

Far Out Corners

Your brain combines visual information to give one of these boxes a life of its own.

Try This

- Cover one eye.
- Walk from side to side and watch the small box in the center.
- Notice that the box seems to turn as you walk by.

What's Going On?

When you ride in a car, nearby objects seem to whiz by, while distant scenery is so far off that it seems to be following you. In the same way, the innermost corner of the box is the farthest away from you, so it moves less than the rest of the box. Your brain can only explain this by assuming that the box is turning as you walk past.

This box-turning effect is most dramatic with one eye closed. That's because it's hard to judge depth in the boxes when you look at them with only one eye. With insufficient information about the boxes, your brain assumes that they are ordinary boxes that stick out, not in.