

# THE ONE-HOUR MEMORIZED DECK

## (AKA "SIX KICKS" STACK)

by Chris Matthewson

### Introduction

I originally developed this rule-based full-deck stack for an "Any Card at Any Number" (ACAAN) effect, but now use it exclusively for all memorized deck work. I hope you will give it a try.

To begin, see if you can discern any ordering in this stack:

7♥ 5♠ 4♣ 8♠ 9♥ Q♠ 10♥ 7♣ 2♥ 6♣ 4♦ 5♥ K♥ 9♣ 7♦ Q♥ 10♣ 3♠ 2♣  
 3♥ J♥ 5♣ 9♦ 3♣ 3♦ Q♣ 10♦ A♣ 2♦ J♣ 8♥ 5♦ 6♦ 8♣ 8♦ Q♦ J♦ A♦  
 K♦ A♠ 6♠ 6♥ 4♠ J♠ K♣ 7♠ 4♥ 9♠ 10♠ A♥ 2♠ K♠

It's easier to figure out if the first card of the stack is brought to the top, so let's cut the deck to bring the A♠ to the first position:

A♠ 6♠ 6♥ 4♠ J♠ K♣ 7♠ 4♥ 9♠ 10♠ A♥ 2♠ K♠ 7♥ 5♠ 4♣ 8♠ 9♥ Q♠  
 10♥ 7♣ 2♥ 6♣ 4♦ 5♥ K♥ 9♣ 7♦ Q♥ 10♣ 3♠ 2♣ 3♥ J♥ 5♣ 9♦ 3♣ 3♦  
 Q♣ 10♦ A♣ 2♦ J♣ 8♥ 5♦ 6♦ 8♣ 8♦ Q♦ J♦ A♦ K♦

Detailed examination will reveal that it is not quite as random in appearance as the best-known of the rule-based stacks (Martin Joyal's "The Six-Hour Memorized Deck"), but my experience has shown it to be just as effective, and considerably easier to learn and retain. I truly believe that it can be learned (at least the position for each card) in an hour, and I have personally gone up to two years without thinking about it, still being able to remember all the cards and their positions with only a little effort (which quickly disappeared).

The organizational basis of the stack becomes more apparent when the cards are charted in a grid, ordered by value:

|     |    |     |    |     |    |     |    |
|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|
| A♠  | 1  | A♥  | 11 | A♣  | 41 | A♦  | 51 |
| 2♠  | 12 | 2♥  | 22 | 2♣  | 32 | 2♦  | 42 |
| 3♠  | 31 | 3♥  | 33 | 3♣  | 37 | 3♦  | 38 |
| 4♠  | 4  | 4♥  | 8  | 4♣  | 16 | 4♦  | 24 |
| 5♠  | 15 | 5♥  | 25 | 5♣  | 35 | 5♦  | 45 |
| 6♠  | 2  | 6♥  | 3  | 6♣  | 23 | 6♦  | 46 |
| 7♠  | 7  | 7♥  | 14 | 7♣  | 21 | 7♦  | 28 |
| 8♠  | 17 | 8♥  | 44 | 8♣  | 47 | 8♦  | 48 |
| 9♠  | 9  | 9♥  | 18 | 9♣  | 27 | 9♦  | 36 |
| 10♠ | 10 | 10♥ | 20 | 10♣ | 30 | 10♦ | 40 |
| J♠  | 5  | J♥  | 34 | J♣  | 43 | J♦  | 50 |
| Q♠  | 19 | Q♥  | 29 | Q♣  | 39 | Q♦  | 49 |
| K♠  | 13 | K♥  | 26 | K♣  | 6  | K♦  | 52 |

Ordered by Value

or by position:

|    |     |    |     |    |     |    |     |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|
| 1  | A♠  | 14 | 7♥  | 27 | 9♣  | 40 | 10♦ |
| 2  | 6♠  | 15 | 5♠  | 28 | 7♦  | 41 | A♣  |
| 3  | 6♥  | 16 | 4♣  | 29 | Q♥  | 42 | 2♦  |
| 4  | 4♠  | 17 | 8♠  | 30 | 10♣ | 43 | J♣  |
| 5  | J♠  | 18 | 9♥  | 31 | 3♠  | 44 | 8♥  |
| 6  | K♣  | 19 | Q♠  | 32 | 2♣  | 45 | 5♦  |
| 7  | 7♠  | 20 | 10♥ | 33 | 3♥  | 46 | 6♦  |
| 8  | 4♥  | 21 | 7♣  | 34 | J♥  | 47 | 8♣  |
| 9  | 9♠  | 22 | 2♥  | 35 | 5♣  | 48 | 8♦  |
| 10 | 10♠ | 23 | 6♣  | 36 | 9♦  | 49 | Q♦  |
| 11 | A♥  | 24 | 4♦  | 37 | 3♣  | 50 | J♦  |
| 12 | 2♠  | 25 | 5♥  | 38 | 3♦  | 51 | A♦  |
| 13 | K♠  | 26 | K♥  | 39 | Q♣  | 52 | K♦  |

### Ordered by Position

## The Rules

These are fairly simple and easily remembered. They are particularly straightforward for the Aces, Twos, Threes, Fours, Fives, Sevens, Nines, and Tens. (Note that I use the **SHoCkeD** suit ordering for the reason explained in Doug Dyment's *Calculated Thoughts* book, although one could easily adjust the order of the suits to match **CHaSeD**, **DuCHeSs**, **CoDfiSH**, **HiS DeCk**, or other sequences).

Rules for most of the numerical-valued cards are pretty simple.

- A** For example, the Aces (or “Ones”) are in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 41<sup>st</sup>, and 51<sup>st</sup> positions — just remember “Ones, first and last.”
- 2** The Twos are in positions 12, 22, 32, and 42, all nicely in order, with the first digit position indicating the suit.
- 3** For a little variety, the Threes are all in the 30s: 31, 33, 37, 38. This rule may require an extra minute to get down.
- 4** The Fours are in a very mathematically-ordered progression: 4, 8, 16, 24.
- 5** The Fives are just like the Twos: 15, 25, 35, 45.
- 7** The Sevens are in the  $1\times 7$ ,  $2\times 7$ ,  $3\times 7$ , and  $4\times 7$  positions: 7, 14, 21, 28 — very easy to recall.
- 9** The Nines are just like the Sevens: 9, 18, 27, 36.
- 10** The Tens are also just like the Sevens: 10, 20, 30, 40.

Rules for the remaining values (Sixes, Eights, and Court cards) are only a bit more complex, making them slightly more difficult to learn, but not too much.

- 6** The mnemonic aid to recall the rule for the Sixes is simply  $2 \times 3 = 6$ : 2, 3, 23, 46 (46 is  $2 \times 23$ ).
- 8** The mnemonic aid for the Eights is:  $1+7=8$ ,  $4+4=8$ , along with 47 and 48, giving us: 17, 44, 47, and 48. (An additional aid: the rounded/curved 8 is like a 3, and the **8♣** and **8♦** are at 47 and 48, similar to the **3♣** and **3♦**, which are at 37 and 38.)
- J** The Jacks are fun. Think of the “Jackson Five”: **J♠**=5, **J♥**=34 (3 and 4 come before 5), **J♣**=43 (the reverse of 34), and **J♦**=50 (the reverse of 05). Think of little Michael Jackson, spinning, reversing, and moonwalking about the stage!
- Q** The Queens are almost like the Twos, except “dressed to the nines”: 19, 29, 39, 49 (again, all in “sequence”).
- K** Finally the Kings, which are **almost** like the Sevens: 13, 26, 6 (huh?), 52. Just where you’d expect them to be (except for the King of Clubs) in a perfectly ordered deck. Why is the **K♣** at 6 and not 39? Because I gave 39 to the **Q♣**, who seemed to need it more! [I actually call this system my “6KC (or Six Kicks) Stack” because the **K♣** is the only card that can’t be deduced from some quasi-logical rule. Consequently, it’s the easiest card to remember!]

This stack exhibits what some might consider to be “unnatural” clumps of Spades and Diamonds, but true randomly-shuffled decks almost always have such things (their absence, in fact, is a strong clue that this is **not** a shuffled deck). And in the great scheme of things, people really don’t notice such occurrences (certainly not **my** audiences, made up of professionals, professors, and pseudo-intellectuals).

That said, I personally address this issue by switching the **J♠** and **J♦**, so the **J♠** moves to position 50 and the **J♦** to position 5. This nicely breaks up the run of Spades near the top and the run of Diamonds near the bottom, but it does make the mnemonic aid for the Jacks slightly more difficult to remember. So, I leave it to the reader to decide which option to use. Good luck!

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This edited description of Chris Matthewson’s stack courtesy of

Doug Dymont

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