

Find The Card The Hard Way

To perform this trick, you need the help of four spectators. All five of you should be seated around a table. Deal five hands of five cards each, starting with the person to your left and dealing clockwise. Ask each of the spectators to look at the hand in front of him (or her), mentally pick a card and then place the hand back on the table. He should remember the card he picked but not show it to you.

You gather up the hands. Start with the hand on your left and pick up the hands in a clockwise fashion, so that you pick up your hand last. As you pick up each hand, place it on top of your pile. Deal the cards again in the same way so that each person has five cards in front of him. You pick up each pile, one at a time, and fan it so that all four spectators can see its face. Each time, ask if anyone sees their card. If they do, place the fan on the table (without looking at the cards), pull their card from the pile and place it face down in front of them. In some hands there may be two or more participants' card, in others there may not be anyone who sees his card in that pile. Once you have picked out the cards for each spectator, go around the table turning over the four chosen cards and asking them if that is their card. Everyone will be amazed when you get all four right!

How did you do it? Simple. Because of the way you gathered up and dealt the cards, the first spectator's card is in the first position of its fan (that is, his original pile of five cards was dealt so that each one of his five cards became the top card of one of the final five piles), the second spectator's card is in the second position of its fan, etc. So if you pick up and fan a pile and spectator number four says she sees her card, then her card will be the fourth card in the fan (or the fourth card from the top of the pile).