CLAIMS

1. A card-handling device configured to be positioned at a gaming structure having a playing surface, comprising:

a card-shuffling apparatus for shuffling playing cards; and

a card output portion for receiving the playing cards from the card-shuffling apparatus, wherein the playing cards are positioned by the card-shuffling apparatus to be received into the card output portion where major faces of the playing cards are oriented in a plane substantially transverse to the playing surface when the card output portion is in a first position at least partially within the card-handling device, and where the card output portion is further configured to transport the playing cards to a second position where at least a portion of the card output portion is accessible from the playing surface.

2. The card-handling device of claim 1, wherein the card-handling device is configured to output the playing cards in a stack where a height of the stack of the playing cards is slanted to extend along a major length of the card output portion in a direction along the playing surface.

3. The card-handling device of claim 1, further comprising a rotating card input device, wherein the rotating card input device is configured to:

receive the playing cards in a plane substantially parallel to the playing surface,

rotate the playing cards within the plane substantially parallel to the playing surface, and

transport the playing cards as rotated to the card-shuffling apparatus.

4. The card-handling device of claim 1, wherein the card output portion enables an operator to slide a stack of the playing cards from the card output portion onto the playing surface when the card output portion is in the second position.

5. The card-handling device of any one of claims 1 through 4, wherein the card output portion comprises:

a storage compartment configured to hold the playing cards in a plane substantially parallel to the playing surface; and

a movable guide configured to alter a volume of the storage compartment.

6. The card-handling device of claim 5, wherein the card output portion comprises a door on an end of the storage compartment configured to release a selected number of cards.

7. The card-handling device of claim 6, wherein the door comprises a magnetic securing device, and wherein the door is configured to displace to a position clear of a pathway upon which a stack of playing cards travels to exit the storage compartment of the card output portion.

8. A method of shuffling cards comprising:

inputting cards into a card-handling device in an orientation substantially parallel a horizontal plane;

transporting the cards to a card-shuffling apparatus;

outputting the cards into a card output area in an orientation substantially perpendicular to the horizontal plane.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein transporting the cards comprises moving the cards from a location above a surface of a gaming structure to another location below the surface of the gaming structure, and outputting the cards comprises returning the cards to the surface of the gaming structure.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising sliding cards out of the card output area to the surface of the gaming structure at one time.

11. The method of any one of claims 8 through 10, wherein transporting the cards comprises rotating at least some of the cards about a minor axis of the cards to alter an orientation of lateral edges of the at least some of the cards, the minor axis of the cards extending through a thickness of the cards in a direction transverse to a longitudinal axis and a lateral axis of the cards.

12. A card-handling device for use with a gaming surface comprising:

a retractable card input portion configured to receive playing cards in an orientation substantially parallel to the gaming surface;

a transportation device configured to transfer the playing cards from the retractable card input portion to a card-shuffling apparatus within the card-handling device; and

a card outlet configured to receive the playing cards from the card-shuffling apparatus and to deliver the playing cards to a location proximate the gaming surface in an orientation substantially transverse to the gaming surface.

13. The card-handling device of claim 12, wherein the card outlet is configured to receive the playing cards from the card-shuffling apparatus at a location below the gaming surface.

14. The card-handling device of claim 13, wherein the card outlet is configured to elevate the playing cards above the gaming surface and maintain the playing cards in the orientation substantially transverse to the gaming surface.

15. A card-handling device configured to be positioned at least partially below a gaming table upper surface, and comprising:

a card intake area;

a card-shuffling apparatus, the card intake area configured to feed cards into the card-shuffling apparatus in an orientation substantially parallel to a surface of the gaming table; and

an output area configured to receive the cards from the card-shuffling apparatus in an orientation substantially transverse to the surface of the gaming table in an area beneath the surface of the gaming table and to transport the cards to an area at least partially above the surface of the gaming table.