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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forget the cracker joke: 125 tricks to steal the show this Christmas

Britain's leading magician, behind *The Greatest Magician*™ and *The Man Who Was Magic*™, teaches tricks and the stagecraft that make them land. Presales open 15 November and the book is out 1 December.

26 October 2026 – Internationally renowned British magician James Phelan publishes new book: **How to do Magic: Tricks, Secrets and Showmanship With Things You Already Own** on 1 December 2026, with presales from 15 November.

Every one of its 125 tricks uses something already in the house: a coin, a napkin, a bread roll, a rubber band, or just yourself. It's the perfect Christmas present and an ideal Secret Santa gift: a stocking filler that gets everyone round the table watching. It arrives three weeks before the big day, when the props will already be on every family table.

THE STORY

James was four when a teacher told him he would never make anything of himself doing magic. Years later, she bought a front row ticket to one of his sold-out shows and waited at the end to apologise.

In between, he did his first show at 13 and built his own stage, self-funded from day one, using the inspiration his uncle, the late Paul Daniels, gave him for fuel.

> *"Everyone starts with one small trick and it's enough to turn sceptics into believers and strangers into friends. This book gives you that first trick."*
>
> JAMES PHELAN

In 2017 he was playing to 30 people a night. In 2019 he played a 120-seat Edinburgh Fringe room that was often half full. **In 2024 he became the first magician in history to sell out a two-week solo run at The Magic Circle.** In 2025 he played the West End's Adelphi Theatre. And now, James's one-man show has grown into the most commercially successful magic show in the country, selling out 1,500-seater venues, 280 nights a year.

His lottery prediction on BBC radio's *Trickster: Live* jammed the switchboard, he got four yeses on *Britain's Got Talent* in April 2026, and *The Man Who Was Magic* continues playing to rapturous rooms.

Nobody teaches the half that makes a trick land: the performance. *How to do Magic* does, with a first trick for anyone aged 8 to 80 using things they already own. The book, perhaps, that a four-year-old, whose teacher didn't believe in him, once needed.

THE BOOK

How to do Magic runs to eleven chapters, from coin and restaurant magic to card tricks and mind reading. Most tricks need no sleight of hand. The only thing to buy is a thumb tip.

A section on performing covers what to say, where to look, how to beat nerves and how to recover when it goes wrong. It's written for anyone aged 8 to 80: complete beginners, families looking for something to do together, and seasoned performers who want to sharpen the tools in their repertoire.

> *"I was taught very young it's never just the trick, it's also the performer. The trick is half of it. The other half is how you perform it, and nobody ever teaches you that. Until now."*
>
> JAMES PHELAN

THE TOUR

In addition to the book, James has more than 100 dates remaining of his touring show *The Man Who Was Magic* into 2027. London Theatre Reviews called it "British magic at its finest". Venues include:

Northern Stage, Newcastle upon Tyne, 18 Dec 2026
Komedia, Brighton, 4–7 & 25–28 Jan 2027
Phoenix Theatre, Exeter, 10–13 Jan 2027
Plaza Theatre, Stockport, 16–17 Mar 2027
Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, 24 Mar 2027
Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, 4 May 2027
Kenneth More Theatre, Ilford, London, 15 May 2027
Redgrave Theatre, Bristol, 27 Jun – 1 Jul 2027
The Magic Circle, London, August 2027

All dates and tickets: manwhowasmagic.com.

BOOK DETAILS

TITLE	*How to do Magic: Tricks, Secrets and Showmanship With Things You Already Own*
AUTHOR	James Phelan
DATES	Presales open 15 November 2026 · Published 1 December 2026
FORMATS	Hardback · Paperback (366 pages) · Ebook · Audiobook
ISBNS	**Paperback:** 978-1-80867-167-8 **Hardback:** 978-1-80867-168-5 **Ebook:** 978-1-80867-166-1
BUY	howtodomagicbook.com · order by 12 December for Christmas delivery

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. James Phelan. Magician and mind-reader from Cobham, Surrey. Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star.

2. Record breaker. In 2024, the first magician in history to sell out a two-week solo run at The Magic Circle.

3. Britain's Got Talent: Ten years after he first made it through and walked away, he went back in 2026 and got four yeses.

4. BBC radio. His lottery prediction on BBC radio's *Trickster: Live* jammed the BBC switchboard. Twice a guest on BBC Radio 2's *Midnight Mastermind* with OJ Borg.

5. Podcast. His podcast *How To Be Famous* averages 2 million views an episode. Guests include Katie Price, Gareth Gates and Russell Kane.

6. Social. James has 300,000 followers across social media. @phelanmagician on Instagram, X, TikTok and Facebook.

7. The Man Who Was Magic. Directed by Matt Peover, Amanda Baker and Debbie McGee. Played Underbelly's McEwan Hall at the 2025 Edinburgh Fringe and the Adelphi Theatre on 23 September 2025. Touring UK theatres into 2027: manwhowasmagic.com.

8. Showman Live. Produces James Phelan's live shows and *How to do Magic*.

9. Assets. Book cover, author photographs and show images on request.

LET'S TALK

James is available for interviews, features, reviews and extracts: in the studio, down the line or on a podcast. Review copies, images and a trick for your readers or listeners are ready to go.

Near a tour date? He'd love to invite you as his guest to an upcoming show, too.

READY-MADE SEGMENTS

1 **The journalist's junk drawer**
James performs live with whatever is on the desk: a pen, a mug, a phone. No set-up, real reactions.

2 **Christmas dinner trick in 60 seconds**
He teaches your audience one trick to do at the table this year with a napkin, coin or bread roll.

3 **Reading the journalist's mind**
A live mind-reading moment. The journalist thinks of it, James names it. Works on radio as well as screen.

4 **Christmas No.1, sealed and opened live**
James seals his prediction of the Christmas No.1, or tomorrow's headlines, before the show, then it's opened live. His lottery prediction on BBC radio's *Trickster: Live* jammed the switchboard.

5 **One trick to fool your colleague or co-host**
James teaches the journalist a trick to try live on a colleague or co-host, or family, and listeners play along.

6 **Told at four he'd never make it**
The human story: a teacher's verdict, a self-funded climb, four BGT yeses and, at last, an apology.

7 **The human lie detector**
The journalist tells three truths and one lie, and James spots the lie. How easy is it to tell what people are thinking? Easier than you'd like.

8 **Three tricks for the office party**
Quick, easy tricks from the book to survive, and steal, the work Christmas do.

9 **Three tries at Britain's Got Talent**
James tried BGT at 13, got through at 23 just as his uncle Paul Daniels died, and finally made it at 33. A story for anyone who's ever wanted to give up.

Podcasters: James hosts *How To Be Famous* and is happy to swap guest spots.

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