

# Skill Builder: Charleston Pivot Effect

## Description

This exercise demonstrates that the Charleston isn't repetitive—it's reactive. When one player changes focus, the entire table's tile flow shifts. By running two iterations side by side, players can see how one pivot transforms what everyone receives.

## Purpose

To help players recognize that the Charleston's value lies in movement and adaptability. Each decision creates a ripple that changes what tiles circulate and what becomes possible.

## Beginning Prompts

Before beginning, invite players to reflect:

- What would you say is the purpose of the Charleston?
- What do you think about the two rounds of passing?
- What are your thoughts on the optional across?

(Encourage open responses without correction—these will frame the debrief later.)

## Setup

- Four players
- A category strip labeled with a random **category** (e.g., Consecutive Run, 2468, Pairs, Like Numbers, Winds & Dragons)
- Give the category strip (face-down) to the strongest player
- Each player takes a **photo of their starting hand** before play (or notes it on an index card)

## Goal

To visibly show that when one player pivots mid-Charleston, it changes the outcome for everyone—proving that the Charleston is a living, reactive exchange.



## How It Works

### Iteration 1 – Baseline Charleston

**Purpose:** Establish a reference point.

1. All players use their starting hands.
2. Conduct a full Charleston sequence (right–across–left).
3. Players photograph or note their ending hands.
4. Discuss briefly:
  - What repeated or stood out?
  - How did the passes feel—predictable or fluid?

### Iteration 2 – Pivot Effect

**Purpose:** Demonstrate how a pivot shifts the flow.

1. Reset to original starting hands using the first photos.
2. The same strong player focuses as they did in the first iteration for one full Charleston (right–across–left).
3. Before beginning a second Charleston, they peek at category strip and pivot to the new category.
4. Complete the second Charleston and photograph ending hands again.
5. Discuss:
  - What differences do you see between your two ending hands?
  - How did one player’s change of focus affect the table?
  - Did new tiles or combinations appear?



## Optional Variation: Skeptic at the Helm

For groups with a vocal skeptic, run Iteration 2 again with that player holding the category strip.

Ask afterward:

- What did you notice when you changed focus?
- Did the experience match your expectations?

## Teaching Point

When everyone stays fixed, the Charleston can appear static. But when one player pivots, unseen tiles emerge, and the table transforms.

That's the **Charleston Pivot Effect**—a reminder that the game changes when you do.

## Reflections

### Group Discussion Questions

- How did the second Charleston differ from the first?
- What surprised you about how one player's pivot affected everyone else?
- How does this change how you view the Charleston's purpose?

### Personal Reflection Questions

- Do I tend to commit too early to one hand or idea?
- When is flexibility more valuable than consistency?
- How can I bring more adaptability into my next game?

