

JERRY'S NUGGET



P L A Y I N G C A R D S
C A R E A N D H A N D L I N G

JERRY'S NUGGET PLAYING CARDS CARE AND HANDLING

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Playing Card Collecting

Made in the United States of America

Dedication

This guide is dedicated to Tom and Judy Dawson and all the playing-card collectors out there who've helped me realize there's a vast amount of knowledge about pasteboards waiting to be discovered.



Intro

Keeping your Jerry's Nugget playing cards in the best condition possible doesn't have to be difficult. Some simple changes to your handling habits and routines can drastically improve their lifespan. This short guide will teach you how to do just that.

Enjoy.


LeeAsher.com



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Your Jerry's Nuggets Playing Cards

Playing cards of all variety and quality are prevalent in so many aspects of modern society that we tend to forget their potential fragility. Imagine the beginning magician's deck of cards: moisture-warped, grimy-edged, faded and often incomplete! Remember how much abuse they endured? The cards endured endless shuffling and went everywhere including the dashboard of the family car, outside during the rain. They were dropped on almost every surface, and stored in a box in the garage or some other potentially damp storage area.

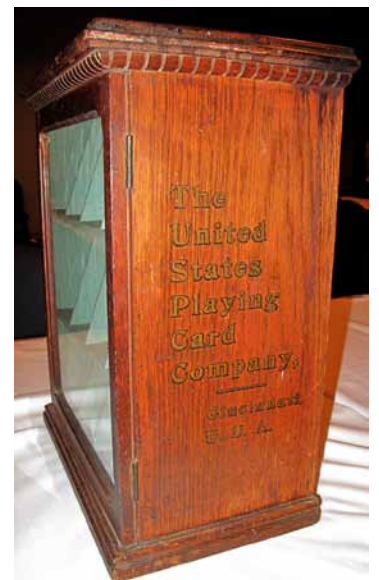
All cards are potentially fragile objects that should be handled and stored properly, minimizing exposure to light, humidity, and extreme temperatures.

While Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards were revered for their durability and longevity, they will not last forever. If you want to extend the life of your deck as long possible and care for them properly, learn the various components of playing cards, how they interact with the environment, and the resulting effects on the pasteboard.

Optimum environment for Jerry's Nuggets Playing Cards

After purchasing some Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards, where should they be kept? A dry, cool, well-ventilated storage area is optimal. Avoid storing cards in the attic, basement, along a wall, or wherever else moisture and temperature fluctuate to the extremes and where condensation could occur. Humidity and high temperatures increase deterioration and invite the growth of mold and mildew, which breaks down the binder layers of the card and potentially mars the surface. Consider using a dehumidifier or a fan to promote air circulation in the summer, or even spring and autumn if you live in a rainy climate.

Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards prefer a 68 F (20 C) and a relative humidity range of 30%-40%. They can be stored in temperatures as low as 30-40 F (-1 through 4 C), as long as the humidity stays constant between 30-40%. Again, dehumidifiers can reduce the moisture in a room or storage area and are inexpensive.



United States Playing Card Company original playing card display courtesy of the Larry Lubliner collection

The Natural Habitat of the Jerry's Nugget Playing Card

The natural habitat of the card for maximum longevity is consistently dark, dry, and cool. Again, high temperatures will most likely accelerate deterioration. Consider carefully the storage container for the Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards.

The goal is to protect the bricks, decks, or cards from dust, light and potential changes in the environment. Look for archival paper enclosures, free of acids, peroxides, and sulfur or a chemically-stable plastic container. If a plastic sleeve is desired, choose coated polyester, polypropylene, or polyethylene sleeves. Most of the best museums, libraries and archives strictly use polyester (found under the commercial name - Mylar) without any anti-static coatings. It's a big no-no to use any type of PVC casing.

Deterioration and fading can be caused by a multitude of lights, so beware of ultraviolet rays from both artificial and natural sources.

For even more protection from light, dust, and fluctuations in the environment, store the cased cards in a safety deposit box within a banking institution.

Feature Jerry's Nuggets Playing Cards as Art

Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards should not be displayed for long periods of time, or they will fade and lose the intensity of their natural color. If you do choose to display the cards, protect them from lengthy exposure to strong light sources, limit exhibition times and monitor the condition of the cards.

Create a micro-environment by placing the cards in a frame for exhibition. Frame the cards with archival products such as unbuffered rag board for the mat and plexiglass with ultraviolet filtering to block damaging light. Even with UV protection, place the display out of direct sunlight to prevent fading.

Handle Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards with Care

It would seem obvious that most damage to Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards results from poor handling. So, the owner of the deck understands this, but what about others who may have access to the deck? How the deck is displayed might indicate the esteem and respect one should have for this specially exhibited deck of cards.

Establish a protocol for handling special cards. Some experts even advocate wearing white gloves to avoid transferring fingerprints and any oil or soil to the finish, although this cuts down on manual dexterity during prestidigitation practice. Practice in an uncluttered, clean area. Wash hands thoroughly before handling, practicing or playing. A poor quality surface or dirt can scratch the card surface allowing soil to creep in and accumulate.

When handling the Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards, support them with a firm grip. Use both hands to avoid any potential, careless damage, and be aware of one's surroundings.

Cards are inevitably exposed to any number of dirtying substances that attract pests, unless archivally preserved and stored. It is very important that areas where cards are handled and stored are free of any debris prone to card-munching critters.

The cards' paper fibers alone and the finish are enough to attract hungry insects and rodents who are ready to make a meal of red and blue Jerry's Nugget bedding. Do not allow food or beverage near your Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards or other card collections. Besides attracting scrounging pests, accidental food and beverage spills will irreversibly damage most playing cards.

Also, keep ink pens away from your Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards to avoid unintentional ink transfer.

When cards are not in use or being viewed, place them in the box or their special container.

Where do you store your card collection? Can you locate a desired deck without rummaging or searching? Having a specific location to properly house your Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards will allow quick, careful access and prevent the possibility of damage.

In Case of Emergency

Most people have emergency plans for evacuation during a fire, flood, or other emergencies. While this might sound strange, do you have a disaster plan for your prized possession or special collection?

80% of collecting institutions do not have an emergency plan that includes collections with staff trained to carry it out.

- Source: A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections @2005 Heritage Preservation, Inc. More information at www.heritagehealthindex.org

A protective container and location chosen for your Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards are the first line of defense.

Evaluate the potential for damage in the event of a fire; can smoke or flames reach the location? Study the water pipe and drainage system of your location; if a pipe bursts, will it soak your storage area? Develop a plan that addresses the specific needs of the your collection before an emergency or disaster occurs.

If the disaster does occur, stay calm and retrieve the collection when the danger has passed. Evaluate the situation and document any damage; photograph the location and the damage to the collection. Then, contact a conservator for assistance and advice on the repair and recovery of the damaged cards.

Believe it or not, purchasing insurance for a playing card collection is not as difficult as one might think. For those who envision a daunting process, be reassured to know that there are professionals specifically trained in just this type of insurance.

A unique insurance agency called Collectibles Insurance Services, LLC is one specific example of an insurance company which offers insurance for collectibles such as Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards.

Common Card Concerns

The following problems are commonly found in Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards:

Damage to the card's structure: If the card is broken, bent, torn, or cracked, do not use pressure-sensitive adhesive tape to repair. If the main support of a Jerry's Nugget Playing Card sustains damage, carefully place it in a polyester sleeve with an archival board support. Consult a professional card conservator to perform repairs. (see pg 7 for a list of professional card conservators)

Soiled Cards: Warning! Improper cleaning of a Jerry's Nugget Playing Card can cause irreversible damage such as permanent staining, loss of binder or image, abrasion, alteration, or warping. For removing most soiling on the cards, use a clean, soft brush. Women's make-up brushes or softer paint brushes would work well.

Brush from the center outward towards the edges. Do not attempt to clean cards with solvent - or water-based cleaners such as a window cleaner. However, one can use a very small amount of water on a clean cloth to dissolve any sticky substances; gently wipe with a dry cloth, then air dry.

Cards Stuck Together: Excessive moisture, humid environments, and contact with liquids can cause cards to adhere to one another, to the display-frame glass, or to other enclosure materials. This can be a very challenging situation to remedy without causing further damage to the card. Consult a conservator before attempting to remove any adhered material.

Deteriorated Cards: If the Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards are brittle, sticky, discolored, or appear wavy and full of air bubbles, remove the affected cards from the rest of the pack, consult a conservator to help establish the cause of the deterioration. Usually chemical instability of the storage area is a major factor in the breakdown of the card's structure. The conservator can identify these materials and make recommendations for safe storage of the remaining collection to prevent any other card sacrifices.

Playing cards are categorized as "ephemera", as transitory and impermanent objects, made cheaply to be enjoyed and discarded. While more care and finer materials go into the manufacture of better grade cards, their composition is not intended to withstand the abuse of harsh chemicals or abrasive treatment

- Margery Griffith, Director/Curator of The Playing Card Museum of The United States Playing Card Company.

How do my Cards rate?

Playing Card Conditions

Like any collectible, condition plays an important role in desirability, and thus in value. The following is a method of playing card grading developed by Mr. Gene Hochman while writing the original volumes of the Encyclopedia of American Playing Cards. This method has stood the test of time.

You can compare each individual deck you own to get an idea of how to grade your collection, based on the original Gene Hochman description found in the Hochman Encyclopedia (Tom and Judy Dawson, 2000 pg. 02.):

As Issued: This consists of a complete deck, with all 52 cards in mint condition, 2 jokers and any extra cards contained in the original packaging when first distributed for sale. The original packaging may still be intact and unopened as when first distributed. The seal may have been carefully opened for examination, but not necessarily broken, and would still be attached. The deck has never been used, shuffled or handled; only time has worn away the cello and stamp.

Mint: A complete deck showing no signs of use is referred to as mint condition. All 52 playing cards would be present with both jokers in the original box, also in mint or near mint condition. The inside wrapper would not be included.

Excellent: This consists of a complete deck that has been occasionally used, but is still in first class condition. Gold edges would still be intact, if it is a painted deck. Cards are crisp with smooth finish.

Good: A grading of "good" refers to a complete deck showing signs of repeated use, but is still usable. There would be no major creases, bent, or broken corners. The deck would not be warped, swollen or misshapen and would fit comfortably into the original box. No noticeable breaks would occur when looking at the side of the deck.

Poor: A deck not good enough to fit into one of the above categories. It likely would have at least one of these serious faults, such as bent or broken corners, bad creases, or heavy soiling.

With Faults: A deck graded as good or better, but with serious faults such as a missing or damaged card or a damaged, incomplete or missing box.

Resources

52 Plus Joker

<http://www.52plusjoker.org>



This organization is dedicated to the playing card collecting culture. They offer a wealth of information for the card collector. Its main purpose is to promulgate the hobby of antique and contemporary playing card collecting.

52 Plus Joker was formed to advance knowledge about the artistic aspect, manufacture and the history of playing cards, to facilitate the collection and trading of antique and collectible playing cards and related items, and to promote fellowship among members with similar interests.

Annual membership to 52 Plus Joker provides a wide variety of benefits, including access to auctions, the annual card collecting convention, and the quarterly magazine, *Clear the Decks*. As a member, you can advertise in the quarterly at a lower cost. A 'members only' section of the website contains past editions of *Clear the Decks* and previously written articles. Members have access to the membership roster showing names, addresses, telephone numbers and interests of our members. Members also have access to appraisals by experts at no cost, as well as research, advice and direction. Regional meetings are held throughout the USA.

Paper Conservators

<http://cool.conservation-us.org/>

CoOL, an online resource operated by the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation is a comprehensive, text library of conservation information, covering a wide spectrum of topics of interest to those involved with the conservation of library, archives and museum materials. It is a growing online resource for conservators, collection-care specialists, and other conservation professionals

<http://www.conservation-us.org/>

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) is the national membership organization of conservation professionals. Its members include conservators, educators, scientists, students, archivists, art historians, and other conservation enthusiasts in over twenty countries around the world.

History & Little Known Facts of Jerry's Nuggets Playing Cards

- Playing cards are very much part of the history of printing and lithography world-wide, and often depict historical events, social trends and advertising for common products of the era.
- At the end of the 19th century, American casinos became common centers for legal gambling and a large venue for the printed playing card. Each casino developed their unique playing card design.
- Enter Jerry's Nugget Casino in 1964. Little were the founders to know, their playing card would create a collectors' sensation.
- Originally printed in Cincinnati, Ohio, by the US Playing Card Company, these playing cards were made in 1970 for the Jerry's Nugget casino gaming tables. An oil derrick seen in the casino parking lot graces the joker and back of both red and blue Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards.
- Once manufactured, they were driven to the Vegas casino via trucks, where they sat in storage for many years. They never saw any 'real action' in the casino and were ultimately sold in the gift store.
- The now highly-prized playing card eventually sold out in the early summer of 1999. Jerry's Nugget Casino does not have any plans to reprint the playing cards, nor could they recreate the process to make them again.
- Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards were only one-sided embossed decks unlike the decks produced today. Back then, a cotton roller painted the embossment on the front of the playing card. Currently, a steel roller makes the impression. Finally, the cards were finished with a dip coat technique. The decks of today are not made this way. This would be an impossible process to replicate, because it has been made obsolete from the new technological advances in playing card printing.
- A majority of the Jerry's Nugget playing cards are sold at auction (EBay), except in rare occasions. The seller knows that the publicity surrounding the rare deck and the heated atmosphere of competitive bidding of EBay, often result in even higher prices.
- Because of this bidding frenzy, in 2008, sophisticated counterfeiters saturated EBay and the world market with fake Jerry's Nugget playing cards. Discontent, deceived purchasers started posting videos on YouTube about their disappointing experience with the fakes.

- While the illegal versions look remarkably genuine, most playing card experts can easily tell the difference because the fake decks are made from cheap cardboard. Beware of being ripped off, as many have been taken by this scam. From the outside packaging, the fakes look convincingly real, but one touch is all it takes to feel the difference.
- The box contains a hidden key to the origin and authenticity. On the inside flap of a box of Classic Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards is a date stamp proving the production date, 1970. [Click here to see the hidden Jerry's Nugget playing Card key.](#)
- Many notable magicians have been seen playing with Jerry's Nugget playing cards. Look for Dai Vernon and Steve Freeman on the Revelations Tapes, Daryl on Cardboard Chameleons, and Bill Goldman in his Monkey in the Middle. Anyone who attended Magic Castle Jam sessions would see Larry Jennings with a deck, as well as Michael Skinner in Las Vegas jam sessions and Ed Marlo in Chicago jam sessions. Earl Nelson used the cards in Frank Simon's book Versatile Card Magic. Dan and Dave Buck use Jerry's Nugget Playing Cards in their System and Trilogy DVD and [Lee Asher](#) is synonymous with these cards.



Thank yous

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped make this project come to fruition. In no particular order:

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Rose Rings

Baron Von J Nugg

The folks

And to all the esteemed members of the LV Magic Mafia.

Jerry's Nugget Casino



Yes, there's a real casino where these cards were once sold! Jerry's Nugget Casino is still open for business and caters to a local market rather than competing with some of the mega-resorts found on Las Vegas Boulevard.

If you're ever in Nevada, take a trip to Jerry's Nugget Casino. It's located at 1821 N. Las Vegas Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89030 USA. You can also contact them via telephone at (702) 399-3000.

Before traveling all the way there, take a moment to visit their official website:

<http://www.jerrysnugget.com>