Here's a thought: If 52 factorial (the amount of possible variations of a pack of playing cards) is so big, why does it look so small? A number with 67 zeros? Oh wow. People may say you could never count that high in your whole life, but I disagree. I can actually count that high in a couple of seconds. Don't believe me? '52 factorial', there we go. You didn't ask how I'd count the number, did you? Technically speaking, I just did. If you were to say to me 'Simon, count to a billion without simply saying 'one billion', I could do that very easily, too. Here goes: 999,999,999, one billion. Granted, I didn't count all the way to a billion but I did indeed count to a billion. 'Walk around the Earth, remove a drop of water from an ocean, keep doing that until all the water is gone, walk round the Earth again, place a card on the floor and keep walking around the Earth until the stack of cards reaches the sun and you still haven't got an idea of the size of 52 factorial?' I get why the number is written as '52!', the exclamation mark in this case representing a shouted expletive, I just don't believe it.

I'll tell you a big number: Simon's number, the amount of times I've been to Staines, which is of course even bigger than 52 factorial. If I went to Staines a billion times every day of my life, you still haven't got anywhere near to Simon's number. Forget all the restaurants and various businesses in the town, the amount of money I've spent in the carpark over all this time could actually pay for everything in the world many times over. Technically speaking I should be worshipped as some kind of Earth-saving hero. To that I say 'thank you, it was nothing really'. However, sorry for all the traffic. How have I been to Staines so many times? Well, Toyota Aygos are very reliable. I should arguably go for an MOT more than once a year with such extreme usage, but again, reliable. There are some numbers that are so big, they wouldn't even fit into the whole universe. Fair enough, I couldn't count THAT high and whilst I often like to think of myself as up for challenges, the number would be too much. I like going to the gym because I like the way it makes me feel, at the end of counting such an extreme number on the other hand, I'd imagine I'd have a very warped and nihilistic personality.

How would I behave once the number had been counted? I'd just be like 'Don't talk to me…' Kinda like how I behave already. Hang on, I've just noticed something… 52! has 67 zeroes? Six seven! :D All people familiar with memes and youth trends will know that's the least serious number of all time, further proof I shouldn't take 52! seriously. Millions of children around the globe saying 'Six sevvvvenn!' and serious mathematicians expect me to believe it's a real thing? It like a maths expert telling me I will live for exactly 1234567654321 seconds. You expect me to believe that as well? You may think my love of palindromes and my optimistic personality would manipulate me into believing you, but actually I don't. The lifespan is just as unbelievable as 52! if not more so. Six seven? You think getting down with kids makes you cool? No, it just makes you look like frauds. Here's something that's interesting: I Googled how long the prior amount of seconds (the beautiful, palindromic number) was and it's almost 40,000 years. No, I'm not going to live the long, but you know what it reminds me of? Warhammer 40,000. I really do think it's the right thing to email the boss of the company and tell him of the excellent, thought provoking fact. What a number! Better than 52!

Here's something else that's interesting: The word 'factorial' itself. It's chillingly close to the childish phrase 'for real' isn't it? As in 'do you want to know a super big

number? You CAN believe me, you know? I'm being for real I mean factorial'. It's like when someone slips up and says '(expletive) you' instead of 'thank you'. The slip up is what the person really means, in this case the slip up means he's being silly and therefore making things up. The fact such a person stressed how trustworthy he is really suggests to me he is lying and has something to hide. It's like a criminal saying 'Do I REALLY look like a burglar to you? Like REALLY? Do you REALLY think that?!?!!? I'm not I'M NOT, I'M NOT!!!!!! AAARGH!!!' I'd be suspicious, anyway. To conclude, there aren't that many variations in a pack of cards. A few thousand, maybe. Or if you want me to fit in with other mathematicians, there are a few thousand! Let's get excited about maths and shout! And on that enthusiastic note… Bye!