

USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back Deck

Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

THE MANDOLIN STORY AT A GLANCE

The United States Playing Card Company (USPC) Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is the only Bicycle brand deck that provides magicians maximum flexibility in gaffs, is Traditionally Cut, and looks comfortable and familiar to laymen.

The USPC has permanently stopped producing Bicycle 808 Rider Back gaffs that in any way alter its trademarked back design. It will continue to make standard gaffs that don't affect its trademarks. Despite alterations made to the Rider Backs in the past, this new USPC policy is a matter of providing legal protection for Rider Backs moving forward.

Some magic dealers have considerable supplies of discontinued Rider Back gaffs so you may be able to get these gaffs for the time being. But when existing inventories run out, no more will be made. The new policy has nothing to do with regular 808 Bicycle Rider Back decks. They will still be produced and available at magic dealers and popular retail stores.

USPC's new Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is a layman-tested, familiar-looking deck specifically designed to look similar to the Bicycle 808 Rider Backs. With the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker, magicians can gaff any aspect of the Mandolins as much as they like both front and back. USPC determined that the best way to ensure that magicians can get Bicycle brand gaffs that match Bicycle brand decks legally, reliably, at a high quality, and with a Traditional Cut, was to create a new Bicycle brand deck that would be distributed primarily within the magic trade. (Some distribution to the public through convenience stores and other small retail outlets will be permitted over time.)

The back design for the new deck was selected from literally hundreds of concepts and was focus-group-tested by hundreds of laymen. The Mandolin design was hands down the most popular choice among laymen. In test after test, laymen preferred and felt most comfortable with a back design closest to the famous 808s. In most cases, people did not even notice the difference between the two. When the difference was pointed out, laymen assumed it was just another standard variation of the Bicycle brand.

Mandolins include the same Ace of Spades and Joker found in the classic Rider Back decks. They also come with a magician-friendly duplicate Joker and blank “cut card.” All standard gaffs are available in the new Mandolin back design. With the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker, custom gaffs can be made in any configuration desired, including alterations to the back design.

Mandolins meet the highest quality standards of stock, moisture content, pliability, finish, cut, durability, and handling of any current mass market USPC deck in the world. They are the only Bicycle brand deck other than Richard Turner’s Gold Seal deck to be manufactured with a Traditional Cut.

Mandolins also are the only deck on the market featuring the classic “full-back” Bicycle card case that so many performers prefer. Jon Racherbaumer, Bill Kalush, Alan Ackerman, Johnny Thompson, Richard Kaufman, Jason England, Justin Miller, Steve Haynes, David Ben, and other pros have tested and enthusiastically approved of the new Mandolins.

The USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is the only Bicycle brand deck that provides magicians maximum flexibility in gaffs, is Traditionally Cut, and looks comfortable and familiar to laymen. Murphy’s Magic Supplies, Inc. is the exclusive distributor of all Mandolin decks and gaffs. Murphy’s will continue to sell existing supplies of Rider Back gaffs, but over time all new custom gaffs will be produced as Mandolin Backs. The manufacturer’s suggested retail price (MSRP) is \$3 per deck. To produce your own custom gaffs, visit www.809bicycle.com.

FAQ

THE BASICS

Q. What is the Mandolin deck?

- A.** The USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is the only Bicycle brand deck that provides magicians maximum flexibility in gaffs, is Traditionally Cut, and looks comfortable and familiar to laymen. Mandolins are a layman-tested, familiar-looking deck specifically designed to look similar to the Bicycle 808 Rider Backs. With the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker, magicians can gaff any aspect of the Mandolins as much as they like both front and back, including the back design.

Q. Why was this deck created?

- A.** The Mandolin deck was created to fill the gap rising from the USPC's decision to permanently stop producing Bicycle 808 Rider Back gaffs affecting its trademarked designs. USPC determined that the best way to ensure that magicians can get Bicycle brand gaffs that match Bicycle brand decks legally, reliably, at a high quality, and with a Traditional Cut, was to create a new Bicycle brand deck that would be distributed primarily within the magic trade. (Some distribution to the public through convenience stores and other small retail outlets will be permitted over time.) It is a layman-tested, familiar-looking deck that magicians can gaff as much as they'd like both front and back, with the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker.

Q. So, are Mandolins gimmicked in some way?

- A.** The Mandolin deck is not a trick deck. It is a normal Bicycle brand deck, but one that is meant to be similar in appearance to the 808 Rider Backs. In addition, it is designed to become the magician's new standard for standard and custom gaffs, including individual cards such as double backs, Twisted Sisters and Twilight Angels, as well as complete decks such as Invisible Decks, Svengalis, Strippers and all other gaffed decks.

Q. Are Mandolins just for magicians, or are they going to be sold to the general public too?

A. USPC determined that the best way to ensure that magicians can get Bicycle brand gaffs that match Bicycle brand decks legally, reliably, at a high quality, and with a Traditional Cut, was to create a new Bicycle brand deck that would be distributed primarily within the magic trade. However, some distribution to the public through convenience stores and other small retail outlets will be permitted over time.

Q. How much do the Mandolins cost?

A. The manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) is \$3 per deck.

Q. What colors are the Mandolins available in?

A. Mandolins come in the standard red back and blue back colors, just like the Bicycle 808 Rider Back decks. Additional back colors will be available over time. Custom back colors are available for custom orders. Visit www.809bicycle.com for more information.

Q. Please tell me these new cards won't have the ugly new box that the new Bicycles come in.

A. Good news: Each Mandolin deck comes packaged in the traditional box with the "full-card" back design printed on it that so many magicians prefer and that laymen recognize.

Q. What do major working magicians think? Has anyone tried the Mandolins yet?

A. Jon Racherbaumer, Bill Kalush, Alan Ackerman, Johnny Thompson, Richard Kaufman, Jason England, Justin Miller, Steve Haynes, David Ben, and other pros have tried the Mandolins and have commented publicly how much they like the Mandolins. For example, Alan Ackerman recently wrote: *"Been using the new Mandolins for a week now — a good 10 hours of wear and tear and they still work flawlessly. I just set the cards on the table and did a perfect table faro and the deck is a week old. Another nice thing about the new stock — they are soft — centers and bottoms are just so easy to do."*

LEGAL CONFUSION

Q. The magic forums on the Internet have a lot of threads about the whole Bicycle issue being about copyrights or trademarks or patents or something like that. It's all very confusing. What's the real answer?

A. You're right; there's been a lot of confusion and a lot of misinformation about this. So, first, it's important to be clear: USPC has not discontinued making every gaff. It has discontinued making gaffs that alter the design of trademarked elements, which include back design, Jokers and Ace of Spades.

USPC owns exclusive trademark rights for its Ace of Spades, Joker, back design, brand names and numbers, case design, and name of finish used on its various cards. (You can see the company's trademark notice on the box flap of each deck of cards it produces.) By stopping the production of certain gaffs, USPC is showing increased protection of its trademarks, which will strengthen its legal position in potential cases of trademark infringement by other companies in the future.

Q. If USPC considers it a trademark infringement to alter the backs of Bicycle Rider Backs, why wouldn't it be just as much of an infringement to alter the backs of Mandolins?

A. USPC's business interest is to protect the brand integrity of the 808 Rider Backs. It is willing to allow trademark alterations as long as they are confined to a new deck with distribution focused primarily on the magic trade.

DESIGN & FEATURES

- Q. The Mandolins look awfully close to Bicycle Rider Backs. This hardly seems like a design innovation.**
- A.** That's the point. The Mandolin Back deck was not intended to be an original boutique deck. It is intentionally designed to look similar to the Bicycle 808 Rider Backs so they would be a traditional looking deck that would be comfortable and familiar to laymen.
- Q. How'd they decide on an angel with a Mandolin? Is there some special meaning behind the Mandolin?**
- A.** An angel with a mandolin is a classic image and one laymen responded to very favorably in focus groups. It's not distracting in the way that some other, newer, images proved to be when tested. Originally the mandolin was positioned at an angle, but ultimately the designers determined that by positioning it straight up and down the image replicated the same symmetrical "footprint" as the 808 Rider Back image of an angel on a bicycle. And, if you think about it, an angel playing a mandolin makes at least as much sense as an angel riding a bicycle.
- Q. So, is the only difference between Mandolin Backs and Rider Backs the back design?**
- A.** Visually, yes. The back design of the Mandolins was intentionally created to be distinct but familiar. The cards give laymen no reason to regard them suspiciously precisely because they are not a radical departure from the look of the classic Rider Back deck — the most popular cards in the world. The faces are identical to the Rider Backs. In addition, the Mandolin box is even more familiar than the new box used for the Rider Backs. (The Mandolin box is a return to the traditional Bicycle box with the printed full-card back design that so many magicians prefer and laymen recognize.) Plus, Mandolin decks come standard with magician-friendly matching Jokers and a blank "cut card."
- Q. Won't a blank card seem weird to laymen? Seems like it'll scream "trick deck."**
- A.** You can, of course, discard the blank card before use if you prefer. It is just another way Mandolins are designed to give magicians more flexibility. You can do some very cool effects with a blank card. From time to time various decks for the public have included a blank "cut card" so this is nothing that hasn't been seen before.

Q. Are there any other differences?

- A.** There are important differences in the way the cards are produced as well. Most significant is that Mandolins are “Traditionally Cut” (Rider Backs are not), which means the cards faro more consistently straight from the box, shuffle more smoothly and have a softer feel. Overall, Mandolins meet the highest quality standards of stock, moisture content, pliability, finish, cut, durability, and handling of any USPC mass market deck available. You will feel the difference in your hands when you faro, rifle, spring, deal and palm.

Q. What does “Traditionally Cut” mean?

- A.** “Traditionally Cut” means the blades used to cut the individual cards out of the master sheet pass through the stock from the face of the card to the back, and cut through one card at a time. Currently all standard 808 Rider Backs and non-casino cards are cut all at once, back to face. These are not Traditionally Cut.

Q. Are Mandolins the only cards available to magicians that are Traditionally Cut?

- A.** Among Bicycle brand cards, only 809 Mandolin Backs and Richard Turner Gold Seal decks consistently feature the Traditional Cut. An easy test to determine if a deck has been Traditionally Cut is to do face-down faro shuffles with them. You will quickly discover that a non-traditionally cut deck does not faro face down as smoothly as a Traditionally Cut deck.

Q. Is there an easy way to tell if my new cards are Traditionally Cut right out of the box?

- A.** Yes. Traditionally Cut cards are actually packaged differently than non-Traditionally Cut cards. When you first open a new deck, just place the box with the thumb notch facing up (the card back side of the box) as you slide out the new deck. If the deck slides out face down, you have a Traditionally Cut deck. If the deck slides out face up, you have a non-Traditionally Cut deck.

Q. What difference does it make if cards are Traditionally Cut like the Mandolins?

- A.** It is largely a matter of feel and personal preference, but many top card magicians prefer Traditionally Cut decks because they find that the sides of the cards have a softer, more comfortable feel, faro more consistently straight from the box, and in general ensure smoother shuffling.

Q. Where did the term "Traditionally Cut" come from?

A. Richard Turner has been working for USPC since the early 90s as its quality and touch analyst. He observed that some of the older decks, which had been cut back to front, shuffled better. Richard called this "Traditionally Cut."

Q. Are casino cards Traditionally Cut?

A. Most casino cards are Traditionally Cut, as were most cards made before 1993.

Q. Are playing cards from places like China Traditionally Cut?

A. No, nearly all cards made by companies other than the USPC are not Traditionally Cut. In fact, many overseas companies use a new process called the "ram cut," where up to 30 sheets are all cut at one time. This causes a completely squared edge, which is even worse than a non-traditionally cut deck. This is why USPC decks are still the best feeling and working cards for magicians.

Q. Will Mandolins be available in miniature and jumbo decks, jumbo index or other variations?

A. It all depends on demand. Right now we're focused on bringing to market all of the standard and custom gaffs. Once Mandolins are established, any number of variations is possible.

Q. Who owns the Mandolin Back?

A. The USPC owns the rights to the Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back design. However, with the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Jokers, magicians can gaff these cards in any way they like, including all back elements.

TEAM

Q. Whose idea was it to create a new deck?

A. It all began with Paul Harris trying to get his famous Twilight Angels cards reprinted. Once USPC made the decision to permanently stop producing all Bicycle 808 Rider Back gaffs affecting its back design (including Twilight Angels), Paul began looking for other ways to produce his favorite effect. Eventually, after a couple of years, his search led him to Richard Turner, who works with USPC and was in the perfect position to oversee quality control of the decks.

Q. Who actually designed the Mandolins?

A. Paul Harris led the overall development of the deck, including art direction of the final design. Richard Turner was in charge of the selection of the paper stock, the cut, and other manufacturing details of the cards. A variety of artists were involved in different aspects of the design, including Dirk Spece, Gary Bell and Garrett Thomas. The final version was fine-tuned by Lanka, an artist so expert in replicating period art that even the Smithsonian has acquired some of her work.

UNITED STATES PLAYING CARD COMPANY

Q. Is USPC just manufacturing the Mandolins or is it going to be distributing and marketing them as well?

A. USPC owns the rights to the design of the Mandolins and is manufacturing the deck. Murphy's Magic Supplies, Inc. is handling distribution and marketing to the magic community. Paul Harris and Richard Turner are responsible for the day-to-day operation of www.809bicycle.com, where you can order custom Mandolin gaffs.

Q. I went to Bicycle's website to look for more information about the Mandolin deck but couldn't find anything. Why isn't it there?

A. It's there now! There was an initial delay in including Mandolins in the product line up, but it is now included in the "cards and games" section at www.bicyclecards.com

Q. So, is this actually a new USPC deck or isn't it? It's beginning to sound like this is actually just a giant custom run for Paul Harris and Murphy's.

A. The development of the Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck represents an unusual and unique arrangement. After months of negotiation with the USPC, it was determined that the best way to ensure that magicians can get Bicycle brand gaffs to match Bicycle brand decks legally, reliably, and at a high quality was to create a new Bicycle brand deck that would be owned by USPC and distributed primarily within the magic trade. It is not simply a custom-run deck, because custom-run designs are owned by the customer, not USPC. In this case USPC is not only manufacturing the deck, it also owns the rights to the design of the Mandolins as well. This is the only way it was possible to produce a comfortable, familiar deck with a design so similar to the Bicycle 808 Rider Backs. Mandolins are a USPC deck in every sense of the word except that their distribution is focused primarily (though not exclusively) on the magic trade.

Q. Isn't USPC just trying to make more money by forcing magicians to buy all their gaffs again?

A. No. This is about trademark protection, not market opportunity. USPC owns exclusive trademark rights for its Ace of Spades, Joker, back design, brand names and numbers, case design, and name of finish used on its various cards. (You can see the company's trademark notice on the box flap of each deck of cards it produces.) By stopping the production of gaffs affecting its trademarks, USPC

is showing increased protection of its trademarks, which will strengthen its legal position in potential cases of trademark infringement by other companies in the future.

What's driving USPC's decisions is an attempt to protect some of the company's most valuable assets, not the hope of earning a few more dollars from the magic community, which is one of the smallest sources of its revenue. At the same time, USPC knows its decision frustrated magicians and wanted to be a part of a solution that solved a problem for the magic community.

Keep in mind, too, that Mandolins are about giving magicians another choice of cards and the opportunity to have the widest range of gaffs. If the gaffs you use are among those that the USPC will still make, or if you use no gaffs at all, you are, of course, free to continue to use the USPC Bicycle 808 Rider Backs, or any other deck for that matter.

In general, all gaffs need to be replaced eventually. Mandolin gaffs will be phased in over time and you can phase them into your collection gradually as well.

Q. How do we know USPC won't change its mind a year from now and stop making gaffs for Mandolins just like it stopped making gaffs for Bicycle Rider Backs?

A. USPC has invested a huge amount of effort into getting the Mandolin to this point and USPC has assured us that they have a long-term commitment to keeping standard and custom Mandolin gaffs available to the magic community. Put simply, no one wants to go through all of this again.

Q. Is quality control going to be any better on the Mandolins than on the Rider Backs? Sometimes the Bicycles I get at Wal-Mart are printed so off center they're practically a one-way deck.

A. USPC has recently invested millions of dollars in a new facility and new production equipment and processes that are designed to ensure the quality of all of its cards. The Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is among the first beneficiaries of these improvements. However, as with any product, there may occasionally be slight variations in production.

MARKETING & DISTRIBUTION

Q. Won't the public think this is a "magician's" deck?

- A.** No. Mandolins are a layman-tested, familiar-looking deck specifically designed to look similar to the Bicycle 808 Rider Backs. The design was selected from literally hundreds of concepts, and focus-group-tested with hundreds of laymen. The Mandolin design was the clear winner. In test after test, laymen preferred and felt most comfortable with a design closest to the famous 808s. In most cases, people did not even notice the difference between the two. When the differences were pointed out, people assumed it was just another standard variation of the Bicycle brand.

Keep in mind, too, that there are dozens and dozens of different decks of cards sold to the general public. On the official Bicycle website for the public there are at least 20 different models of Bicycle-branded decks featured. The USPC alone produces at least four brands of cards other than Bicycles, including Bee, Aviator and others. As long as there's nothing so unusual or dramatic that it catches their eye, the public has about the same interest in what's on the back of playing cards as they do in what's on the back of cereal boxes. No one looks at cards as closely as magicians do. Mandolins look normal because they ARE normal.

Q. Why is Murphy's the only supplier?

- A.** Murphy's Magic Supplies, Inc. is the largest magic wholesaler in the world. They can make the Bicycle 809 Mandolin decks and gaffs available to the greatest number of magic retailers possible — and, therefore, the greatest number of magicians possible — with the least amount of business complexity.

MANDOLINS VS RIDER BACKS

Q. I still don't understand why I have to stop using my Bicycle Rider Backs. I've got several dozen brand new decks ready to go. Why would I switch?

A. You have the opportunity to switch, but the choice is yours. If the gaffs you use are among those that the USPC will still make you are, of course, free to continue to use the Bicycle Rider Backs. However, if the gaffs you use affect the back design, then your best option is to shift to the Bicycle Mandolin Back decks and gaffs. You may also prefer the Mandolin for its softer feel, Traditional Cut and classic card box.

In general, card gaffs need to be replaced eventually. Mandolin Back gaffs will be phased in over time and you can phase them into your collection gradually as well.

Q. I've heard that USPC IS producing gaffed Bicycle Rider Backs again. Why not just go back to using Bikes?

A. There's a lot of confusion in the magic community about this. It's critically important to make the distinction between gaffs that affect trademarks and those that don't. USPC's policy affects only those gaffs that affect trademarks. That means Ace of Spades, Jokers and back design. USPC has, indeed, permanently stopped producing Bicycle 808 Rider Back gaffs that in any way alter its trademarked Ace of Spades, Joker, and back design. It has not stopped making standard gaffs that don't affect its trademarks.

Q. I'm confused. I've seen the new deck, and the box says "Bicycle" just like the old deck. But the cards don't have any Bicycles. What's the deal?

A. There are many Bicycle-branded decks that don't have the famous 808 Rider Back design. Here's how it works: The United States Playing Card Company is a company that manufactures and markets various different brands of cards. Bicycle is one of those brands, as is Bee, Aviator and others. Within each brand there may be various models. The Bicycle 808 Rider Back is a model. The Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back is a model. The Bicycle Deckade is a model. Even the Bicycle Jack Daniels is a model.

So, as counterintuitive as it may seem, not every model of Bicycle-brand cards includes a bicycle in the design. What magicians have come to affectionately call “Bikes” is really a reference to a particular model, not the brand. Bottom line: The USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is a new model in the Bicycle-brand line of cards made by the USPC. It is purposely designed to be a familiar-looking deck that magicians can gaff as much as they’d like both front and back (with the exception of the trademark Ace of Spades and Joker). In fact, the USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck is the only Bicycle brand deck that provides magicians maximum flexibility in gaffs, is Traditionally Cut, and looks comfortable and familiar to laymen.

MANDOLINS VS OTHER DECKS

Q. Hasn't the Phoenix Deck already given magicians a new alternative to Bicycles?

A. Choice is a good thing. We respect the competition and know that ultimately magicians will decide what cards they prefer. We believe the USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back deck will become the new standard for magicians because the Mandolin deck is the only Bicycle brand deck that provides magicians maximum flexibility in gaffs, is Traditionally Cut, and looks comfortable and familiar to laymen. It does so while meeting the highest quality standards of stock, moisture content, pliability, finish, cut, durability, and handling of any current USPC mass market retail deck. Plus the Mandolin is also the only current Bicycle deck that features the classic Bicycle card case.

GAFFS

Q. Oh great. Now I have to replace all my gaffs.

A. You have the opportunity to, but the choice is yours. If the gaffs you use are among those that the USPC will still make you are, of course, free to continue to use the USPC Bicycle 808 Rider Backs. In general, card gaffs need to be replaced eventually. Mandolin Back gaffs will be phased in over time and you can phase them into your collection gradually as well. The Mandolins fill a need that most of us wish didn't exist. But, the fact is it does, so we have to adjust with the times.

Q. Are my favorite magic shops going to stop selling Rider Back gaffs even if they have normal backs — like Three Card Monte, for example?

A. Murphy's Magic Supplies, Inc. is the exclusive distributor of the new Mandolin cards. They will continue to sell existing supplies of 808 Rider Back gaffs to magic shops, but over time all NEW custom gaffs will be produced as Mandolin Backs. Standard gaffs (double backs, blank face, etc.) will be available in both 808 Rider Backs and 809 Mandolin backs.

Q. I don't know what all the fuss is about. I haven't had any problems buying Rider Back gaffs at all.

A. That's because not all 808 Rider Back gaffs have been discontinued. Only those that affect USPC's trademarked Ace of Spades, Jokers and back design will no longer be made. Also, many magic shops have extensive inventories of product that were made before USPC stopped making these gaffs. So, it's quite possible you'll be able to find a wide range of both standard and custom 808 Rider Back gaffs for a little while. But when existing inventories are gone, no more 808 Rider Back gaffs affecting trademarked elements will be made.

Q. Do I have to buy Mandolins at a magic shop or will they be available in the same places I can buy Bicycles?

A. At the moment, Mandolin Back decks are available through magic dealers only. After months of negotiation with the USPC, it was determined that the best way to ensure that magicians can get Bicycle brand gaffs to match Bicycle brand decks legally, reliably, at a high quality, and with a Traditional Cut, was to create a new Bicycle brand deck that would be distributed primarily within the magic trade. However, some distribution to the public through convenience stores and other small retail outlets will be permitted over time.

Q. What do you mean by “standard” gaffs vs. “custom” gaffs?

A. Standard gaffs are utility cards that generally can be used for a wide range of effects. They include double backs, double faces, blank back, blank face, double blanks. Custom gaffs generally are cards designed to accomplish a single specific effect. Examples include Simon Aronson’s Red Sea Passover and Paul Harris’s Twilight Angels. The rights to a custom gaff are generally owned by the effect’s creator. All standard gaffs will be available in the new Bicycle 809 Mandolin Backs, and unlike 808 Rider Backs, custom gaffs for 809 Mandolin Backs are allowed in any configuration desired (with the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker) including alterations to the back design.

Q. What standard gaffs are available now?

A. All standard gaffs are now available in Mandolin Backs.

Q. Can we still get custom gaffs made like we used to?

A. Yes. With the exception of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker, magicians can gaff any aspect of the Mandolins as much as they like both front and back. Individual custom cards and complete custom decks are available. If you have ordered custom 808 Rider Back decks in the past, you will find the new 809 Mandolin Back custom ordering process to be similar, though usually quicker and frequently less expensive. Visit www.809bicycle.com for details and contact information.

CUSTOM ORDERS

Q: What's the minimum order for a custom gaff?

A: Minimum order for single custom gaff Mandolin Back cards is 5,000 cards (all 5,000 must be the same card). Minimum order for a full custom Mandolin Back deck is 1,000 decks (all 1,000 decks must be the same configuration).

Q: Are mixed-back runs available for custom cards? For example, can I print 5,000 cards with a custom face and get half with a red back and half with a blue?

A: No mixed-color runs are available. Each custom run of single cards or decks is for one specific set of colors. If you need both red and blue backs you would need two different runs of 5,000 cards each for each back color.

Q: How much of the card can I alter?

A: With the exception of the face of the trademarked Ace of Spades and Joker, you can gaff as much as you like, both front and back. That means you can change, alter or add anything you want to the entire back and the entire front of Mandolin Back cards. Mandolins are the only deck available that provides magicians maximum flexibility in gaffs and looks comfortable and familiar to laymen.

Q: Can I order custom Bicycle 808 Rider Back cards?

A: Yes, but you cannot alter the trademarked Ace of Spades, Jokers or backs of the Bicycle 808 Rider Back; only the remaining faces are available to be gaffed. We do these in runs of single cards only. This means that if you want a full deck of custom 808 Rider Back cards, you would need to order 56 different single cards with a minimum order of 5,000 of each single card.

Q: How many colors can I use on a custom card?

A: USPC utilizes four-color process printing, which means you can use any combination of any process colors you want.

Q: How do I create a custom card or custom deck?

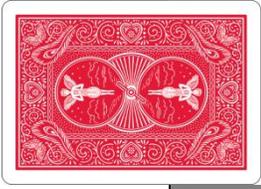
A: You can use your own designer, or we can put you in touch with one of our recommended artists. Our customer service person will gladly guide you through the process. Contact us at www.809bicycle.com.

Q: What is the turn-around time for custom card and deck orders?

A: For single card runs, we have to wait for all 56 cards of a print run to be reserved by different customers before printing. You will be sent regular progress updates. Once a full run is ready to print, the usual turn-around time is six to eight weeks. For full custom deck orders, once final proofs have been approved, your order will immediately be sent to print with expected delivery in six to eight weeks. Note that turn-around time can occasionally be longer if USPC is backed up with other orders.

Q: How do I get started with my custom order?

A: Visit www.809bicycle.com for details and contact information.



USPC Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back Deck Feature Comparison Chart

	Familiar-looking design	Traditional cut	Traditional "full back" tuck box	Standard gaffs available commercially	Custom gaffs available	No limitations on gaffed backs	Includes extra or specialty cards	Cost per deck
Bicycle 808 Rider Back	✓	No	No longer available	Limited	Limited	Cannot alter trademark back design in any way	No	Approx. \$1.25 to \$3
Bicycle 809 Mandolin Back	✓ Includes famous Ace of Spades, Jokers and classic box design	✓ Ensures smooth faro shuffles right out of the box	✓ Includes classic "full-card" back design printed on box	✓ All standard gaffs available now	✓ Easily ordered at www.809bicycle.com	✓ Back design can be altered in any way	✓ Double blank and 2 full Jokers included in every deck	\$3
Richard Turner Gold Seal Deck	✓	✓	✓	No	No	Cannot alter trademark back design in any way	No	\$6
Phoenix Deck	No	Varies	✓	✓	✓	✓	Extra set of large-pip aces	\$3
Tally-Ho, Hoyle, Kem, Aviator, Bee, etc.	✓	No	Varies	No	No	N/A	No	Approx. \$1.50 to \$3 depending on model. Kem can be as much as \$9.
Guardians, Eco, Centurions, Ghosts, Viper, Tragic Royalty, Tiger, etc.	No	No	Varies	Limited	Limited	Cannot alter trademark back design in any way	No	Approx. \$3.95 to \$9.95 depending on model. Average = approx \$4.95
Split Spades, Smoke and Mirrors (Dan and Dave), etc.	No	No	No	No	No	N/A	No	4.95 to 5.95