

The PM PRINCIPLE

by Michael Powers

EFFECT: The PM Principle is a *blockbuster* three phase mental routine. A prediction of things to come is made and set aside. The magician then turns around while the spectator *freely* selects a card (no force) and then buries it in the deck herself. The magician turns around and begins to deal cards *face down* from the face down deck. Suddenly, and without hesitation, one card is dealt face down onto the spectator's outstretched palm as the magician says "*That card had a different feeling than the others.*" The magician then asks the spectator to concentrate on her card while he draws his impression of her thoughts on paper. The paper is folded and set aside. Now the selection is named and the spectator is instructed to examine the card on her palm - it matches! The drawing is checked and it too matches the selection. Finally, the prediction made *before the card was selected* is also found to match, for the *killer ending!*

- *Extremely Easy to do*
- *Immediately repeatable*
- *No estimation*
- *No force*
- *No outs*
- *Works every time*
- *Deck can be examined*
- *Totally impossible!*

Comes complete with [REDACTED] typeset manuscript detailing several variations including borrowed deck versions. Bonus Effect also included. It's a hot one!

The
PM
PRINCIPLE

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The effect exactly as described on the front cover is achieved in a very easy way by following the steps outlined below.

Method: This effect is based on a subtle mathematical principle—the use of two key cards. The two key cards have tiny punches in the upper right corner which can be felt when the cards are dealt. Even knowing that these key cards are used is not sufficient for an understanding of how the location is achieved. Following the steps outlined below will achieve the effect exactly as stated above. Later in the manuscript, you will find an explanation of the mathematics of the PM Principle as well as borrowed deck variations and variations where the spectator shuffles the deck.

You have been provided with a deck of cards. Two of the cards contain the punches spoken of above. The two jokers each have a large black X across its backs. Before trying the punched card method, try the experiment outlined below to get a feel for how the PM Principle works.

Experiment: Remove the Jack of Spades (JS) and Eight of Hearts (8H) and place them aside. These are the cards with the punches and will be used later. This leaves you with a 50 card deck not counting the jokers. Count off 25 cards face down (half the deck). Now place one joker on top and one joker on the bottom of the 25 card packet. Finally place this now 27 card packet on top of the other 25 cards. This positions a joker on top of the face down deck followed by 25 cards then the other joker and finally 25 more cards. The backs of the jokers have large black X's on them for

easy identification in the face down deck. Place the deck face down on the table and follow the next steps exactly:

- 1) Cut about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the cards with your right hand.
- 2) Look at the bottom card of the cut packet and memorize it (or write it down).
- 3) Now, with your left hand, cut about half of the pack remaining on the table.
- 4) Place the cards from your right hand (the packet with the selection) onto the cards remaining on the table.
- 5) Finally, place the cards in your left hand on top and square up.

Think about what happened. It seems that there is no way to locate the selection. It was an arbitrary distance from the top of the deck and it was placed at an arbitrary position in the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ of the deck. It is not next to any key card and seemingly has no relationship to any key card. Luckily there is a simple mathematical relationship between its location and the locations of the two marked jokers. Perform the following steps and you will begin to see the power of the **PM Principle**.

- 1) Take the face down deck into left hand dealing position.
- 2) Begin to deal cards one at a time face down and count silently *up to and including* the first joker (marked card). Let's say the marked card falls at number 14. Remember the number - 14.
- 3) Subtract that number (14) from 26 getting 12. We'll call this result (12) your *secret number*. (Note: You will always be subtracting from 26.) Remember your secret number (12) as you continue to deal cards face down. You can forget everything except the secret number - 12.
- 4) Keep dealing until you see the next marked card. Deal that card to the table. Now deal 12 more cards i.e. a number equal to your secret number. The 12th card after the marked joker will be the selection! It always works! You simply deal your secret number of cards from the second marked card.

Be sure not to count the marked card as one of the 12. Deal the marked card and then count off 12 more. (Remember - you

don't always count 12. You count a number equal to your secret number as defined above. In this example the number is 12.) The 12th card is the selection. That's all there is to it!

Later we will discuss how to get set up from a shuffled deck, how to reset immediately and other details which will strengthen the effect. At this point you should try setting up again to be sure you understand how to use the two marked jokers. Remember - place a joker on top, then 25 cards, then the second joker and finally the balance of the deck - all face down. Run through the steps above again to be sure you arrive at the selection.

Obviously you cannot use jokers with X's on them when you really perform the effect. This is where the JS and 8H come into play. These two cards have been specially "marked" with tiny punches or raised spots at their outer right corners (face down). Your thumb should be able to feel these bumps as you deal. This allows you to know that you have dealt one of the special cards even without looking at the deck. As an insurance policy I recommend that you "pencil dot" these two cards at their outer left corners. This places a tiny but discernable mark on the special cards. This is optional but I recommend it. The tiny punches can sometimes be difficult to feel and the dots allow you to perform the effect even on days when your right thumb might be a bit insensitive. Also the punches tend to become flattened with time and become more difficult to feel.

Experiment 2: Remove the two marked jokers and replace them with the two punched cards (JS and 8H). Thus in the face down deck you should have a punched card on top followed by 25 normal cards then the other punched card and finally the remaining 25 normal cards. Try dealing the top card face down to the table. Could you feel the tiny punch? Place it back on top and this time "wipe" the right thumb across the outer right corner as you deal. This may feel a little unnatural but will look normal to those watching. Try dealing several cards and be sure you can feel the difference between the punched card and the normal ones. If you cannot consistently feel the punched card, you will have to pencil

dot the cards and rely on the visible marks. This hardly weakens the effect so don't worry about it.

Set the deck up with the punched cards in position (one on top and one 27th from top). We will now repeat experiment 1 but use the punches to identify the special cards. Follow these steps exactly:

- 1) Place the set up deck face down on the table. Cut about 1/3 of the cards with your right hand and look at the bottom card of the cut packet. This is the selection - remember it.
- 2) With your left hand, cut about half of the cards remaining on the table.
- 3) Place the cards in your right hand onto the tabled portion.
- 4) Place the cards from your left hand on top of the tabled pack and square up.

Again - it seems that the selection could not be located. But luckily the PM Principle will make it possible. Place the deck face down in left hand dealing position and begin dealing cards face down to the table counting silently to yourself. Count up to and including the first punched (and/or pencil dotted) card. Let's say that the punched card falls at position 15 this time. Subtract that number (15) from 26 as before (always from 26). The number arrived at viz. 11 is your secret number. Remember it as you continue to deal. Keep dealing until you feel the second punched card. Deal it to the table and count 11 more cards (11 is your secret number in this example). The 11th card will be the selection!! Check it to be sure.

Just finding the card under these conditions is good. However, we will need to frame the entire sequence with an **ESP** theme to make it really hot. Here's how I play it out: (Set up the deck with punched cards on top and at 27th (i.e. with 25 cards between them) and place it face down on the table.)

Say, "*Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to conduct an experiment in ESP. Would you assist me?*" (Select an assistant.) *The order*

of the cards is irrelevant but I'll mix them a bit. (Perform a false shuffle or cut or leave this step out.) *Are you right or left handed?* (Assume right handed.) *I am going to turn around so I can't see what you do.* (Turn around.) *Please cut about one third of the cards (less than half is all that is required) with your right hand. Look at the bottom card of this packet and memorize it.* (pause and allow for a different selection if you wish) *Hold those cards in your right hand and cut about half of the remaining cards with your left hand.* (pause) *Now place the cards from your right hand onto the pile on the table and then cover them with the cards in your left hand. This buries your random selection at a random location controlled totally by you. Square up the cards so I cannot see where you have cut.* (Pause and then turn around.) *This is a very fair way to select a card. You controlled everything and I didn't even look. Please place your hand palm up near the deck. I am going to deal cards face down until I get an "impression." I am hoping that one card will give me a different feeling than the others. That card may be related to your card. Let's see what happens.* (Begin the PM Principle sequence, dealing cards face down and counting until you feel the first punched card. Let's assume that it fell at number 11. Subtract 11 from 26 (*always 26*) getting 15. 15 is your secret number this time-remember it. Continue dealing cards until the next punch is felt. The selection will be your secret number (15) from the punched card. Make sure the dealing is as continuous as possible. Try not to pause to think about what is going on. When you reach the selection, deal it onto the spectator's outstretched palm.) Now say *"I am getting a very strong feeling about this card."* (Place the remaining cards face down next to the already dealt cards - you will be able to painlessly reset for a repeat in a moment!) Say *"I'll bet your card is not among these."* (With these words, pick up the dealt pile and begin spreading the cards face up. When you come to the first punched card (JS or 8H), cut the spread at that point putting the upper half underneath. This places a punched card at the bottom of the face up deck. Now place the tabled packet of undealt cards face up onto the cards in your hand. This restores the two punched cards to 1st and 26th!! Note - you will need to get the 2nd punched card to 27th in a moment to be fully reset.

You will do this later by placing the selection back into the top half of the deck. Talk about an easy reset...

As you are resetting say "*I don't get any special feeling about any of these cards.*" Finally say "*Please name your thought of card.*" Pause for a moment to build suspense and have the spectator look at the card on her palm. It's a killer.

To totally reset, you must place the spectator's selection back into the top half of the deck which brings the second punched card to 27th from the top. You are totally reset and ready to go again. This is the basic PM Principle effect. (Note: If you are relying on the punches instead of the pencil dots, you should either look at the spectator as you deal or look upward, away from the deck. This increases the total impact.)

Further Adventures with the PM Principle: Having a punched card on top may weaken the deceptiveness of this effect for magicians who know about punched cards. Also, people may begin to check the top card and notice that one of the two punched cards is always there. There is a solution. The same effect, exactly as described, works even if you place several cards on top of the punched card at the top of the deck!! The only required conditions are (1) That there be 25 cards between the two punched cards. (2) That the first cut is made between the two punched cards and (3) That the second cut is made below the punched card in the tabled packet. Thus you can position several cards above the upper punched card. This increases the deceptiveness by varying the top card and allowing curious magicians to feel for work in the cards. Since there are only two punched cards, even magicians in the know are unlikely to find any work in the deck.

You can even allow the spectator to cut the deck as long as you can be sure that you can cut (or pass) the original top card to near the top.

Impromptu Methods: If you can pencil dot (or punch) two cards in someone else's deck the effect can be a killer for magicians. An

alternative is to memorize two key cards and then deal the cards face up onto the table. You need to know the top card and the 27th from top card. (Faro shufflers can peek the 26th card as in a faro check. Simultaneously peek the bottom card and then double cut the bottom card to the top.) You would now have a cut made and the selection buried as usual. Now deal cards *face up* from the face down deck, counting as before. Use your memorized key cards as you would the punched cards to arrive at the selection which should be dealt face down to generate suspense. The face up method is still extremely deceptive even for magicians. Key cards seem to be precluded. *Crimped cards* as key cards are also possible and work very well in the BONUS EFFECT below. You can also *nail nick* the keys in borrowed deck. Any method for identifying your key cards will do.

Spectator Shuffles: Locate the punched cards and palm them out. (Bringing them to the bottom and then using a Gambler's Cop works nicely.) Have the spectator shuffle the remaining 50 cards. Add the two gaffs onto the deck as the spectator returns the deck to you. If you are seated a simple way is to have the two gaffs in left hand dealing position with the left hand below the table. Now slide the deck toward the table's edge with your right hand. The left hand moves upward finally meeting the deck just as the deck clears the table. The two gaffs are thus added to the bottom in a very deceptive way. Now double cut one to the top and split the deck performing a Faro Check to be sure you have 26 cards in each half. At this point I generally take the bottom half in left hand dealing position and the top half in overhand shuffle position in the right hand i.e. the right hand is palm up. Now run the top card of the right hand half deck onto the left hand half deck and then shuffle normally. Finally, double cut the bottom card to the top. This positions the two gaffed cards at 1st and 27th.

Generalizing Further: Throughout the description of the PM Principle you have been told to subtract the first counted number from 26 to arrive at your "secret number." All that really matters is that you know how many cards are between the two key cards. In the above presentation there were 25 cards between the keys.

Simply add one to this number to get the important number (26). Thus, if you knew that there were 21 cards between the key cards, you would use the number 22 instead of 26. You would proceed as usual except you would subtract from 22 instead of 26. The PM Principle is very general and an understanding of the flexibility will allow you to modify this effect and hopefully create new and better ways of using the PM Principle. For example, you could have the spectator shuffle the entire deck. You could then spread the cards face down and determine the number of cards between the gaffs (assuming you have pencil dotted the key cards) by sight. If too few or too many cards lie between the keys you would add or subtract accordingly. You wouldn't have to get exactly 25 cards between the keys due to the above generalization.

The Mathematics of the PM Principle: Mathematically, the PM Principle is easy to understand using elementary algebra. Not everyone will care how it works, however some magicians enjoy this sort of thing.

Let's call the number of cards in the first cut N . This means that the selection is $N-1$ cards after the first key card. This leaves $52-N$ cards on the table with $26-N$ cards above key card 2. (This is due to the fact that key 2 was originally at position 27. Think about it.) After the spectator cuts the second time and places the original packet into the break, we can find N easily.

We know there are $26-N$ cards before key 2 and thus $27-N$ up to and including key 2. This is the number you arrive at during the first count. Thus when you counted say 15 cards up to and including the key card, you knew $27-N$. When you subtracted that number from 26 you obtained $26-(27-N)$ or $N-1$. But remember - the selection is exactly $N-1$ cards after the other key card! That's it That's the PM Principle.

This proof can be easily generalized to show that the number 26 is always one more than the number of cards between the keys and that the principle still applies even when the first key card is not the top card as described above.

BONUS EFFECT: Set up the deck for the normal PM Principle i.e. one key on top and one at 27th from top. For this effect you will have to have pencil dots at the outer left corners so the cards can be spotted in a spread. Proceed as usual, having the selection made and buried while your back is turned. Now spread the deck face down as you comment about how the selection could have been made anywhere. Note when the first pencil dot shows up in the spread and continue to spread until you see the other dotted card. (Keep the first dotted card in view as you continue to spread.) Use a pass to move all cards between the keys *as well as* the second key, to the bottom of the deck. Leave the first key card in place. You may openly move the cards if you feel the pass is outside your range of expertise. This action will *leave the selection 26th from the top!* Now a **Faro Check** will let you *see* the selection. From that point there are a semi-infinite number of ways to go.... The other advantage of having the selection positioned at 26 by this action is that an *Incomplete Faro Location* is possible. For those who know the Faro Shuffle and are not aware of this principle, a brief description follows:

Incomplete Faro Location: The spectator can be made to locate her own selection by a free cut when the selection is 26th from the top. Follow the above procedure, positioning the free selection at 26th. Now perform the following actions:

Place the deck face down on the table and remind the spectator of the total freedom in making the selection and the freedom in burying the selection while your back was turned. Tell the spectator to cut more than half the deck, but to be sure to leave more than two or three cards on the table. Thus the spectator cuts about 3/4 of the cards. Take these cards and split *near* the center in readiness for a Faro type shuffle. Your right hand holds the top part after the cut while your left hand holds the bottom portion. Now begin the Faro action being sure that the bottom card of the left hand portion remains the bottom card as you would in an OUT Faro. It doesn't matter if you split the pack at its center as long as it is cut *close to* the center. When the Faro is finished say

that you have further randomized the deck by shuffling it. Point out that the number of cards remaining on the table is unknown to anyone and was totally determined by the spectator herself. Have her count the cards. Let's say there are 9 cards in that packet. Point out that the number "9" was arrived at by complete random chance as was the selection. Have the spectator count down to the 9th card in the portion you just Faro shuffled. *It will be the selection!!* (Also see my *Incomplete Four Way* in **Top Secret Stuff** for a more elaborate routine with four selections based on the incomplete Faro.) Setting the deck up for the PM Principle after this effect is fairly easy because the cards have been counted. The top card of the small packet is one of the keys and you know from the count how many cards it contains. The other small packet contains the same number of cards. Locate the second key card and adjust to insure that there are 25 cards between the keys.

Final Thoughts: The PM Principle is easy to use and allows for a really "impossible" location. The mental theme presented here is just one idea on how to get magic from this principle. I hope to see it put to other uses. The more subtle the better. I hope to be fooled by someone using the PM Principle in a clever way.

Punching your own cards: Jeff Busby sells a nice device for punching cards for \$29.00. The device comes with a manuscript of ideas from Ray Grismer. The cards provided here have been punched for right handed dealing. If you are left handed, try using a straight pin to punch holes in the outer left corner. Punch from the face of the card outward. The longest lasting punches are those which do not totally penetrate the card. Try experimenting. Also, for those who become adept at feeling the punches, it should be noted that Marlo has published a great deal of material on applications of punched dealing, notably in Marlo's Magazine 5. Anyone who has seen Jack Pyle do punched dealing has seen the power of this technique.