

The Laser Pen

Did you ever want to be David Copperfield and cut yourself in half and walk down the street and scare people? Well, now you can at a fraction of the cost. (And time to build the illusion) Give someone a laser pen and ask if they saw the Copperfield special. You did? I can do that. Pick up a board "for protection" and hand someone a laser pen and turn it on. Ask them to slice you across the waist to be careful not to hit anyone else. The laser cuts through you and the board and the audience slowly sees your top half SLIDE OFF OF THE BOTTOM HALF!

EERIE!

The coolest part of this illusion is that you actually **cut yourself in half!** So, the next time someone asks if you can cut a person in half you can say, "Yeah, **me!**" The gimmick can be made in about ten minutes with stuff you already have around the house.

Needed: A T-shirt made of strong material. Not just 50/50 cotton and it should not fit very tight or very loose on you – it should fit you well. You also need:

- A pair of scissors
- A board measuring 20 x24 (or two boards each 20x12 with a hinge) Paint a line down the center of the 24" dimension and paint one side black and the other side white.

To build – Take your scissors and cut a straight line from the base of the sleeve to the end of the shirt on both sides. The cut should be so that if you were wearing the shirt and had your arms straight at your sides, the cuts would be invisible.

PRESENTATION: In presentation, this would be assuming you were performing street magic and your board was off to the side. You would be wearing a larger shirt or jacket to cover the cuts in the shirt and your shirt would be tucked in to prevent "swinging."

When you are ready to perform the illusion; grab your board and cover your mid-drift section. Remove the jacket and un-tuck your shirt (being careful).

Now, stand so that your audience sees your profile (from the left or right) and hold your board so that the small dimension is covering the slit in your shirt, wedged right under your arm pit and being held by your hand on the outside. The board should also be about center on your stance.

Now for the effect, (and this will take slow practice) lean forward so that you look as though your top half is sliding forward off of your pants. The audience should see your shirt “swing forward” but to them it will look as though you are in the shirt coming into view. The two colors of the board will help create an *optical illusion* of your center of gravity and assist your viewers in believing you are separated.

Be careful not to:

- Slide too far and expose your back leaning
- Tilt or slant your neck – keep it straight with your shoulders.

Slide right back – tuck your shirt in and drop the board.

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