



Hello, this is the suggested handling for the Bottom Ridge Shells and Classic type shells. That are used with a softball or a hard cork ball.

You should also review the video files on the site. When I say suggested handling I mean just that, as this is the handling of the shells and accessories that have worked for me. I'm sure there are many other ways and you should always look for other ways that could work best for you. The handling instructions will give you a starting point to make any adjustments to fit you.

Remember with sleight of hand you want to duplicate a motion that looks the same as your natural motion. These suggested handling instructions are for someone who already knows how the three shell game is played. There is no given routines, only ideas on how to build your own routine. With the new bottom ridge design, you will be able to build routines that go way beyond the old three shell game.



The handling instructions are shown with walnut shells but can apply to any of the bottom ridge shells or the Classic type shells and other shape shells with some minor adjustments.

For questions; contact us at www.3shells.com

Bottom Ridge Shells

The bottom ridge type shells were designed for the working magician. Even though the bottom ridge shells are more of a con type shell than what have been used on the streets for the con game. What many don't understand is the shells used on the street do not bring any confidence to a mark to play. It is an unknown crew that is working with the shell operator that are called Shills. The mark will see others winning at the game and this will bring the confidence for the mark to play.

Unknown to the mark the shill's that are winning are the actual con to the game.

Displaying the shell game for entertainment is totally different than working the shell game for money.

The bottom ridge shells can bring confidence to play the game for an entertaining challenge to play. This is because they are fair shells. The bottom ridge is not a gimmick, it is just the opposite. The ridge never holds or hides the ball in the shell. The ridged bottom works like a ramp to send the ball on an open path where the ball can roll freely inside the shell. You are never forced to take the ball. The ball stays inside the shell when the shell is moved on the surface and you have full control to take the ball when you want.

You can even fool the ones that are in the know on how the shell game is normally done with all other type shells. This makes them an unpredictable shell that always appears to be done fair. The only unfair thing is the operator, that has a choice of when to play fair or not to play fair, at any time. The softball can now be justified in using it, so there is no sound from which shell has the ball. The shell has entire flat surface. Shells with no clues, no rules or anything to hide.

This brings a whole new ball game for the magician.

Shell Grip & Pea Steal

Many of the walnut shells on the market come with a V- notch at the back of the shell or a Chanin dip that brings a door for the ball to come out. These visual clues are not needed with the BRS type shells. None of our shells come with these visual gimmicks.



Shell Grip

(a) The last three fingers are curled inward to lay flat on the surface.

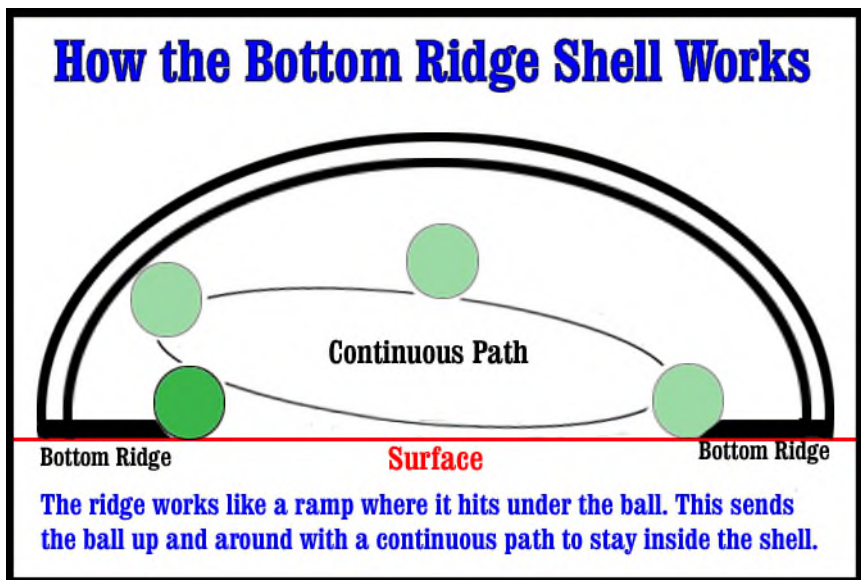
(b) Index fingertip and thumb tip rest on the surface. The inside of the index finger and thumb hold the shell by the sides of the shell. The back of the shell is rested against the second finger that lays flat on the surface. The hand and fingers are relaxed. This is a 3 point grip from the back and both sides of the shell with a full view of the shell.

Why we suggest this position in holding the shell: (a) Shell has a full view. (b) Much more control in moving the shells and picking up the shells. (c) The hand and fingers have a full open view. (d) None of the fingertips are touching another finger that is a known way for holding something. (e) The thumb and the first two fingers are only used to control the shell and the second finger brings equal support at the back of the shell. (f) The thumb, index and second finger all work together as a unit to keep the shell level to the surface. This means the fingers can work very openly in a more natural way not having to hold two things at the same time. (g) The second, third and fourth fingers are used for ball control. The ball is always in the background when the ball is out of the shell. When the ball is out of the shell it is rested in a finger clip or a back finger clip position out of view. The ball can be changed to all the other areas of the hand by movement of the fingers or with the use of the surface without any finger movement.



The hand should always come away from the shell in a relaxed open hand natural manner like the image on the left. The basic handling method is where every finger has their own separate job. This handling combined with all the new shell features makes the game now impossible to figure out. Because you have full control where you are never forced to do anything.

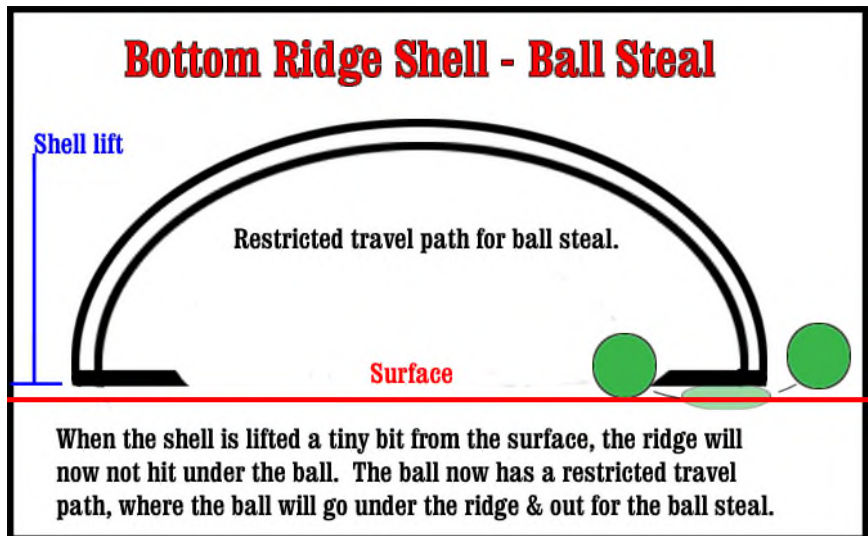
The ball is in a 3-4 back finger clip in the image on the left.



One of the most important things you want to understand is how the bottom ridge works. This is a unique type shell that brings many features if you understand the mechanics of how it works. Like knowing that the ridge has to work on a level surface where the ball rolls level inside the shell so the ridge can hit under the ball to keep the ball inside the shell. An example of a surface that would not work well, would be shagging carpet. This would

not work well because the ball wouldn't roll level on the surface. You also don't want to work on a spongy surface where the shell sinks down lower than the ball. As the ridge would be taken out of play to work. Once you understand some simple things on how the ridge works the handling of the shells will work well for you. View the above image on how the ridge works.

Stealing the ball from the shell



Think about what makes the lifting of a shell to become noticeable when the ball is forced to exits or enters the classic type shell.

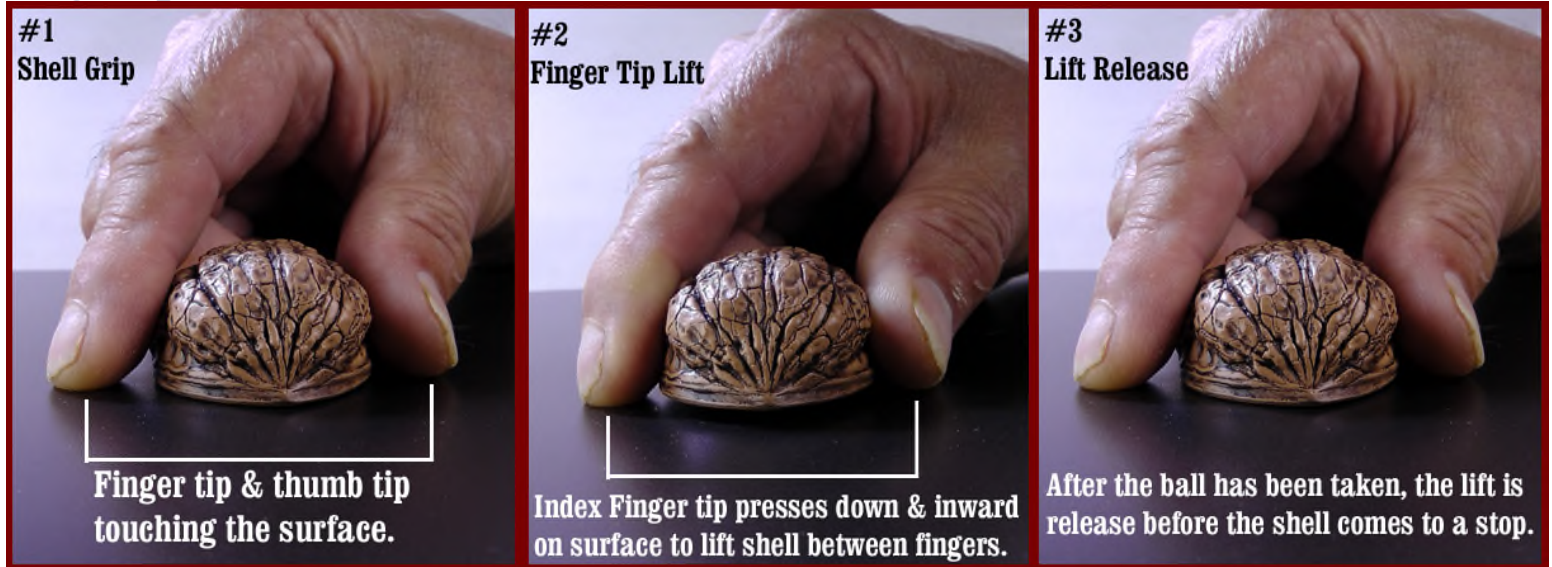
What happens is one area of the shell lifts up higher than the other area of the shell when the ball puts pressure on the shell to lift for the ball to exit or enter the shell. The BRS handling can also work well for the classic shells.

To make this lift unnoticeable you don't let the pea lift the shell. You lift the

shell a tiny bit in a level way when you steal or load the ball from any type shell.

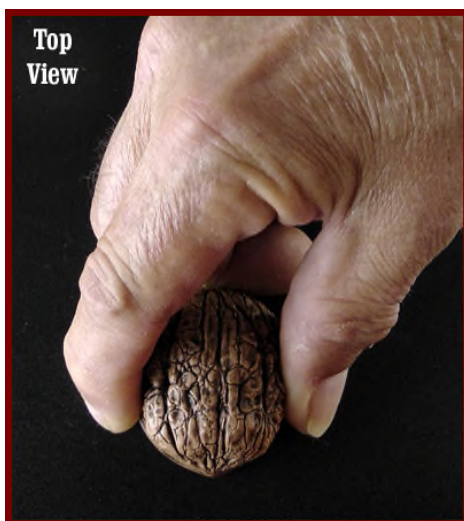
This is done by using an equal balance three point grip on the shell to get a slight level lift on the shell between the fingers and ending with a gradual release of the shell to the surface. Also, with our soft type balls, you will have undetected pea steals and pea shell loads.

Fingertip Lift



Your hand is relaxed with the index fingertip and thumb tip touching the surface like in #1.

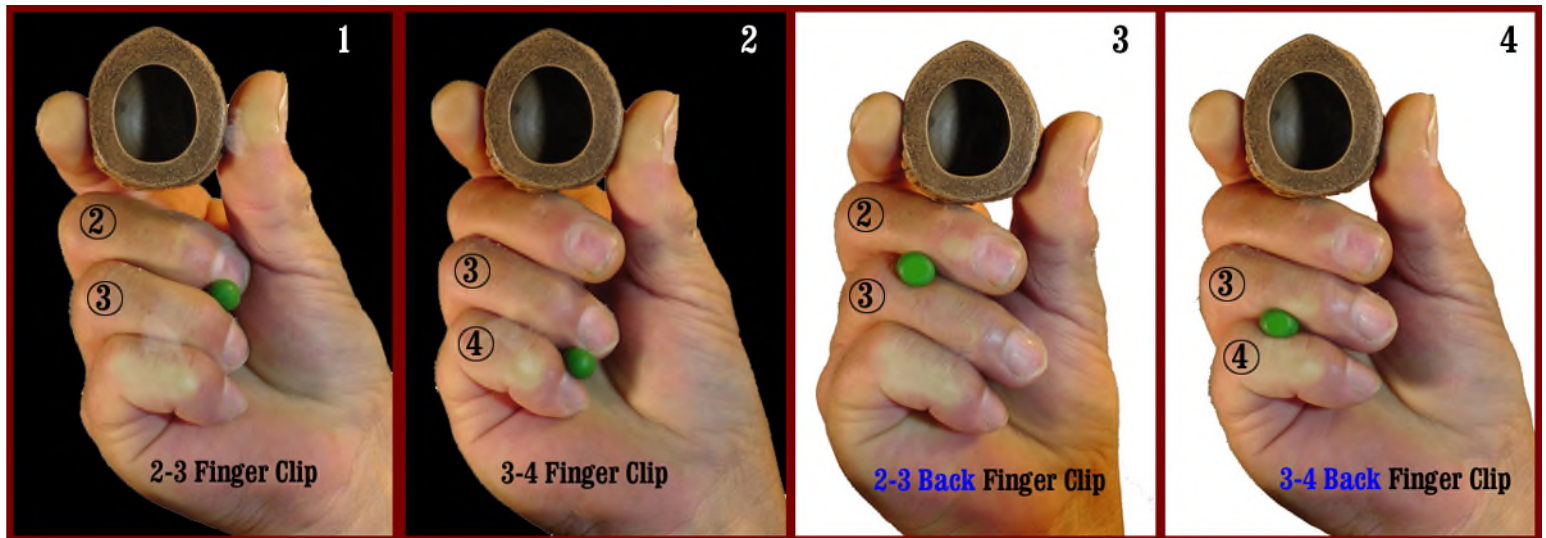
The other three fingers behind the shell are curled inward laying flat on the surface. With this shell grip, you have the three fingers supporting the back of the shell. The index finger and thumb supporting both sides of the shell to always have the shell in a good control grip.



To steal the ball from the shell. The shell is moved forward, at the same time the index fingertip presses downward and inward on the surface #2. This will put pressure on the shell from the first joint of the index finger to lift up between the thumb and fingers. By the shell having a three-point support from the back and both sides, the shell should lift up in a level way. This is only a slight lift from the shell where the ridge doesn't go under the ball anymore. The ridge will now hit the ball that will restrict its free traveling path. The ball will now go under the ridge and out for the steal. The shell lift only lasts a split of a second.

As soon as the ball comes out of the shell, the shell is gradually released to the surface before the shell comes to a stop #3. This is a slow release of the shell, like an airplane landing.

How to take the ball when the ball comes out of the shell.



The finger clip and the back finger clip work well when stealing the ball from the shell.

Depending on what you are going to do next after the ball steal will determine which type clip and what position you want to use.

The Finger Clip Steal

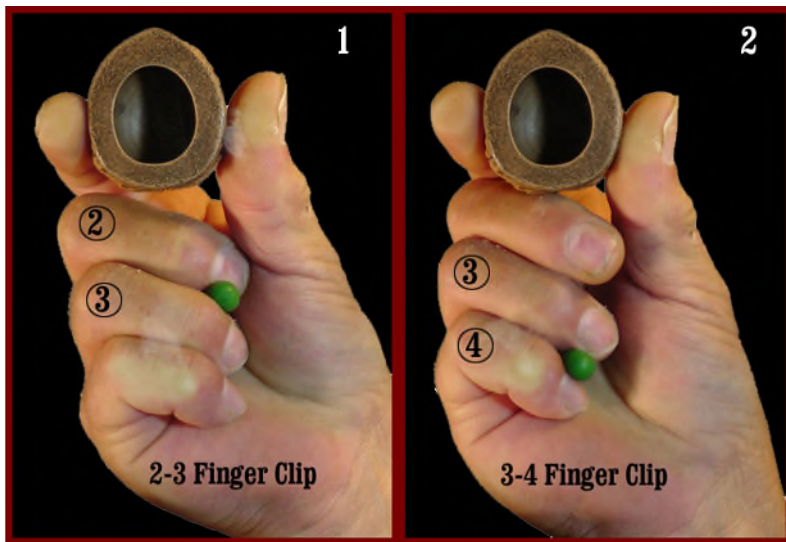


When the ball comes out of the shell the ball is clipped between two fingers and the last three fingers of the hand are curled up into the palm of the hand where the ball is out of view.

In the above picture, the ball is in a 3-4 finger clip. The shell has a full view and the fingers do too.

The ball is being held in the background, not the foreground like if using the pinch steal.

The key to doing the shell game well is good ball control with your fingers and also using the surface with the fingers to control the ball to different locations of the hand that you want. This can take some time to master. The balls that come with your shells are very easy to finger clip and control with your fingers.



What you want to keep in mind when finger clipping a ball, it does not take much finger pressure to finger clip or back finger clip a ball. The more you practice the less pressure it will take and your hand will look more natural where your hand will appear to be not holding anything. What you want to do is find the best position to clip the ball with your fingers.

We all have different fingers. Some fingers have windows between the fingers, so you

might try to clip the ball in the area without the windows or above or below these windows. Once you find the best position to clip the ball from the front and back of the fingers it will only take practice. Then your memory muscles will set in to make it a natural thing where you won't even need to think about doing it.

The Classic Shell Grip & Pinch Steal

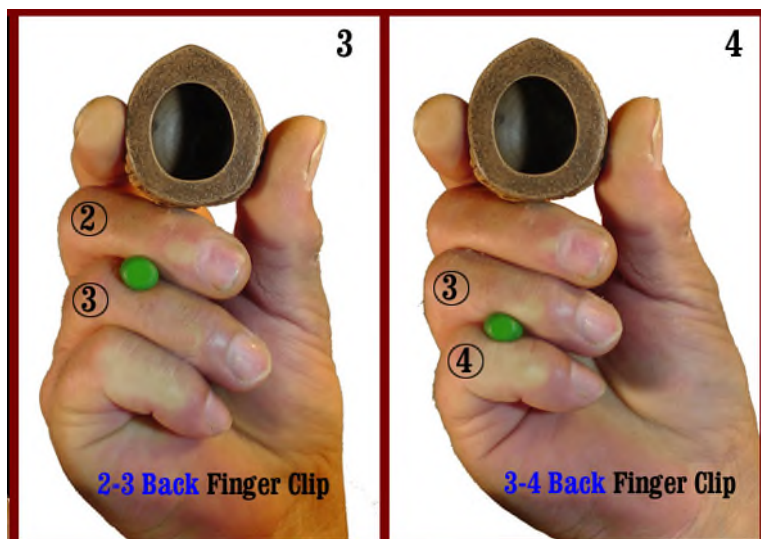


The classic shell grip and pinch steal are used by many magicians. I don't recommend this shell grip or ball steal with the bottom ridge type shells. It can work fine with the classic type shell without the ridge. For me, I do not like the classic shell grip or the pinch steal for a few reasons.

As you can see in the pictures above that it is a two point grip from the front side and back side, not a three point grip on the shell. Not a full view of shell or fingers. With the pinch steal, the index fingertip and thumb are touching together like you're holding the ball and the finger that is holding the ball is in the foreground to be more noticeable like your holding something between the thumb & finger. But you should use what fits you the best.

This is only my opinion.

The Back finger Clip



The back finger clip is my personal favorite as you can do so many things when the ball is in this position and the hand will appear to be not hold anything. I have found that some find the back finger clip to be harder to do than the standard finger clip. This is because of different reasons that can be overcome for most. Like working with the proper ball or applying the proper finger pressure on the ball where it doesn't push the ball out of the fingers. It is also important to find the best position on your fingers to clip the ball as

everybody's fingers are different. So don't look at the pictures here and think that this is where the ball needs to be to clip a ball right. It is the best position for my fingers and I also had to find the best spot for me. The balls that come with your shells are a softball that is easy to clip with some practice.

There are two finger positions that can be used; between the 2nd & 3rd fingers and the 3rd & 4th fingers. I prefer using the 3rd & 4th fingers because the ball is close to the surface to use the surface to manipulate the ball to other positions. The ball also will not flash as easy. When the ball is in the 2nd & 3rd fingers you need to be more careful of it flashing. Normally a back finger clip ball will only be in the back clip position for a short period of time before the ball will be moved to another place.

Loading a ball into another shell after a ball steal. (from back finger clip)



The shell is placed over the ball, the shell is moved forward and the ball is stolen with a 3-4 back finger clip.



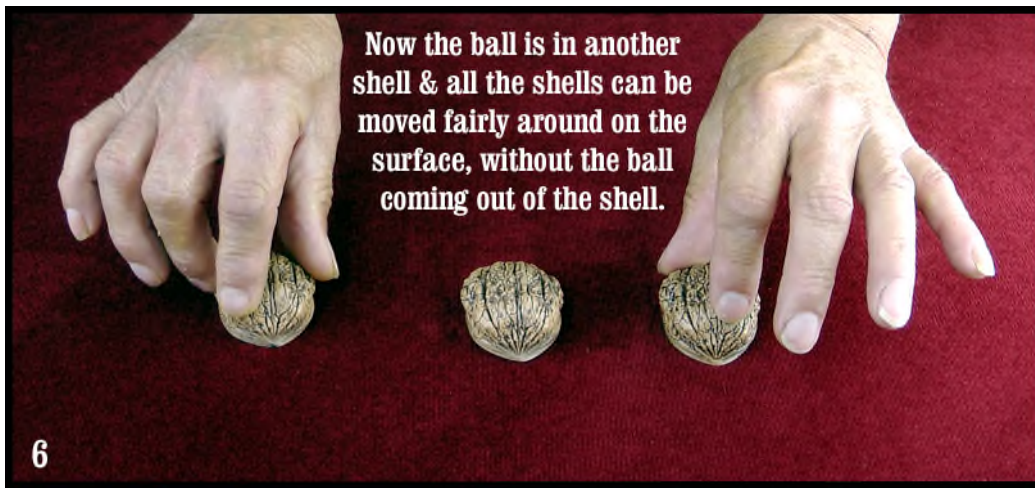
The other two shells are picked up and shown to be empty. The hands are held just a little about the surface and at an angle that the 3-4 back finger clipped ball can not be seen from any side viewers.



The shells are lowered to the surface where the back clipped ball touches the surface. The ball is released from the clip & both shells at the same time are swiveled mouth down on the surface. The ball will roll under the fingers into the shell for your shell load.



Surface shell load complete.



Now the ball is in another shell & all the shells can be moved fairly around on the surface, without the ball coming out of the shell.

Displaying the shell to be a fair game shell (optional)



If you want to display the game as a fair game, you can show that the shells have no trap doors or gimmicks for the ball to escape from the shell. By putting two shells together as a whole walnut. This will show the shells

with the entire flat surface. Then the inside of the shell can be displayed. The shell is placed over a ball on the surface and the shell is moved around fairly with the ball to show the ball stays in the shell.

Getting the player to follow the shell you want them to follow.

When starting the game with the bottom ridge shells I normally will not steal the ball till I set them up to follow the shell I want them to follow. This is done by using the fair shell feature by shuffling the shells around on the surface and lifting the shells to show which shell has the ball or doesn't have the ball. By doing an extended shuffle of the shells in a fair way and lifting up the shells in showing where the ball is or isn't the player will follow the shell that was just shown to have the ball.

Then I like to steal the ball after I just showed a shell with the ball when placing the shell back down. Then you can load the ball into one of the other shells after you have just shown a shell empty after placing this shell back down. The other cool feature is now all the shells can still be moved in a fair way with the ball not coming out of the shell. This will even fool the ones in the know of the game. This is because they will never know when you steal or load the ball from the shell.

You have full control to use the shells fairly or unfairly when you choose too.

Shell Traps used with the Bottom Ridge Shells or classic type shells(optional)

These are an optional item that can be purchased to work with most the sets that we make.

Most of the Shell Traps are made of clear plastic that has a custom fit to the shell.

The Shell Trap that is shown being used with the shells is a 2" Toy Vending Machine Capsule Cap that you can be picked up if you purchase a toy for your kid. Give the kid the toy and you get the container. All the other shell traps shown are custom made traps for different shells.



Custom Clear Trap (1) Custom Clear Trap (2) Vending Mach. Trap (3) Clear Tube Trap (4)



(1) The tip of the shell is placed on top of the ball and the clear shell trap is placed over the shell. (2) The trap is gripped the same way you grip the shells. You move the trap with the shell over to the player. As you move the trap over to the player you lightly squeeze inward on the bottom base of the trap for the ball steal. You do not want to press down on the surface when moving the trap. This type trap is a soft clear plastic. The ball is taken into a back finger clip. On the other hard plastic custom type shell traps, you will have to apply the fingertip lift like you would do with a ball steal from the shell. (fingertip lift)

The trap becomes an extension of the shell. The shells that are being used with this type trap are with the High Top Bottom Ridge Vintage Shells. This trap also works with the Game Taker Shells, without the bottom ridge and the Mystery Shells.



(3) The other two shells are picked up and shown to be empty. The hands are held just a little about the surface and at an angle that the 3-4 back finger clipped ball can not be seen from any side viewers.

(4) The shells are lowered to the surface where the back clipped ball touches the surface. The ball is released from the clip & both shells at the same time are swiveled mouth down on the surface.

The ball will roll under the fingers into the shell for your shell load.

