NO PUSHOVER

Bet you can’t push me backward!

THE SETUP
Hold a broomstick horizontally in front of you. Extend your arms with your hands gripping the stick about the same distance apart as your shoulders. Challenge someone to try to push you backward. He or she must grasp the middle of the stick and push using a steady, forward pressure (no sudden thrusts).

INSIDER INFORMATION
It’s impossible to move you a single inch backward! The secret defense is force diversion, whereby you change the direction of your opponent’s force. To do this, flex your elbows out like wings and push slightly upward to counter any pressure. The force that is supposed to knock you backward is diverted into your arms and upward.

Possible Pitfall
This trick depends on timing, so you may need to practice it to make your moves at just the right moment.
NO PUSHOVER, EITHER

Bet you can’t throw me off-balance!

THE SETUP
Hold the broomstick horizontally again, this time with your thumbs up, about six inches on either side of the center of the stick. Have your friend hold the ends of the stick and try to knock you off balance.

INSIDER INFORMATION
When your opponent pushes forward, you push the broomstick upward. The force of the push will be deflected away from any direction that could knock you off balance. Hands on the center of the stick, hands on the ends of the stick: it doesn’t matter. You can win either way.