The Astounding Balancing Coin

What to do: If you can't find one of those thick plastic clothes hangers you can try this with a regular wire hanger, but you'll need a great sense of balance. Now that you have your coat hanger go outside. Don't be tempted to demonstrate this experiment in a room full of breakable things. If you happen to let the hanger slip off your finger, you better be outdoors! Since you're going to be experimenting outdoors, you're better off using a washer instead of a coin. A dropped coin that is easy to find on the living-room floor may be lost outside.

Loop the hanger over your finger. With your other hand balance the washer or coin on the bottom of the hanger so it looks like this:

Now you know why it is a good idea to use the thick plastic hanger. It's not hard to balance a washer on a thick hanger, but it's difficult to get it to balance on a thin wire one.

Be absolutely sure to place the coin directly below your finger, which is sticking through the hanger's hook.

When the coin is balanced, begin rocking the hanger gently back and forth on your finger. Speed it up gradually.

When the hanger is swinging well, give it an extra spurt of energy and start it spinning in a circle around your finger.

What happens: The coin will stay in place long as you keep the hanger spinning and don’t jerk it.

Why: Centrifugal force is created when things spin rapidly. It causes spinning things to try to move away from the center around which they are spinning. The coin is pressed against the bottom of the hanger by centrifugal force. It won’t slip off unless you slow down or break the smooth spinning motion.

YOU NEED

• plastic close hanger
• coin or washer