it ahead of time. Instead you pretend to empty the last drops in your mouth or in a glass by gently letting go of the pinhole as you tip the can. That way "the last drops" will leak out and further sell the emptiness of the can. Then you can proceed to crush the can in full view of the audience! Patter, patter (your own) and then restore it.

Questions & Answers

If you run into a problem, maybe these questions from real people can help.

Q: *Does that fake hole really work? How close can you let people look at the hole before they realise it's fake?*

A: Think of it this way: If someone would be holding an empty can in front of you, you would probably know it was empty without looking very closely at the hole. You just register the hole and know it's empty. Especially if it is crushed.

Q: *When the can has expanded the pressure is so much that the soda starts dripping out of the hole in it.*

A: Don't be in a hurry! If you shake it too violently the can expands quicker but there is no way telling if a couple of "shakes" less would have done the trick, and so the pressure is unnecessarily high. Try covering the hole with a different part of the thumb. Or maybe your skin on the thumb is too rough and dry. Try making it softer with some lotion.

Q: *The can cracked and soda seems to fly and drip all over the place.*

A: Make sure it's not a steel can but aluminium. Don't practice several times with the same can. Is it possible you in your mind exaggerate the needed crushing for it to look crushed? Try to lay the can on your up turned palm and press right down with the thumbs to make a good waist and a convincing crushed look. Try wrapping the can in a towel before squeezing it, this makes for some softer dents.

Q: *How do you prevent the audience from hearing the hissing sound from the hole when you remove your thumb?*

A: Keep your thumb over the hole until you open the can, otherwise you don't get the Pfzzt sound that indicates that this is an unopened can.

Q: *Small movements in my hand seemed to be unable to make the can expand properly, and I found that I needed to actually shake the can slightly to make it expand nicely.*

A: This may vary for different brands, but the warmer the can is, the easier the carbon dioxide is freed. Try it when the can is at room temperature...

Q: *All cans have a lip and I have found it difficult to just slide the napkin off. When I get it off, what do I do with it?*

A: Assuming you hold the can with the right hand, the left thumb clicks the tab as the 1:st and 2:nd finger squeezes the tissue and lifts it up. I show the healed can as I rest my left hand temporarily against my side. I KEEP the tissue between my relaxed fingers. The hand goes back and the thumb opens the tab. Pour the drink into a glass. If you are holding the glass with your left hand, just hold the piece of napkin against the side of the glass, letting it go when you eventually put down the glass. If someone else is holding the glass or if it's on a table, just drop the napkin to the floor as you pour. At this time you could drop an elephant on the floor and no one would notice. (Well, maybe not...)

Note 4: Craig Matsuoka of Hawaii suggests the use of a gaffed milk tumbler, in connection with the restoration of the can. Use food colouring and water in a milk tumbler to simulate the colour of the drink you are using. Hold the full milk tumbler in one hand and the crushed can in another, apart from each other. As the can begins to heal, the milk tumbler empties. The drink is magically transposed to the can...

Note 5: Someone might just use this idea, if they have the right acting talents. You have just used a spectator as an assistant. Tell him that you are thirsty and ask him if he would like a drink as well. Give him a glass and pick up a gimmicked can of soda (not crushed – as per note 3) and pretend to open it by making a clicking sound with the ring on the top. Do not show the black hole on top before you have pretended to open it. Simulate drinking the soda right from the can yourself and talk to the audience. At this stage pretend you have forgotten all about the spectator with the empty glass in his hand, and pretend to drink it all yourself (cover the pinhole as you lean back to take the last gulps). When you are through, finish off with a big “Aaaaah!” as you squeeze the can as far as it will go before soda is coming out of the pinhole. Then you suddenly remember your thirsty assistant. You look a bit ashamed as you approach him and empty a few drops, the last drops, in his glass. Well, well, whatever will you do now...

NOTE 6: Tom Stone came up with a good switch you can use on stage. Take the presentation idea from note 5, for example. You have the spectator on stage, but don't ask him if he wants a drink. Just have him stand there as you pick up a real and unprepared can, open it and pour a glass full for yourself. When the can is empty you ask him if he would like a drink as well. Then you tip the can and as the last drops land on the floor you crush the can and say “Sorry”. But then you get an idea (here comes Toms switch): At the back of the stage stands a chair. Get the chair for the spectator and ask him to sit down (“you might have to sit down for this one”) and now you have switched the empty crushed can for a gimmicked can! On the back of the chair is two black pocket servantes. Push the empty can down in an empty pocket as you lift the chair up and pull out the gimmicked can as you set it down behind the spectator. Give him a glass and proceed with healing.

NOTE 7: David Blaine performed this with a beer can. Personally I feel that the thick and creamy foam produced by some beers tips the method, as it suggests that the beer has somehow been violently shaken.

History and credits:

In 1995 or -96 I heard about a magician who uncrumpled a flattened soda can by pressing it to his forehead. Then he opened the can and poured himself a drink. This is what I heard. This sparked my imagination. From there I worked out Healed and Sealed Soda. Later I found out that the magician I had heard of was David Harkey, and what he used was a mechanically gaffed and specially made can together with a sleight of hand switch. As the method I

worked out used a normal can with no switch involved with all the benefits that involves, in all aspects, I thought it significantly different.

I have also found out that John Kennedy used a black art hole on a soda can to create a re-sealing climax in his "Inexhaustible Soda Can" in "John Kennedy's Lecture III" (Kennedy, 1983). The effect up until the climax is very different though, and I suggest that you check it out as it seems like a good effect.

- An opened, emptied and crushed soda can slowly restores itself, making noises as all the dents disappear.
- You heal the hole in the top, so that the can is once again Healed and Sealed.
- Then OPEN the can with a pfzzzt! and the original soda is poured into a glass!
- One normal can is used - no switches. Easy to do, but as with all magic - practice on the presentation!

Matthew Field commented on this trick when performed by Tim Ellis on Monday Magic in New York:

"This is one of the most astonishing things I've witnessed in a long, long time!"

Wayne Shipman followed up by saying:

The soda can restoration was drop-dead magic. Rooms full of jaded magicians were exclaiming "NO!" and "NO WAY!"

In May 2002 **David Blaine** performed his own handling of this on his show "Vertigo". Please note that David Blaine is holding the exclusive worldwide television rights for this trick until the year 2005.

Spectacular effect. Absolutely ingenious. Best trick i have ever bought...handsdown. / Joshua

Thank you for being so devious, I cannot wait to literally wipe peoples perceptions right out of their brains with this. / David

Healed^{and} Sealed Soda