

Hofzinsler's Non-Problem

This is a simple version of Hofzinsler's '4 Ace Problem'.

1. Have a card selected and returned to the deck. Control it to the top using your favorite method. Shuffle the deck, keeping the selection on top.
2. Turn the deck's face towards yourself and begin spreading it, first quickly spreading the back few, glimpsing the selection and remembering its suit. Remember the spectator should be convinced that their card is lost inside the deck in an unknown location. Now spread from the front, looking for the aces. Remove each one as you come to it, the only stipulation being that the first one you remove doesn't match in suit of the selection. As each is removed, it is revolved face towards the spectator and placed on the back of the deck. Once all four aces are removed, revolved and placed on the back, close the deck and place it face down in the left hand. The four aces will be face up on top. Confirming what you've done, quickly spread the 4 aces, slightly spreading the 5th card from the top as well (the face down selection that's directly below the aces). Close the spread, catching a pinky break below the five cards. The right hand now removes all five cards off the deck, made easy due to the left-hand pinky break. Once removed, the left-hand places the deck on the table, mostly squared. Place the packet in the now empty left hand, aces facing upward, in dealing position.
3. With the left hand, spread the top three aces over, keeping the last ace and secret card squared as one. In an inquisitive manner, ask the spectator what suit their selection is. When they say the suit, with the right hand, remove the ace of that suit, revolve it face down and place it on the bottom of the packet, squaring the cards during that time as well.
4. Spread the top three aces once again. The right hand grasps these three cards and moves them inward slightly (injogged towards yourself). The left fingers keep a grasp on the bottom double card during this. The right hand now closes the spread leftward. The three face-up aces will be squared inward to a face down double. The left hand revolves palm downward to flash the ace that matches the suit. Revolve back palm up and use the Anneman alignment move to displace the ace underneath the other aces, the face down selection remaining outjogged.

In case you don't know the Anneman alignment move: The right-hand lowers on top of the packet, the thumb going on the inside edge of the packet. The index goes on top of the top face up ace and the middle finger goes on top of the outjogged double. The left hand grips the packet slightly on the left and right edges. The right hand now moves forward. Its middle finger will retain the top card of the double in outjogged position, the index and thumb causing all the cards above the bottom card of the double to move forward as well. The bottom card (the ace) will move inward and below the face up aces. Stop when it bumps into the right thumb. This move is done as you gesture towards the spectator with the packet. To them, you've simply slid the entire packet forward in the left hand, unaware of the bottom cards secret displacement.
5. The right hand now removes the outjogged face down card and places it on the table. Tell the spectator to place a finger on top of it.
6. Grasp the packet in the right hand, biddle style. The left thumb now peels off the top ace into the palm. It now peels off the next ace onto the top of the previously peeled ace, but right jogged slightly. The right-hand double is placed on top of the other two aces, right jogged even further. Reposition the left hand so you can grasp the spread, keeping all tight together to prevent the double from spreading.

7. Smack the spread on top of the deck then back upward, spreading the cards further during this large motion. This will cause the hidden face down card to pop into view. Done right, it will seem that you magically snatched a face down card from the deck. The blur of the motion will keep the spectator from seeing what actually happens. Ask the spectator if it would be amazing if the three aces found the selection. After the confirmation, remove the card and turn it face up. Act surprised that it's the ace. Now move your gaze to the card the spectator has been guarding. Say, "*Wait, the ace was there. If it's not there, then what card do you have?*" The spectator should catch the hint to look at their card. They will be most surprised to see that it's now the selection.

I've performed this trick a few times and can say for a fact that it has a nice amazement factor to it. And it's very easy to do. Perfect!