



How *Real* is Fake ID?

Although the production of fake IDs is becoming more sophisticated, it is still not the genuine article. Because of this, it is still possible to spot them. With the advances in digital graphics, image scanning and color printing, it is harder to distinguish fakes from original IDs. But also because of the same advances in technology, newer ways are being developed to find the fake ones.

There is another method of producing fake IDs that is virtually impossible to spot, the "genuine fake IDs". A genuine fake ID is actually a genuine ID in as much as it was actually produced and released by the authorized producing and releasing entity. What makes it fake is by virtue of the method and means by which the genuine ID was attained. How could this be made possible? There's always a way in everything similarly speaking, so does with fake ID making.

One method is by applying for a genuine ID using fake IDs and documents as supporting papers for the application. This can be risky but in many cases, documents required for the application are very easy to forge and are not double-checked. Probably because of the volume of applications as well as the simplicity of some of the supporting documents, those who process these (1) [applications sometimes fail to spot fake documentation](#) used to get real ID cards. By using this method, one can get a real ID. The amount of false information depends on the purpose of the ID card. For instance, if it is a driver's license that a person plans to use to get in to bars and drink, it is possible to have all information to be true except the date of birth and the age. This way you get a genuine driver's license with almost all information actual and only some information falsified. But if the purpose is to use a false or another persons identity, then a whole new set of documents with purely fictitious information or the information of the stolen identity inside.

Another method is similar to the first, but with an added bonus to lessen the risk of getting caught in the process. As we have stated above, the risk in presenting fake documents in applying for a genuine ID card is if the fake documents are spotted during the application. So another way of doing it is by having someone who is part of the process of releasing in on the scam. Having an accomplice inside the (2) [entity that approves produces and releases the genuine ID](#) greatly cuts down the risk of being caught. By having an insider, it may not even be necessary to have to create the false documents needed to apply for the genuine ID. But for those who know how to play it safe, documentation is still provided. This is also to keep suspicion away from the insider helping in the process of getting the genuine IDs under false pretences.

Low pay of staff and official of some governments are sometimes the seeds that saw government corruption. Because most of the IDs and other documents issued by the government are necessary for private individuals to function, the demand has created an alternative source of income for government employees. In some governments, even high officials are part of the scheme making it an organized, almost government level operation.

Another method of lowering the risk of getting caught is by tampering with the information in the database of the issuing agency so that it will match with the fake supporting documents during the application. For the most part, babies or dead people's information is used in the fake documents used in the application. But in some cases, it is necessary to borrow the identity of a living adult person. In cases like these, it may be possible that the real person already has the ID applied for. In which case, the Id will be reported as lost. And if the issuing staff checks the data in the database, they will see that it matches and assume that the application is authentic.

This process can be done by the insider who is part of the scam. But since many government data are accessible from the Internet, a tech savvy person can probably do the job as well. In this case, it may not even be necessary to have an insider to assist in the operation.



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These more sophisticated methods of acquiring false or fake IDs are more effective and are probably more expensive. But in today's world of international terrorism, governments must find better ways and means to catch these criminals to prevent possible terrorist attacks.

- (1) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_document_forgery
- (2) http://www.schneier.com/blog/archives/2006/06/comments_from_a.html