

Finger Sausage Illusion

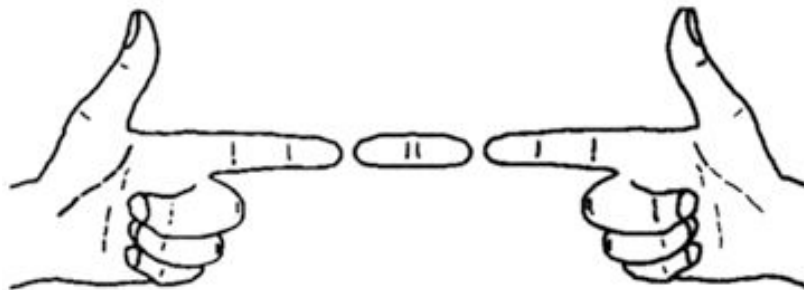
Sometimes called the Floating Finger Illusion, this illusion shows you what the world might look like if you only had one eye in the center of your forehead like a Cyclops. The illusion happens in a special region of our visual field where the product of each eye overlaps. The following technique will let you examine this special region and allow your mind's eye form what is called a "cyclopean image."

Step 1. Hold your hands at eye level about 10 inches in front of you. It helps if the background is rather homogenous and has a color very different from your fingers.

Step 2. Point your index fingers against each other, leaving about 1 inch distance between them.

Step 2. Now look "through" your fingers, **into the distance behind them.** An extra piece of finger "like a sausage" should appear. If you try to look at the sausage, it will disappear, it is only present if you look at something more distant than your fingers.

Move your fingers closer or farther apart to adjust the length of the "sausage." Close one eye or the other and the illusion will disappear. If you focus your attention back to your finger tips the illusion will also disappear.



Whats going on?

This effect is caused by binocular rivalry. When faced with ambiguous visual information you normally don't experience a combination of the different interpretations. Instead you see only one interpretation. After a time, your perception will begin to switch between each of the competing alternatives.

Binocular rivalry is a type of perceptual rivalry. When two different images are presented to the eyes simultaneously, two, you are only conscious of one of the two images at a time. One is dominant the other is suppressed. Every few seconds the perceptual dominance will switch. eyes two different images the two different image are presents to the

Dr. James Pomerantz of Rice University has several YouTube videos on visual illusions. A project of one of his students won third place at the 2014 international Illusion Contest.