

# Razor Shave



**By**  
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- A Razor Blade Magic Trick

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## Foreword

*When I was a little boy, I wanted to do magic very badly... and do you know what? I did magic 'very badly'. The reason I did magic very badly is that I thought magic was all about me, all about showing everyone how wonderful 'I' was and how stupid 'they' were for not figuring it out.*

*It wasn't until years later that I realized that no one cared how wonderful I was...and no one liked to be told they were stupid. It took me a little longer to discover that if I really wanted people to watch me, I had to think about them and not myself.*

*As soon as I learned that, a strange thing happened...my friends started saying, "Can you show us another magic trick?" My parents started saying, "Have you met our son the magician?" People started paying me money to do what I enjoyed most. I was being paid to have fun! That's when I learned the biggest secret of magic and for that matter, the biggest secret of life.*

*It's simply this: "Remember: it's not always about you. As a matter of fact, as a performer, it's NEVER about you!" Learn this and your world will be a very special place. You see, each of us has a gift or gifts. We call them talents. When you discover what your talents are, your world is suddenly filled with color. But when you learn to use those gifts to make other peoples' lives better, when you use them to make the world a better place...*

*Then You Have Real Magic!*

*Peter the Adequate*

# Introduction

The first magic show I ever saw was at my 6th birthday party in Mexico City. This was also the first time I had ever seen someone swallow razor blades and pull them out all strung onto a piece of string. Those of you who have recently done kids magic or have children of your own are probably cringing at this moment. You must remember that this was long before the “PC-age” we are currently in and will be pleased to know that I, who tried to imitate every circus act I ever saw, never even thought of trying to duplicate this amazing feat. I did however learn how to do it in my teens and have been performing it ever since.

In the 47 years since that birthday party show, I have seen MANY different versions of the same trick and have seen magicians swallow needles, light bulbs, lifesavers and an impromptu version of the trick using olives and spaghetti (magicians at late night convention get-togethers can be a little weird). As much as this trick has always captivated me, I have found every performance, including many of my own, to be somewhat flawed.

Here are my two main objections to the way it is usually performed:

- 1) The trick always seems to be “ego-driven.” Every time I see this trick, it is presented as if it were a feat of skill. If you have read my foreword, you know that this goes completely against my philosophy of magic and performing.
- 2) Every “blade switch” I have seen seems contrived or unnatural.

Many years ago, I created a razor blade eating routine, which solves both of my main objections. I guarded its secret jealously until I had developed both the routine and the character so thoroughly that I felt I had really made it 'my own'. I now feel that it is time to share this routine with the rest of the magic community.

Here is how I have solved my two main objections to this trick:

- 1 ) The routine is entertaining and engrossing, even without the magic trick. The aim of the routine thus becomes more about entertaining the audience and less about showing off.
- 2) Every move in the routine is a logical part of the entertainment, making the working of the trick totally invisible and unnoticeable.

# “Razor Shots”

by Peter The Adequate © 2008

## The Routine:

The magician tells the audience that he will perform a feat that is so dangerous and so incredibly stupid that he can only accomplish it with the aid of the one ingredient, which allows him to do “stupid stuff” ... Tequila!

The performer then lines up five shot glasses and five lime quarters with razor blades impaled into the rind. One by one, he pulls the blades out, slices through a sheet of newspaper to prove their sharpness and then returns them to the limes.

The magician then fills each shot glass with tequila.

One by one, he places a razor blade on his tongue, draws it into his mouth, licks the salt from his hand, chases it with a shot of tequila, and finally a squeeze of limejuice. With each combination of blade, salt, tequila, and lime, the performer gets visibly “drunker” until we see him stumbling across the stage.

After swallowing the last razor blade, the magician begins to floss; in case he got a piece of lime stuck in his teeth. (You can't be too careful when it comes to your health!). Finally the magician begins to contort his face and stomach. After nearly choking on the floss...the magician then pulls the floss out of this mouth and to the amazement of the audience, the razor blades are strung onto it about two inches apart from each other.

## The Props

- -10 Dulled Razor Bladed (see notes for dulling instructions)
- -5 Opaque Shot Glasses
- -1 Pour Spout (Add This To Your Bottle Of Tequila / Water)
- -1 Salt Shaker
- -1 Container Of Stage Blood
- -1 Package Of Dental Floss
- -5 Lime Wedges (4 1/4 size and 1 slightly larger)
- -5 Sheets Of Newspaper
- -1 Water Filled Bottle Of White Tequila.

**(The above prop list can be purchased for under \$25.00)**

The 10 razor blades need to be dulled to the point where they will cut through newspaper, but not harm your skin. Do this at your own risk!

To dull the razor blades, hold each blade (one at a time) on the flat side of the blade. Using a nail file, file down the sharp edges of the blade with 10-20 strokes of the nail file. After the first 10 strokes, you should be able to comfortably apply slight pressure with the balls of your fingers along the edge of the blade. Continue dulling until they are no longer sharp...but will still cut paper.

Another option is to add clear Scotch Tape to the main part of each blade. If using this method, leave the corner of the blade free from tape so that it can still cut through paper.

## **The Method: A Brief Overview**

There are two major secrets involved in this routine. The first is “proving” that the razor blades are sharp. This secret lies in the fact that the blades are indeed sharp enough to cut the newspaper, but not sharp enough to cause any serious injury to the performer.

While the specially prepared blades will not be sharp enough to cut your skin, they will be sharp enough to cut through newspaper if done right. To slice through a sheet of newspaper, you must take a swipe at the paper, hitting it with a corner of the blade. As long as you continue the downward motion, the blade will slice through the paper as if it were sharp. It is best to use a fresh sheet of paper for each blade.

The second secret lies in substituting the unstrung razor blades for a pre-strung set in a manner which is natural, logical and most importantly, unnoticeable. Most devices I have seen on the market look highly suspect and very unnatural. The secret used for this switch are the shot glasses and the limes themselves!

You will need to buy five opaque shot glasses. Shot glass with pictures can also be used. You will need one of the glasses to be a “slightly more opaque” in design than the others. Place this glass in the fifth position, furthest to the right. Follow the “swallowing” of each razor blade with a shot of Tequila (water), a lick of salt, and a squeeze of lime.

To “swallow” each razor blade, you will stick out your tongue, gently place the blade on your tongue, and then draw it into your mouth.

While drinking the shot of Tequila, you will slide the blade over to the inside of your left cheek. After you place the fifth blade in your mouth, you will repeat the same procedure, but this time you will allow all five blades to slip out of your mouth and back into the final “more opaque” shot glass. Be sure to slide the fifth blade over to your left cheek, so that you can allow all of the blades to slip out as one single package as you finish off your shot. The frosting and the pattern on the final shot glass will help mask the presence of the blades as you spit them back into the glass!

Once you have disposed of the “unstrung” set of blades, you need to replace them with the new batch of “pre-strung” blades. Each razor is “swallowed” with a shot of tequila and a squeeze of lime. Since you dispose of the old set during the downing of the shot, it only makes sense that the acquisition of the new set should happen during the squeezing of the lime. To achieve this in the most natural and deceptive manner possible, I have chosen to have the lime wedges serve three distinct purposes, two readily apparent to the audience and one hidden from the audience.

First, use each lime wedge to display a razor blade. Place a lime wedge in front of each shot glass, cut a thin slice into the rind of the wedge and insert one corner of the razor blade into the slit. Second, use each lime wedge, as previously mentioned, as a chaser for the tequila shots. Third, the last lime wedge also has a second slice cut into the pulp side of the lime. Insert the entire packet of pre-strung razor blades into this slice, such that only about a quarter inch protrudes from the lime. Since the rind side of the lime is facing the audience, they will be blissfully unaware of the second stack of razor blades.

When you chase the final tequila shot with a squeeze of lime, you simply extract the packet of blades with your teeth and position them into the left side of your mouth. Because it is natural to contort your face and mouth when squeezing a sour lime into it, the extra movement of re-positioning the packet of blade in your mouth will go virtually unnoticed!

## The Set-Up

This routine works best if you have everything set up on a small tray or roll-on cart. This will keep your performing table dry and clean from any mess this routine will create! Any tray will work. I purchased a silver looking tray from the local dollar store.

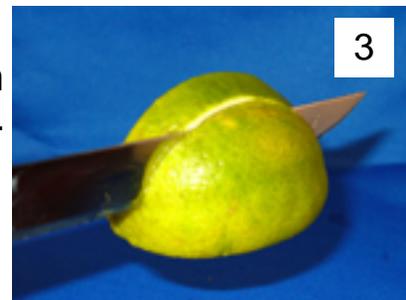
To begin you will need to prepare your five lime slices. Take one lime and cut it into quarters. Take your second lime and cut it in two, with one part slightly larger than the other one (**Figure-1**).



Discard the smaller of the two pieces. Cut the larger segment in half and you will have four quarter sized wedges and two slightly larger wedges (**Figure-2**). Discard one of the larger segments and you will have the five that you need.



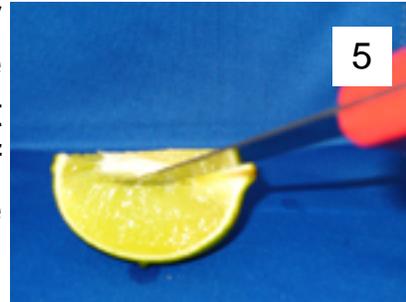
Next, cut a slit into the rind of each lime wedge. This is the where your unstrung razor blades will go. (**Figure-3**)



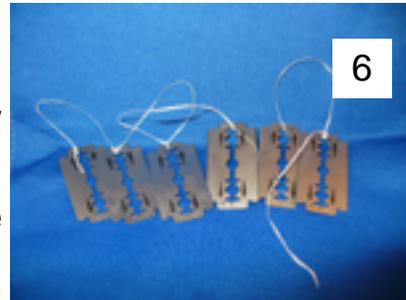
Stick an unstrung razor blade into the rind of the lime and place a shot glass behind it. Repeat this for the other three lime quarters. (**Figure-4**)



To prepare the final lime, (the slightly larger wedge) cut a slit into the rind for the unstrung razor blade as you did in the first four, and also cut a slit into the pulp part of the lime. This is where you will 'hide' the pre-strung razor blades during the routine. **(Figure-5)**

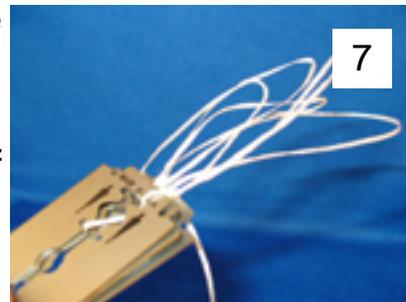


Now for the pre-strung blades! Using the dental floss, tie the blades a few inches apart and at the end tie a small knot...this will make the end easy to locate when inside your mouth **(Figure-6)**.

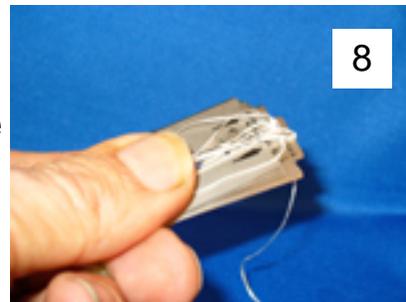


**Note:** The picture shows 6 blades....there should only be five!

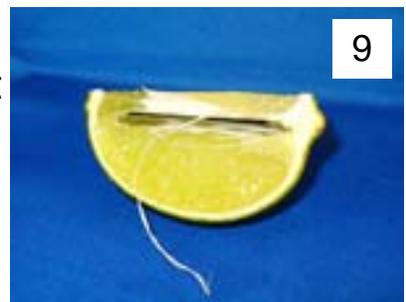
Stack the pre-strung blades on top of each other with the loops sticking up on top. **(Figure-7)**



Next, fold the loops back over to the flat surface of the top blade. **(Figure-8)**



Finally, insert this pre-strung packet into the secret pulp pocket of the fifth lime. **(Figure-9)**



Your final set up should look something like this. **(Figure-10)** The five limes are in front of the five shot glasses. Each lime has a razor blade stuck into its rind. (not shown in picture) The gimmicked lime (with secret load) is on your right and just behind the shot glass that is hard to see through.



All this is set up on a tray or rolling cart. You will also need a water filled tequila bottle with a pour spout, some tabloid size newspaper sheets cut in half (each sheet should be about 11" X 12"), a salt shaker (with salt) and dental floss. It is always a good idea to test cutting the paper before each performance as the paper will cut easily with the grain, but will not tear if you go against the grain.

The final step in the set up is to place a small drop of stage blood on the third razor blade. Place the drop on the side facing away from the audience.

## The Presentation

The following is my professional presentation for “Razor Shots.” You may of course choose any presentation you wish, but I am happy to share with you my audience-tested routine in its entirety.

I created this piece as a character sketch for one of my favorite characters “Carlo The Magnificent,” a magician with great flair, lots of guts, and very little taste or talent! Carlo speaks with a VERY bad Latin accent (a cross between Spanish and Italian, as if he were trying to imitate a romantic Latin lover).



All stage directions from here on will be [between brackets]. All the patter will appear *in italics*.

[For my onstage transformation into the “Carlo Character,” I use “The Stripper” by David Rose, as I fling off my regular costume and slip into Carlo’s lounge act attire. Carlo then says:]

*“Tonight, for your pleasures and mine, I will present some ‘Dan-ger-ous’ magic. And for ‘Dan-ger-ous’ magic I need some dan-ger-ous music!”*

[Instantly, the theme to “Mission Impossible” kicks in and Carlo proceeds to explain what he is about to do.]

*“For this I will use six sharp razor blades.”*

*“Juan, the number Juan (1), not its name.”*

[At this point, he holds one of the newspaper sheets and slices into the sheet as explained earlier.]

*“Two, Tree, Four (for me), Five and il numero Six.”*

[With each blade, he uses a fresh sheet, slices through it and then returns the blade to the lime wedge it came from.]

*“Six very sour limes, a little salt, some dental floss (you can’t be too careful when it comes to your smile) and the one thing which allows me to do stupid stuff... **TEQUILA!**”*

[At this point, the music switches abruptly to the song “Tequila,” originally recorded by The Champs in 1958. There are many versions of the song available, ranging from Latin to Heavy Metal.]

[Carlo begins to dance around, trying unsuccessfully to be suave and hip, as he fills the shot glasses from left to right. The focus should be on “flashy and splashy” rather than neat. He then breaks off a 12-inch strand of dental floss and sets it on the table for later use. ]

[Carlo grabs the first blade and places it carefully on his outstretched tongue. This is followed by drawing the blade into his mouth, downing the first shot of Tequila (actually water), sprinkling salt on his fist, licking it off and sucking on the lime wedge. While swallowing the water I let the blade slide off my tongue and into the space between my left cheek and gum. This allows me to open my mouth freely to “swallow” the next blade.]

[The second blade is “swallowed” in the same manner as the first, only this time Carlo appears to be a little less steady on his feet and it seems as if the alcohol is beginning to affect his demeanor.]

[As I reach for the third blade, I gently touch the tip of my index finger to the drop of blood on the back of the blade. I wince as I would if I had just been cut by the blade, pause for a moment to look at the drop of blood on my finger and then stick my finger into my mouth to clean off the blood. The rest of the “swallowing” proceeds the same as the first two blades, only a slight bit drunker.]

[When it comes time to drink the fourth shot, my breathing is now labored and I end up tossing the contents of the shot glass over my right shoulder instead of drinking it.]

[On the fifth blade, I am visibly drunk and staggering just a bit. In order to drink the last shot, I hold my right wrist with my left hand, in order to steady it. As I “swallow” the last blade, I slide it onto the rest of the blades on the left side of my mouth and then slide the entire packet back onto my tongue. This is done as I slowly down the liquid in the shot glass.

[With my head slightly tipped back, I push all five blades into the empty shot glass and then slam the glass back onto the tray. Make sure the pattern is facing the audience in order to hide the blades. Also, it is a good idea to place your index finger over the top of the shot glass so that the blades don’t pop out as you slam it down! As I suck on the last lime wedge, I draw out the packet of pre-strung blades, using my teeth and lay them on my tongue, pull them into my mouth and over to my left cheek where the un-strung blades were previously.]

[Carlo then faces the audience, picks up the strand of floss and begins to floss his teeth. At one point during the flossing, Carlo lets go of one end and almost chokes as he swallows most of the dental floss. (In reality I let go of one end and curl the strand of dental floss into my right cheek. I leave one end hanging out about one to two inches and pretend to be choking on the dental floss. As I do this, I push the last remaining bit of dental floss into my mouth and grab the knotted end of the floss attached to the razor blades.)

Slowly Carlo pulls the floss out of his mouth allowing the blades to drop into view one at a time. When the last blade has been pulled out he faces the audience and makes a dramatic bow.]

## Alternate Presentation

If the venue allows the presence of alcohol, I will invite an audience member to join me onstage to be an up close and personal witness to this strange feat. I start by asking if there are any tequila lovers in the audience and then choose one of those who raise their hand (preferably a woman). **In this instance, I use six limes and shot glasses instead of five.** The last one, an opaque dark color shot glass, has previously been pre-filled with clear tequila. I fill the real tequila bottle with water (using real tequila, for the shots you consume is highly discouraged).

When pouring the tequila into the glasses, I am dancing around to the music and being less than careful. In doing so, I spill a fair amount of tequila (actually water). When I reach the sixth glass, I miss during most of the process, and pour most of it behind the glass. Only the last few drops end up in the glass to top it off. I place a bar stool a few feet away from where I will be performing. The audience volunteer sits there to be able to witness the entire routine up close. When I get to the fifth shot, I hand the sixth glass to my volunteer and we both down the shot and suck the lime together. The look on the volunteer's face when they down the tequila and chase it with lime and salt, not only lends to the entertainment value, but leads many to believe that you the performer are also drinking real tequila!

Since I usually do this routine in the middle of my show, I have often had people marvel at how I was able to perform after downing six shots of tequila. If you choose to ad this bit, and are doing so in a place that serves alcohol, be sure to purchase the shot from the bar, as bringing your own alcohol in would be illegal and cheap.

# **Replacement Specifics**

## **Blades**

Should you need to replace your razor blades at any time, you should follow these steps: Purchase double-edged razor blades from your local drug store, remove them carefully from their case and file down the sharp edges with a nail file or emery board. About 10-20 swipes per edge should suffice. You will know that the blades are safe if you can safely squeeze the blade by pressing on the edges of the blade. It is better to get a small cut on your fingers than in your mouth. My own preference is to use Walgreen's brand razor blades.

## **Shot Glasses**

It does not matter what kind of shot glasses you use, as long as all the glasses are different and as long as the fifth glass is either frosted or has a large enough opaque design to hide the blades from view. Dollar stores are the best places to find replacement shot glasses.

## **Dental Floss**

It does not matter what brand you use, but I have found that the waxed floss works best, as it keeps the floss from sticking to itself a little better.

## **Stage Blood**

Once again, any brand will do, but it is important that it be “thick” enough so as not to run.

## **Limes**

When choosing limes, try to get the largest possible. Remember, one of them has to be large enough to comfortably house the packet of pre-strung blades.

## **Newspaper**

Tabloid size newspapers, such as the *National Enquirer*, *The Globe*, or *Green Sheet* are the best size. Be sure to cut the pages down the crease, so that you can display only one page at a time.

## **Pour Spouts**

Should you lose the pour spout provided, they are available at most liquor stores or restaurant supply houses.

## **Salt Shaker**

Once again, Dollar Stores are the best and cheapest sources for these. Clear glass is preferred as it allows the salt to be seen.

# Razor Shave



*An Engrossing, Entertaining  
and Completely Baffling  
Razor Blade Eating Routine  
With a Twist (of Lime)*

