



PM PLUS



EFFECT: The magician turns his back and instructs two spectators each to cut the face down deck for a selection. The selections are absolutely free and, in fact, the spectators may change their minds and re-cut if they like. The cuts are replaced, burying the selections. The magician then turns around and begins dealing cards face down **without ever looking at the backs of any cards**. Suddenly, after “feeling a vibration,” the magician stops dealing and begins a second pile. Another “vibration” is felt and the magician again stops dealing. At no point does the magician ever look at a card. Now the magician asks each spectator to concentrate on her card. The magician names each of the selections and then instructs the spectators to turn over the top cards of their respective piles. These turn out to be the selections!!!

This truly “impossible” location is based on a mathematical principle and requires no skill. The level of impossibility is extremely high since the selections are completely free and **the magician never even looks at the cards!**

METHOD: Two “key” cards are used to achieve this extraordinary location. The key cards have tiny raised punches at their outer right corner that can be felt by the thumb as the cards are dealt face down. (See the introduction to this section for the details of creating the necessary key cards and for an alternate method involving pencil dots instead of punches.)

SETUP: You will need to make two punched cards. If you want to do the mind reading (which I highly recommend!) you will need to stack the deck in a known order. Those who do memorized deck work are all set. If you haven’t learned a memorized order yet, there is another way that will allow you to do the mind reading anyway. This will be explained at the end. For now, place the cards into your favorite order i.e. Aronson stack, Tamariz stack etc. Don’t use a stack in which the colors alternate because this will stand out like a sore thumb when the deck is scrutinized at the beginning. If you don’t have a favorite stack, just shuffle the deck and then **write down** the order from top down, numbering each card as you go.

Once the deck is in a known order, remove the 1st and 27th cards. In the Aronson stack this would be the jack of spades (1) and the five of diamonds (27). These are the cards that must have punches in their outer right and inner left corners (face down). Put the work in and reposition them at positions one and twenty-seven. You’re ready to rock! (**Note:** The first time through you might want to turn the punched cards **face up** in order to see how they will locate the two selections. Ultimately you will simply *feel* the punches to perform the location.)

CUTTING PROCEDURE: The two selections are completely free but there is a restriction. The first person must cut *less* than 26 cards and the second person must cut past the original 27th card. Below you will find a presentation for the effect that creates these conditions in a very natural way. For now,

let's see how the PM Principle works. Be sure the punched cards are at position 1 and 27 in the face down deck. Now, with your right hand, cut less than half the cards (about a third) and look at the *face card* of the cut section. We'll call this **packet A**. Hold packet A for the moment. With your left hand, cut about half the remaining cards and again look at the face card of the cut section. Call this **packet B**. (You may want to write down the identities of the selections for this experiment. Let's say you cut the 7 of Diamonds in packet A and the Queen of Spades in packet B.) You must now replace the packets as follows: Place packet A (the one in your right hand) onto the portion remaining on the table. Finally place packet B (left hand) onto the tabled deck. This *reverses* the order of the packets since packet A was the former top section of the deck. Think about what happened. It appears that the two selections are completely lost. Actually, the second selection is on top of one of the punched cards and is easy to locate. It's the first selection that seems impossible to locate. That's where the PM Principle comes into play. Follow the directions below and you will locate **both** selections:

Hold the deck face down in the left hand in readiness to deal the cards. Begin to deal cards into a face down pile, **counting backwards from 25** as you deal. (Thus as the first card is dealt you mentally think "25", on the 2nd card you think "24" etc.) Watch for the face up key card (or feel for the punch if it's face down). Let's say that the first key card **falls at number 15**. Remember this number (15). You are going to begin a second count (assuming you want to read their minds). In order not to forget the first number viz. 15, I'd recommend counting like this: 15 one, 15 two, 15 three etc. You will burn the first key number (15) into your memory and will be able to easily remember the second number as well. Continue dealing cards face down (and counting) until you see (or feel) the second key card. **Let's say that your count at this point was 15 - twelve.** In other words you had dealt twelve cards past your first key (which occurred at number 15). *This second key card must be dealt into a new pile to the right of the first pile.* (Note: After you switch to pile two, the top card of pile one will be the *second* selection.) Continue dealing cards onto this second pile, counting cards now. Count up to your first "magic number" and stop dealing. In the above example the magic number is 15. You will count **15 cards past the keycard and stop**. The 15th card past the second key card is the *first* selection!!!

The top card of the pile on the left is now the 2nd selection. The top card of the pile on the right is the 1st selection! This by itself would be a mind-bender. However, your counting will now allow you to **name both of the selections without ever looking at the back or front of any card!** This is POWERFUL stuff!

In the example, you have **two key numbers** viz. 15 and 12. Remember - You counted backwards from 25 and happened to be at fifteen when you felt the first punch. You then counted forwards from one until you felt the next punch. Here's what happened: 25, 24, 23, ... 17, 16, 15 (felt punch), 15-1, 15-2, 15-3, ... 15-11, 15-12 (felt 2nd punch and put the punched card on a new pile). You then dealt 15 cards (same as first key number) onto this punched card. At this point the top cards of the piles are the two selections. Be sure this is true. The two key numbers viz. 15 and 12 will now allow you to **name the selections** as follows:

NAMING THE FIRST SELECTION: The top card of the right hand packet is **ONE HIGHER** than your first key number (which is fifteen). Thus its stack number is 16. In the Aronson stack this would be the 8C. Tell the spectator on your right i.e. the one who made the first selection, to concentrate on her card. Be sure that you don't look at the backs of the cards. This negates the marked deck explanation. Do a bit of acting and then name the card. (Remember, it's one higher than your first key number.) Finally, have the spectator on your right turn over the top card of the packet closest to her. It will be the correct card!

NAMING THE SECOND SELECTION: You'll have to do a simple addition to determine its stack number. Recall your second key number. In this case it was 12. **Add this to 26** getting 38. This is the stack number of the second selection. In Aronson stack this would be the 10H. Repeat the theatrics used with the first spectator, naming the card and then having her turn over the top card of the packet closest to her. You will have read her mind and also found her card without ever looking at anything. **A blind magician can do this trick!** You can start a religion with this! It looks like the real deal.

NON-MEMORIZED DECK PROCEDURE: For those who don't do memorized deck work, I recommend the following: Write the numbers from 1 to 52 in two columns (1-26, then 26-52) on the left hand page in a *small* spiral notebook. Next to each number, write the card at that position in your stacked deck. When you reach the point of predicting the selections, take out the notebook and explain that you will **draw your impression** of the selections. Open the booklet so you can see the numbers. Hopefully you still remember what number you used as your "magic number" above. **The 1st spectator's selection is the card one higher in number than your first magic number.** In the description above, the magic number was 15. That means that the first spectator's card is number 16. If you do memorized deck work, you'll know that that is the 8C in the Aronson stack. If you are using the notebook, you'll know what card to draw by looking at your "cheat sheet." Now tear out your drawing, fold it and hand it to spectator one. Use the same technique to demonstrate mind reading with the second spectator as detailed above. The index written in the notebook eliminates the need for memorization.

NON-STACKED METHODS: You can position your punched or marked cards at 1 and 27 in an otherwise random deck and perform the location phase only. This is still extremely powerful since you never look at the cards! Also, if you use a random deck, you don't have to perform the second count. That is only needed if you want to do the mind reading.

Another option is to **peek** the cards at positions 1 and 27. This is easy for faro shufflers. You can then locate the selections by turning the cards **face up** as you deal. Just follow the same procedure outlined above. **NOTE** that the second count is unnecessary if you're skipping the mind reading phase. Simply count backwards from 25 as detailed above. There's no need to maintain a second count.

FINE POINTS: (1) When you instruct the spectators, you must be sure that they understand the restrictions. And yet, you don't want them to feel that there are any restrictions. I generally say, *"I am going to have two people choose cards by cutting the deck at random spots. Mary, Joe is going to need a chunk of cards, so please don't cut too many. Just cut less than half the cards so Joe has a large pack to pick from. Cut about a third. Joe, cut about half the remaining cards."* I also demonstrate for Mary by cutting about a third of the cards and looking at the face card of the cut packet. *Make sure that Mary knows to look at the **face card** of the cut packet and not the top card of the tabled portion.* Don't forget that it's your job to make the procedure clear to the spectators. If they mess up, it's your fault!

(2) Ask the spectator if she likes her card. If not, instruct her to replace the packet and cut again. Emphasize the freedom of the choices.

(3) Before you begin dealing to find the selections, tell the spectators that you will be able to find their selections because they will give off a "vibration." Mentalists call this "psychometry." You may want to set the tone by explaining that some people believe that one's possessions have an aura that identify them with their owner etc. You want the effect to go beyond the "pick a card - find the card" effect even though that, ultimately, is what happens.

(4) After the two spectators cut and replace the packets. I tell one of them to even up the deck and to put the card case on top so that I get no information when I turn around. This negates the thought that you are getting information from marks on the backs of the cards. Be sure that you make it clear that you NEVER look at the faces or backs of ANY card.

DANGER SPOTS: If the first spectator cuts past the 27th card, the effect will fail. If the second spectator fails to cut past the original 27th card (second key card), the effect will fail. Since you are going to turn your back as the spectators cut, you must be certain that they understand what to do. The trick is to get them to perform the correct procedure without making it seem that the trick would fail if they didn't follow directions.

INSURANCE: Because you are way out on a limb after all the buildup, you need a backup system in case one of the spectators fails to execute the directions properly. I always carry an "Invisible Deck" just in case. This way you can bail out and get something strong if things go haywire.

PUSHING THE PLOT: You can add one final dimension to the PM Principle viz. a prediction. There are a couple of ways to handle this. (1) You can set up two Brainwave decks in sequence to match your stack. Thus you would only have to count to the same position as the memorized location numbers. Apparently you predicted the selections before they were made!

(2) I have also used a prediction deck set up in the same order as the stacked deck with an odd colored card on the bottom. The odd card has a piece of double stick tape on its face. It's a simple matter to count to the spectator's selection and then run it under the spread to the bottom. If you then square up, cut the deck and spread, the double stick tape will cause the odd backed card to adhere to the selection and make it seem to have an odd back. This method should be used with a single selection rather than two.

FINAL THOUGHTS: It's important to sell the freedom of the selection and also the normality of the deck. I always use the \$100 challenge described above to "prove" that the deck is "normal." This ploy creates a lot of interest. The spectators might beat the magician out of \$100! It also proves beyond any doubt that the deck is full and seems to be unprepared. (It's a good idea to put a \$100 bill next to the deck to show that you really mean it. Just be sure you check your deck before the show or you may loose the \$100!)

CREDITS: I originally put out the PM Principle as a manuscript with a "bonus sheet" in 1990. It was a three phase mental routine involving a single selection. The bonus sheet detailed many variations, including the double selection. The mathematics involved was explained and there was also a method given for undoing the cut and positioning the selection at a known location. The manuscript is still available. Alex Elmsley's work in this area can be found in "The Collected Works" (1991). Simon Aronson has recently published some interesting work in "Try the Impossible" (2001).