How Far?

THE TRICK: The magician places two coins—about a foot or more apart—on a table, and puts another coin between them, but not exactly in the center. He asks the other players to judge which two coins are the farthest apart. Usually, they will pick the middle coin and either the end coin on the right or the left. Then the magician tells them that they've all guessed wrong. Using a ruler, he proves, beyond a doubt, that it is the two end coins that are the farthest apart.

THE SECRET: Of course it's all based on deliberately confusing the audience. By putting the center coin down last, the magician indicates that he is talking about the distance between the center and one of the two ends; but this is not what he said, as the audience realizes after it has been tricked.