

The Four Quarters Problem

History and provenance

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September 7, 2026

The spinning-table puzzle

Jay Lorch's puzzle collection gives the four-coin spinning-table problem and a seven-move construction for making all four coins *match* [1]. Laurent Lessard also discusses quarter flipping on a spinning table in 2019 [2]. These are documented expositions; I did not establish the puzzle's original inventor.

A distinction worth preserving

"All coins match" allows either all heads or all tails. The page instead asks for all heads. Consequently a seven-move all-matching answer does not, by itself, solve the stated version.

The new solution converts an all-matching strategy into a 15-move all-heads strategy, checking before the first move and after each move. It does not rely on learning which coins show heads, sensing a particular physical coin, or getting a favorable sequence of rotations.

Other puzzles involving four glasses or coins allow feeling or inspecting selected faces. They have different information rules and should not be silently treated as this version.

Sources

[1] Jay R. Lorch, Table with Four Coins, Brainteasers collection (undated).

<https://jaylorch.net/brainteasers/TableWithFourCoins/>

[2] Laurent Lessard, Quarter flipping on a spinning table (2019).

<https://laurentlessard.com/bookproofs/quarter-flipping-on-a-spinning-table/>

Sources checked September 7, 2026. A documented appearance is not necessarily the earliest appearance.