

WHAT MAGIC CAN DO FOR A LIVING

A **magician** is an entertainer who performs magic tricks, **slight-of-hand** routines and card tricks for the amusement of the public at weddings, functions and public gatherings.

A magician is a professional entertainer who uses various methods of magic or illusion to amaze watching audiences. Magic is a performing art which uses natural means to achieve the illusion of supernatural **feats**. It is an ancient art which has been popular in Western culture since the 1500s, when contemporary logic was applied to so-called **'witchcraft'** in order to understand better other abilities.



Modern magic for the purposes of public entertainment **could typically fall** into one of several categories; table magic, performance magic (such as wedding magic) and illusion. Techniques differ, but in general the desired outcome **should be** to 'wow' watching crowds by making an achievable, practiced routine seem impossible.

The routine often involves the use of **props**, such as cards, glasses, coins or rope, but the total scope of possible routine is vast. The magician or illusionist **should seek** to learn new tricks in order to improve their public performance and, ultimately, their reputation.

SALARY



The salary range is very wide, depending on experience, type of function and locality. Large corporate events in USA pay \$250- \$400 per hour, whereas a magician working on small, local performances, such as a children's birthday party, outside of the capital may expect to receive \$70-\$100 per hour. **Would you live** with this salary?

As magicians are typically self-employed they **can fix** their own rates, although this is dictated primarily by market demand and price tolerance.

WORKING CONDITIONS

As the magician is typically working in close proximity to members of the public, an understanding of common sense health and safety is **paramount**. For this reason, the performer must be able to present the “volunteers” in an entertaining and **engaging** way, and **should be able** to ‘work the crowd’ properly. The magician should also be comfortable speaking and performing in public, or their practiced routines **could count** for nothing.

EMPLOYERS

Most magicians are self-employed, and a great many work alone, so there are no major employers in this respect. This does not **preclude** the magician from registering with a local entertainment agency who, for a commission, **could find** additional work for the working professional illusionist.

CAREER PROGRESSION

The **pinnacle** exists in corporate entertainment. Magicians who work on **retainer** with entertainment venues as table magicians (who cater towards staff parties and Christmas/summer events) **can usually attract** the highest price-per-hour. Weddings also pay well, but under these circumstances there is more bonus on the magician as a self-employed entity to find work for themselves.

SKILLS

According to several agencies and self-employed magicians, these are some of the abilities a magic entertainer **should possess**:

- **Should have** an excellent understanding of the routines and techniques which are to be performed.
- **Can use** props and tools in a safe manner, as there is a potential that some may be harmful to participants and performers.
- **Should ensure** public safety for routines which involve direct audience participation.
- **Should have** an understanding of marketing techniques and promotion in order to grow their potential business.
- Magicians **should also handle** their own administration, so an understanding of tax and **invoicing** can come handy.