

False shuffles, false cuts, and forces

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False Shuffles

Definition

False shuffles are techniques which appear to fairly shuffle a deck, when actually the cards in the deck are maintained in an order appropriate to the illusion being performed.

This means that the deck is NOT required to end up in full deck order, or indeed ANY given order.

Discussion

For example, for doing many versions of Paul Curry's OUT OF THIS WORLD, the deck starts in red/black order. When you're done shuffling via the Red/Black Shuffle the deck is still in black/red order. So the trick will still work, but NO card is guaranteed to be in any known position.

And in actuality, any card control that requires shuffling the deck, such as the HINDU PICKUP control, the IN/OUT Jog control, or even a Milk Shuffle is a false shuffle.

You should also note that ANY technique of shuffling - overhand, tabled riffle, Faro, Hindu, etc. - all have methods to falsify the shuffle.

I, myself, IGNORE any riffle and any tabled shuffles, as I've NEVER in my life been paid to sit at a table and do card tricks, so although the ZARROW shuffle is the most amazing shuffle I've personally ever witnessed, I will never bother to learn it.

Also, since many lay people can't do a riffle shuffle, I don't do one either. I do the shuffle they do know, which is a modified overhand shuffle, along with an occasional Hindu shuffle.

I do however have several specific tricks that call for the Faro, and I do indeed do the Faro. However, the scripting calls attention to this unusual shuffle. My reasoning is that you, as a magician, HIDE the sneaky parts. So if it's not hidden, it's not sneaky.

How to False Shuffle

First key point to know – ATTITUDE and speed matters. NEVER pay attention to your hands when you do a false shuffle. If you pay attention, so will the audience. You want the shuffle to appear at the edges of their attention, so they realize that they SAW a shuffle without actually WATCHING the shuffle. I usually look at a spectator and talk to them as I shuffle. **NOTE:** Pick the spectator to talk to based on which spectator gives the most cover for any bad angles.

Second key point – ALWAYS have a backup plan. Even the best magicians have been known to drop a card, lose a break, or miss a force.

Third key point – always match a false shuffle with a false cut if possible. It adds to the confusion.

With that in mind, let's do a couple of quick false shuffles.

OPTICAL SHUFFLE

Demo: <https://vimeo.com/809396199/63d91a76e8>

Expo: <https://vimeo.com/809396350/88d496ac9a>

The first is the easiest. It is the OPTICAL SHUFFLE. Nothing happens at all in this shuffle, other than the deck is cut. It is an optical illusion.

To perform this, hold the cards in overhand shuffle grip and strip off the first packet. Notice that your right hand moves upwards and your left hand moves downward.



Repeat this up and down motion with BOTH hands, but do NOT actually strip off any cards.

It will look wonderful.

At the end, if you toss the right-hand packet at an angle on top of the left-hand packet, the bottom cards of the right hand packet will stick up, and you can act as if they are cards that didn't quite get shuffled, so you tap them into the deck.



Watch the video labeled “Demo_Optical.mp4” to see what it looks like to laymen.

Watch the video labeled “EXPOSED_Optical_Shuffle.mp4” to see it broken down, slow-motion, etc.

PICKUP SHUFFLE

Demo: <https://vimeo.com/809396286/42ec9cd96c>

Expo: <https://vimeo.com/809396452/a6eb90f1d4>

Second is the PICKUP SHUFFLE. I have no idea what it is actually called.

The basic idea is that each block that you strip from the right hand gets picked up as you go to strip another block from the right hand.

So, the first block is stripped.



As your right hand returns to the left hand to strip another block, the FIRST block gets gripped between the base of the right thumb and the middle of the 2 middle fingers of the right hand. As shown below:



As you repeat this process of 'strip a packet'/'pick up a packet', you are actually just cutting the cards.

This shuffle CAN be done with the cards facing the audience, as the bottom card does indeed change on every shuffle.

PARTIAL HINDU SHUFFLE

<https://vimeo.com/809396144/c43d069333>

I have no idea if anyone else has actually used this or invented this, but it's too simple not to have been discovered before.

This shuffle will NOT keep any part of the deck – except the first stripped of packet (top) from being shuffled.

You basically do a Hindu shuffle holding the deck more vertical, as shown here.



As you strip off the first packet, it will fall onto your left fingers.

As you strip the second packet, simply bend your little finger so it lies atop the first packet. Keep this little finger break throughout the entire shuffle.



As you can see here, mid-shuffle, the arrow is pointing to the tip of the little finger.

The vertical position of the shuffle keeps the HUGE break from being spotted.

When the shuffle ends, cut at the break and your original top packet is back on top.

False cuts

Definition

False cut is a generic term for any way to openly cut a deck that concludes with at least some portion of the deck in its original state and position. A full-deck false cut maintains the order of the entire deck, while a partial false cut typically maintains either the top or bottom stock.

If you read the above statement closely, you'll see that the double undercut is indeed a false cut. However, most people think it's a control. Po-ta-toe ... po-tah-toe

Discussion

Since I don't do tabled shuffles, you'd think I didn't do tabled false cuts, but you'd be wrong. Working closeup and strolling doesn't mean you ABANDON the table top, you merely don't count on it.

And again, as with the shuffles, attitude and speed greatly affect the "convincibility" of the move.

STUPID CUT

<https://vimeo.com/809396070/8483eff8e9>

The STUPID CUT a dumb idea that works. It isn't always usable, but very often can be used at opportune times.

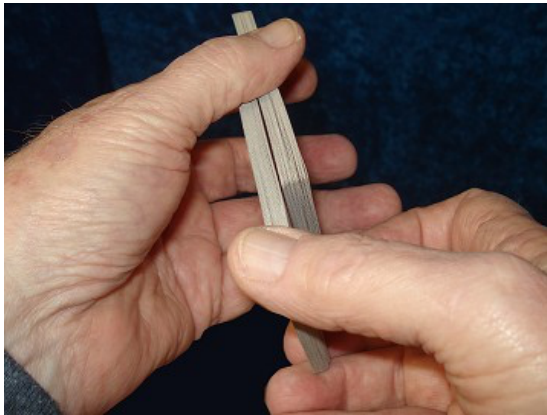
Basically, you're going to cut the bottom $\frac{1}{2}$ of the deck off and place it on the table. Then, you'll put the TOP of the deck on top of the bottom of the deck.

You start the cut on an off moment, which is usually when I talk to someone. The deck is held fairly vertical, as this removes a view of the top of the deck from most spectators. If someone is standing to my far right, that's the person I turn and talk to as I do the move.

Here's the start of the moves. Holding the deck vertically.



Next, you pull off the bottom block of cards.



You quietly and deliberately put this block of cards onto the table while continuing to talk.

Then you simply take the remaining packet from your left hand and drop it “more flamboyantly” on top of the first packet.

The second packet I do this way to draw the audience's attention to this part of the cut – since it's too late to spot anything.

I tend use it after someone else shuffles the deck, and I've taken a peek of the top card.

It just adds to the idea that the cards are mixed.

OSE CUT

<https://vimeo.com/809395975/e54834436a>

The Ose cut, invented by Jay Ose – is the BEST false cut ever.

The OSE cut preserves the entire deck in starting position. To do this:

- Cut the top 1/3 of the deck and place it on the table to your left.
- Cut the next 1/3 and place it on the table in the middle.
- Cut the final 1/3 and place it on the table to the right.
- Pick up the left packet and place on the middle packet, and place those TWO packets on top of the right most packet.

A really interesting variation of this cut mixed with a Charlier shuffle can be found at Lybrary.com. It's called the JOJ False Shuffle.

Charlier Cut

Demo: <https://vimeo.com/809395749/a9349fac4e>

Expo: <https://vimeo.com/809395870/3796e1526b>

Yes, I'm calling a shuffle a CUT! Because this looks way more like a cut than a shuffle. It keeps the deck in order, but the card on top will have changed. You can circumvent that, which will be explained below.

The Charlier Shuffle is also quite awkward to do with a full deck. It's best for packets of cards, envelopes, ESP cards, etc. 10 to 20 cards or so.

To do the Charlier Shuffle, you simply spread the top few cards and take them into your right hand.

You then spread a few cards – FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE LEFT HAND PACKET – and put these cards on top of the right hand still-spread packet. Continue like this until you're out of cards.

A backwards mnemonic for this is “The bottom cards go on top, and the top cards go on the bottom”.

Forces

Definition

Card Forces are techniques used to make a spectator select a certain card OR cards even though it appears they had a free choice.

Sometime multiple outs are needed, since some force techniques only guarantees that one of a group of cards will be picked.

Discussion

And yes, once again, attitude matters. And yes, once again, have a back up plan.

There are categories of card forces:

- psychological
- physically in magicians' hands
- in spectators' hands
- gaffed cards
- mathematical forces
- prop forces (dice, dates on coins, etc.)
- equivokes.

Hopefully, I don't have to explain that MOST mathematical forces, and MOST prop forces are horrible and shouldn't be done. The 10-20 force is a GREAT example of horrible...although it is POSSIBLE to make it usable. But why go to that work when something else will work just as well?

Forces done in the spectator's own hands appear to be the most effective, per THE JINX blog. This actually makes sense. How could YOU as the magician affect them if you're not even touching the cards?

In many force, it's best to insert some talking or by-play with a spectator to put about 10-15 seconds MINIMUM between the execution of the force, and when the spectator actually looks at their selection. This delay helps the spectator not notice the discrepancy that many forces have.

CrissCross or X force

<https://vimeo.com/809395847/6bb2643e79>

Basically, the top card of the deck is your force card.

You have the spectator cut the deck and put the cut off portion on the table.

You pick up the remainder of the deck, turn it perpendicular to the spectators packet and place yours on top.

With a suitable time-delay, you then lift off the top packet and have them peek at the top card of the bottom packet, which is the force.

Gaffed decks

Gaffed decks make this task easy. You can have a 1 way force deck, a deck of repeating banks of cards, along with Rough/smooth variants like the Pop-Eyed-Popper deck.

Business Card Prophecy

<https://vimeo.com/809395695/dfc09d2053>

This force is actually a variant of the CRISSCROSS force, but the clever handling by Bill Simon hides the discrepancy.

The force card is on top of the deck. You spread cards to about the middle of the deck and have someone say STOP. When they say STOP, you separate the deck at that point, as shown:



Notice that the left hand has pushed the top card of the LEFT packet to the right a bit. Now, the right hand turns palm down and grips the pushed off card by the upper right corner. As shown:



The right hand now turns face up, and drops lower than the left hand which puts its packet on top of the face up (outjogged) card. As shown:



You now square up the deck, leaving the STOPPED card protruding and proceed to make a small delay. After the delay, you spread the deck and show the card beneath the STOPPED card.

Psycross Force

This force was invented by Gianni Mattiolo and can be found in the ENCYCLOPEDIA OF IMPROMPTU CARD FORCES.

The name comes from (I'm guessing) a mix of PSYCHOLOGY and CRISSCROSS force...because that's what this is. And it's a beaut.

The psychological/time delay come about by discussing which way the spectator cuts the cards.

A key point to remember:

- If the spectator cut the cards by the ends, you'll cut the remaining packet in $\frac{1}{2}$ by the wide side.
- If, instead, the spectator cut the cards by the wide side, you'll cut

the remaining packet in $\frac{1}{2}$ by the narrow ends.

With that in mind, here's the process.

- Card to force is on top.
- With the deck on your palm, have the spectator cut off about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the deck.
- As explained above, you cut the remaining cards the opposite way.
- You then say, "Look at the way he cut the cards. Interesting! Most people cut the cards the way I did. I think he's a serial killer. [Use whatever line you like.]"
- Have him replace his packet on top of the packet remaining in your palm.
- You then start to replace yours, but instead, you stop and say, "Whoops. Almost forgot. You need to look at your card.". As you say this, you gesture toward the packet on your palm.
- He takes the top card, which is the force.

NOTES

The RED/BLACK shuffle, aka the Laurie Ireland Shuffle was actually invented by Charles Jordan.

I don't believe you should EVER consider or use a CUT – even a real one – as the only way to pretend to mix a deck. Most people consider the CUT to be the cherry on the SHUFFLE sundae. You can shuffle and NOT cut, but I don't think you should CUT and not shuffle.

Most people consider the squaring action to be the end of a cut.

OPTICAL SHUFFLE can be found at **CARD COLLEGE #2** – p260.

Using the false cuts above, remember to NEVER do any one of them more than one time for a given audience. They are so idiosyncratic that it makes them somewhat memorable, and the time-delay may not work the second time.

If you have problems understanding any of this material, please feel free to contact me and I'll make sure you get what you need to figure it out.

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We can chat via email, Zoom, phone, meet for lunch, etc.