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Most often the hour hand is friction fit onto a hollow tube. The shaft or base of the hour hand is also a tube.

Therefore most hour hands are movable. So you should be able to "move" the hour hand to whatever hour the clock just struck. Be sure that you are capable of counting to twelve (12). :-) (kidding)

Grasp the hour hand as close to the base or tube as possible so you do NOT put too much torque on the end of the hand. Grasping any hand by its pointed end may result in breakage. Even if you are simply setting the time with the minute hand.

Now remember I said MOST!!! If in your opinion you feel too much resistance, then take the trouble to visit the nearest clock professional. It will behoove you to establish a good working relationship with that person especially if you continue to collect clocks in the future.

Now if you are looking to remove an hour hand, usually a hand puller (as we use for a stubborn minute hands) will not work because of the hand size. One solution is to grasp the hour hand with your thumb and index finger and try to remove the hour hand by using a twisting motion. This "rocking" of the hand back and forth in order to loosen it is used along with a slight pulling motion toward your body or away from the clock face.

Please be sure to grasp the hollow base of the hour hand and NOT the hand itself.

If that fails then use some penetrating oil such as liquid wrench and let it sit over night and then repeat the above procedure. If the hour hand is still not where you want it then try using two (2) identical size flat head screwdrivers and "pry" with the heads being 180 degrees apart.

You could also place something small, such as another screwdriver, or a metal washer(s) of equal thickness under the prying screwdrivers. This will give your greater leverage.

NEVER use a pair of pliers on an hour or minute hands.

Another alternative

Another way to correct for out of sequence strike or chime function for count wheel systems and non-correcting chime systems is the following.

With count wheel systems there is a easy way to fix the "count".

Each strike sequence, or for that matter each chime sequence, has three phases of operation. These are warn, run, and stop. Most times the stop sequence is in effect and out of this the minute hand approaching the quarter hour or half hour or full hour and does what is

called a warn. A warn is the way the clock prepares to strike or chime. What happens is that the set of gears, called the "train", prepares to strike/chime by allowing the gear to move slightly. This movement can be heard and usually occurs about 5 minutes or so before the strike/chime sequence.

We can use this warn to recycle a count wheel system or a non-correcting chime system. Assume that the clock only strikes the hour, but this will work for any count or non-correcting systems, you would first move the minute hand to say 5 minutes before the hour and listen for the gear movement AKA the warn.

Once you hear, or sometimes feel, this warn take place you can then move the minute hand backwards for a few minutes, and please do not go past the preceding quarter hour, and the clock will strike or chime the next sequence. In count wheel systems each time the strike is activated the clock will strike the next hour and in the case of non-correcting chiming sequences the clock will chime the next quarter hour assuming that this procedure is performed at the first quarter hour.

Count the number of strikes or listen to the chime tune and then repeat as necessary until the number of strikes is one less than the hour indicated and then the next time you do NOT move the hand backwards but instead continue to the hour or quarter hour for chiming clocks, and the clock will then count the correct number of hours for the time indicated by the hour hand.

In non-correcting chime clocks you will have to hear the last set of notes for the hour chime, assuming that you are on the first quarter hour, which is where I suggest you perform this correction, and then as you allow the hand to proceed to the first quarter hour the next set of chime notes will be the correct sequence for a quarter after the hour. After that just set the time correctly and allow the clock to chime a each quarter hour.

Unique situations

The hour hands on Herschede grandfather clocks and most Japanese and Korean wall clocks are designed to be moved independently. The hour wheel is pressed fit into the hour tube and the snail. So the strike will correspond to whatever the hour hand says. Of course the hour hand can only fit on the hour tube in one (1) way. This is accomplished by a slot along the shaft of the hour hand and a corresponding pin along the hour tube. Meaning that if you have to set the time for daylight savings or if the clock has stopped, all you have to do is move the hour hand to the right hour. So if the strike is counting a different hour than what the hand indicates you have a much bigger problems than I can address here and you need to pay a visit to your local and friendly clockmaster.

A service from, E-mail address: Mike@atmos-man.com
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A specialist in Atmos and 400-day clock repair.
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In continuous horological service since 04/01/1982.

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