

First of all, the 'Any Card' part. Give someone a perfectly fair selection of any card in the deck. Let's say she/he gets the Five of Spades. Make sure she/he understands she/he can have ANY CARD she/he wants.

Say, "Okay, so your target for the day is going to be the only other card in the deck that is the same value, and the same colour. That's the card you're trying to find".

Now the 'Any Number' part. Say, "Since you're going to do this, not me, let me see if I can't make life a little bit easier for you." Fan the cards towards yourself, and pretend to re-arrange the position of a few cards, as if anticipating the Spec's later actions. All you really need to do is shift the twin of her/his selection (5 Clubs in this case) to the top or bottom of the deck. Turn the deck face down again.

Start to slowly feed cards from hand to hand in front of the Spec, and invite her/him to push her/his face-down 5S into the spread at any time, leaving it out-jogged for half its length. Say, "It's up to you the number of cards that go past, 5 or 50, 20 or 40, any number you like, but when you feel it's right, just slide that puppy home and trust your instincts".

As soon as the Spec has inserted her/his card, look pleased, as if bursting with a sense of congratulations. Say, "Superb! You won't believe how good you are at this! Let me remind you. What was your card, was it the five of clubs or the five of spades?"

Some people have atrocious short-term memory, so you might get some fun out of this query. Whatever, remind her/him that she/he selected the five of spades. Turn her/his out-jogged card face up to remind her/him, executing Bill Simon's Prophecy Move* at the same time. Immediately square the cards and place the deck in the Spec's hands. Her/His card is now next to it's twin.

"Okay, so what did we agree your target was? The only other card with the same value, same colour, right? So, the only other black five. What is it?". She/He works out that you mean the 5 of Clubs.

Say, "Now when you decided to put your card where you did, what feelings were guiding you?" (a little 'Wonder Words touch, thank you Kenton).

Whatever the response, ride with it and say, "You could have put it in there at position 5 or 50, 20 or 40, anywhere... but I knew you'd get it right. I'm not touching those cards, check it out for yourself. I am SO proud of you!". She/He looks through the deck and finds that she/he placed her/his card (ANY CARD she/he wanted) at ANY NUMBER she/he wanted, but got it right next to it's twin.

And since she's/he's still holding a regular, shuffled deck, she/he has no idea how she/he did it.

Bill Simon's Prophecy Move appears in his 'Effective Card Magic'. I actually prefer Steve Beam's version, the Backwards Prophecy Move, which is found in 'Semi-Automatic Card Tricks' Volume 2. Either will achieve the desired result in this case.

*The desired card is on top of the deck. You spread the cards face down and ask a spec to point to one card. You pull the card out halfway and square up the deck leaving the chosen card sticking out. What happens next is you're going to replace that chosen card with the card on top when you put the card on the table:

- Assuming the deck is in your left hand, you come over the chosen card with your right hand so that the top of the chosen card hits the right fingers at about the second joint line from the top of the fingers. (This is to provide adequate cover.) The right thumb now begins to grab the top card. All at once while revolving your left hand clockwise a little bit, the right fingers push down on the chosen card sending back in the deck and the right thumb grabs the top card moving it up so that the right fingers, now free of the chosen card, grab it instead. You now have the top card in your right hand. You have 2 choices at this point: you can either place the top card face up on the table or face down.

Jay Sankey does this move flawlessly with an added "snap" when the card is picked-up in the right hand. I'm not nearly as polished as he, but doing it on the off-beat and by having a spec on my far-left side choosing the card, I have never been caught.

A couple of fine points on this move (read with cards in hand):

1) As you close the spread - after the chosen card is out jogged - allow your left index finger to extend out under the selection, as if you were lightly "bracing" it in its cantilevered condition. Note: the finger-tip does NOT peek out past the leading edge of the card; it's really just under the centre of the extended half of the card.

2) As the right hand reaches for the selection, the right finger-tips go under the extended card and actually touch the face of the card. At the same time the right thumb APPEARS to be squeezing down onto the selection near where it enters the centre of the deck; in reality, the thumb contacts the TOP card at its front end.

3) The action that allows you to take the top card can be made to very closely simulate genuinely pulling out the selection. DON'T push the selection back flush to the deck; rather, drag the top card outward with the right thumb as you roll the back of your hand forward in a slightly flourishy sort of "grabbing" action. This involves bending the right wrist, and the end result is that the top card will slide freely forward while the selection is simultaneously pushed partially into the deck. As the front edges of the cards pass each other you should be almost pinching them together; that is to say, the selection is bent upward slightly and the top card is bending downward slightly.

3) Immediately after the front edges have passed each other (selection sliding into the deck and top card coming forward off the deck), the left index finger takes over and pulls the selection flush into the deck. The right hand (fingers and all) should always appear to be moving forward ONLY. Since the selection is no longer directly below the top card, the right fingers naturally close onto the switched-in card to complete pulling it free from the deck.

4) As soon as the right fingers and thumb are firmly gripping ONLY the top card, the left thumb applies downward pressure onto the top card, thereby resisting the

outward pull of the right hand. Because the left index finger is right there, the top card can also be pinched between that finger and the left thumb. Ultimately the right hand is allowed to win this "tug-o-war", and the resulting sound is what makes that snapping noise that seems to be eluding you.

5) Contrary to your suggestion, it's VERY important that the left hand does NOT turn or rotate the deck at this point - if the card were really being pulled from the centre, twisting the deck would be a very unnatural thing to do and would actually risk tearing the card. The action you are trying to emulate is that of pulling the card STRAIGHT forward until it clears the deck.

6) Practice in front of a mirror, first genuinely pulling a card from the centre of the deck for a while, and then using the switch instead. When the two consistently look (and sound) the same you may be ready to use this sleight in public.

Done properly, this is a VERY deceptive move and makes for a great force OR final revelation. Done improperly, the audience may be polite but you will not have fooled them.

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