Double your Pleasure  
By R. Paul Wilson

The double lift must be one of the most valuable and over-used sleights in card magic.

I have tried to limit its use in my work but it’s a mighty tempting move to use. So many great tricks use the double lift that we are forced to constantly find new ways to turn two cards as one.

The techniques in this file will teach you my version of the strike double, an interesting “pop lift” (you’ll understand when you see it) and my Ultra-Natural double.

It is helpful if you already know about Marlo’s Strike Double Lift and the perfect two-card push off.

I have written these instructions with an aim to being extremely direct and to the point. Follow the text and the illustrations with cards in hand and you should have no problem understanding these sleights.

“Hit and Pinch” Double

This is a very simple twist on Marlo’s “Strike” double lift. It is easy and looks very fair and casual.

Hold the deck in left hand dealing position. Bevel the deck to the right slightly as your right-hand approaches, palm up. The tip of the right second finger contacts the right edge of the top of the deck at the halfway point. Because of the slight bevel, the tip of the right second finger can easily lift two cards (Fig 1. note the bevelled deck).

As soon as the finger has separated two cards, the right first finger lowers onto the back of the card, directly above the tip of the second finger, until the first finger’s nail is applying pressure (Fig. 2).
Fig. 2

The card is now drawn straight to the right, the short edges remaining parallel with the deck, until the left long edge of the double arrives at the right long edge of the deck (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3

The right hand now flips the double over and back onto the deck (the right hand must remain palm up at all times to maintain the casual look).

To turn the double back down, simply repeat.

### Pop Double

This is a double lift that looks like a neat little flourish.

You are going to do my tabled double (from Crash Course In Brain Surgery and the video Twists Of Fate) on top of the deck. There is a knack you need to acquire but it’s not too difficult.

Hold the deck in left hand dealing position with a break under the top two cards.

The right hand comes over the deck as if to hold it in biddle grip, the right first finger curled on top of the deck, the thumb at the middle of the inner end and the second finer at the middle of the outer end. The right third and fourth fingers do not contact the deck.

The top two cards are lifted at the inner end by the right thumb as the tip of the first finger holds them against the deck at their centre. The double remains flush with the deck at the outer end thanks to the right second finger (Fig. 4, note finger positions).
The second finger straightens and releases the front of the deck as the first fingernail (not the tip of the finger – MUST be the nail) slides towards the thumb, maintaining a downward pressure. The right thumb stays where it is. As the first finger gets closer to the thumb, the pressure on the card increases (Fig. 5).

You now allow the card to pop off the thumb.

Important point, the thumb never pushes the card forward – the pinching action does all the work!

As the edge of the double pops off the thumb, the release of pressure makes the right first finger and thumb pinch together as the double card shoots forward.

Left alone, the card will shoot straight off the end of the deck. The knack is to catch it by the tip of the left second finger and thumb. All you do is apply a little more pressure on the deck and you will catch the double (Fig. 6) before it falls. Revolve the hand palm down or raise the end of the deck so the face of the double may be seen.
This is a neat flourish that seems to preclude the possibility of two cards pretending to be one. This is better suited for tricks where you need to remove two cards from the deck instead of one, where you need a perfect double or just want to show off!

**Ultra Natural**

This double lift has been in my arsenal since I was in the Army in the late eighties. It was specifically designed to fool people who had seen a lot of card tricks.

This began with a move I called “The Gravity Lift” which was a lot like the Hit and Pinch double without the first finger pinch.

The gravity lift looked very fair but it had problems. If you didn’t hold the deck just right the two cards would separate.

This is the final solution to the gravity double lift and is extremely simple to do. It is also one hundred percent reliable.

I perform this move using a perfect two-card push off. If you do not yet do this, you can begin with a small pinkie break under the top two cards. This makes the two card push off extremely simple.

Note: Always get ready for moves on the offbeat. It is easy to learn to get a break under two cards while the hand is resting at your side or you are talking to the audience.

This move hinges on the angle of the deck. Begin by holding the deck completely level with the floor, in left hand dealing position. The left thumb runs along the left long side of the deck.

Slightly lower the right long edge of the deck.

Raise the front of the deck slightly.

This basically lowers the inner right corner, creating a slope running from the outer left (high point) to inner right (low point) corners of the deck.

This should not be too pronounced and will become second nature as you master this move.

Now we have the position of the left hand, let’s discuss the position of the right.

The right hand will never actually grip the double. Hold your right hand palm up, fingers open, but relaxed.
Allow your fingers to curl naturally towards the palm but keep the first finger extended, as if pointing. The thumb remains away from the fingers. The following illustrations will make this clear.

When you make the move, the right hand will be palm up, towards the left.

So we sort of understand how to hold the deck and how to hold the right hand. All will now become clear.

With the deck at the correct angle, push the top two cards, as one, to the right.

The right hand approaches to meet the double. (Fig. 7)

Note how the edge of the middle phalanx of the right second finger meets the double at the inner end, near the right corner.

Note also how the extended right first finger meets the long edge of the double, the fingertip is just under the double card but the length of the finger contacts the edge.

This is what’s going to happen: the left thumb will release the double. Thanks to gravity the double card is drawn towards the right hand and is supported at the right long edge by the right first finger and at the inner edge by the edge of the right second finger. This keeps the two cards square.

The right hand *appears* to move to the right, guiding the card towards the right long edge of the deck.

Important point: The double BARELY moves! Instead it is supported in space by the right hand as described – it is the *left hand that moves*!

The left hand moves very slightly to the left *under* the double card as the right fingers lift the double *slightly* so only the left long edge of the double contacts the deck (Fig. 8).
The left hand does not need to move far to the left because the right long edge of the deck is also lowered slightly.

This causes the left long edge of the double to ride along the top of the deck until it reaches the right long edge of the deck (Fig. 9).

Essentially, the right fingers use gravity to support the card and keep it square as the left hand moves slightly to the left, angling the top of the deck so that the left long edge of the double slides along the deck.

The double card is supported by the deck (at the left long edge), the edge of the curled right second finger (at the inner short edge) and the right first finger (at the right long edge) as the deck moves under it.

The illusion is that the right hand moves the card to the right. In actual fact it is a combination of the left-hand action and the right hand lifting the double slightly that makes the move work. There is a very slight movement to the right by the right hand but only enough to accommodate the movement of the card.

To complete the move, the right hand moves upwards and to the left, in order to flip the double face up onto the deck. The double should land square with the deck. Ensure that the double hinges on the left long edge, which remains in contact with the left finger tips at the right edge of the deck (Fig 10).
Repeat the move to turn the double back down.

Practice this with a single card until you understand the mechanics, then work on the double. Remember that gravity is the key to keeping the card aligned and making it move. If you just play with the concept for a few minutes it will become very clear.

When you need to prove that you’re only flipping over a single card, use exactly the same action.