TAROT CUIDEBOOK

Based on the tarot interpretations of Arthur Edward Waite

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Introduction

Reading Tarot cards can reveal insights into your past, present, or future. The premise is simple: the Querent asks a question, and then the Reader draws the cards and interprets the results.

Tarot reading has been used for divination since the 1700s, and every Reader develops his or her method for interpreting the cards. There are some fundamentals, but Readers are encouraged to explore and develop their own approach.

The Deck

The Tarot deck contains seventy-eight cards: twenty-two Major Arcana cards and fifty-six Minor Arcana cards.

The Major Arcana cards represent the archetypical moments that everyone experiences on their journey through life. Everyone begins life as the Fool, and ends life as the Fool.

The Minor Arcana cards represent the actions, thoughts, feelings, and material struggles that we all encounter in our lives.

Four suits and fifty-six cards make up the Minor Arcana. Face cards consist of the Knave/Page, Knight, Queen, and King.

Each of the four elements belongs to a suit, represented by a specific object:

• Fire to Clubs/Wands/Staffs

- Water to Cups
- Earth to Coins/Pentacles/Disks
- Air to Swords/Spears/Arrows

And each element corresponds to an aspect of human life:

- Fire/Action
- Water/Emotions
- Earth/Work
- Air/Thought.

Spreading the Cards

A spread is a layout for the Tarot cards which provides a framework for the reading. Spreads often follow a predefined theme where the position of the cards is relevant to how they are interpreted.

There are numerous different types of spreads. Certain spreads tend to work well for different types of questions. This guide will provide a starter spread, but you can research and find spreads for every type of question. As you become more experienced, consider developing your own unique spreads.

Three-Card Spread

The past/present/future three-card spread isthebestandmostusedstartingspread. This simple spread is ideal for novice Readers. Cards are drawn and read in the following order: 1) Past, 2) Present, and 3) Future.



Past



Present



Future

- **1. The Past:** This card symbolizes the Querent's past experiences that pertain to the Querent's question.
- 2. The Present: This card represents the Querent's current situation.
- **3.** The Future: This card indicates a possible future goal the Querent should strive for regarding their question or issue. The Querent can shape the future based on their thoughts and actions.

Tips

Become familiar with your deck by putting your thoughts in a journal. Take a page to write about each card, starting with the Fool and going through all seventy-eight cards.

Look at the pictures and use the explanations in this booklet to connect each card with one of your life experiences. Since the cards are archetypical, you have experienced all seventy-eight at least once. Write your corresponding life experience with each card in your journal.

The explanations in this booklet refer to the card being "upright" or "reversed". After shuffling, drawing, and turning over the cards, some may be upright while others will be upside down (or reversed). Reversed cards turn the meaning "upside down."

Pay attention to the symbolism in the artwork; the symbolism enhances, and

provides details, to the meaning of the cards.

Tarot cards are not deterministic and life is not fated. The future is never set. Querents can always alter their future by changing their course of action, changing their thoughts, or adjusting their feelings.

The Major Arcana

The Fool (0)



Meaning: The Fool represents a leap of faith, which is the beginning and ending of the Major Arcana journey we all take through life. We are the Fool. The Fool archetype is about curiosity and open-mindedness, going with the flow of life, and managing our way through the unknown.

Symbolism: A wandering man walks about with no destination in mind. He has what he needs in the sack on the short pole over his shoulder. He has a walking stick for support and a small dog tries to get his attention. He goes wherever the daily path takes him.

Upright: optimism, a journey without a destination, a new beginning, curiosity, and potential

Reversed: ignorance, foolishness, and gullibility



Meaning: The Magician represents choices and creative problem-solving, a connection between imagination and reality. The Magician archetype is the first encounter for the Fool, indicating that we all must make crucial decisions on our life journey.

Symbolism: A craftsman is set up at a booth in a public fair. He has his tools on the table in front of him, ready to do work for whoever approaches and needs his skill. He enjoys a glass of wine while he waits for customers.

Upright: choices, problem-solving, diverse knowledge, solutions, and cleverness

Reversed: conning, deception, mistakes, something broken beyond repair, and failure

The High Priestess (II)



Meaning: The High Priestess represents the knowledge and enlightenment that we attain overcoming difficulties. The High Priestess archetype is the second encounter for the Fool, indicating that we must learn about our intuition, how to trust it, and when to seek out guidance from others.

Symbolism: A regal young woman is ready to offer advice. In her lap is a sacred text, which she will consult if needed. She wears an ornate crown, luxurious robes, and her feet rest on a beautiful pillow. Her appearance conveys her station as an important person who people can approach for advice.

Upright: insight, divination, wisdom from experience, and counseling

Reversed: inexperience, bad advice, incomplete knowledge, and misrepresentation



Meaning: The Empress represents the feminine divine, the essence of beauty, abundance, and nourishment. The Empress archetype is the third encounter for the Fool, teaching you about the natural world, how to care for the world, how to nurture yourself, and how to care for others.

Symbolism: A regal older woman is ready to give counsel to those who seek her out. She has a scepter and shield, which represent her power in the world. Her crown is more ornate and her station higher than the High Priestess.

Upright: caretaking, abundance, the feminine divine, and sovereignty over the natural order.

Reversed: neediness, hardships, scarcity, and barrenness.

The Emperor (IIII)



Meaning: The Emperor represents the masculine divine, the essence of command, order, and power. The Emperor archetype is the fourth encounter for the Fool, teaching us how to establish order from chaos, how to the shape the natural world to our needs, and how to build civilization.

Symbolism: An older man sits ready to give orders to those who follow him. He holds a scepter and wears a crown to show his authority. His left arm rests on a carving of an eagle, which is another symbol of power in his card.

Upright: authority, the rule maker, order, stability, and sovereignty over society and civilization

Reversed: cruelty, dictatorship, and narcissism.

The Hierophant (V)



Meaning: The Hierophant represents wisdom attained through scholarship and exploring the world, the learned knowledge we attain in our effort to make sense of life. The Hierophant archetype is the fifth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we need to go beyond intuition and emotion, and use intellect and experience to solve some problems. Or, we need to find someone with those qualities to help us.

Symbolism: A wise man of learning sits ready to dispense knowledge. He has a scepter and a crown, both indicating his authority. He offers a blessing to the men in front of him, sharing his wisdom with those who seek him out.

Upright: wisdom, authority, knowledge, doctrine, and advice

Reversed: arrogance, elitism, hypocrisy, and charlatanism



Meaning: The Lovers represents partnership, especially a profound connection with someone that is both intimate and romantic. The Lovers archetype is the sixth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we cannot fully experience life until we connect with someone intimately and deeply.

Symbolism: A young man and woman stand in front of king who is present to bless their union. Above them is a blindfolded cherub who is aiming his arrow at the woman. He prepares to shoot her to keep her love true.

Upright: commitment, status through union, connection, and soul mate

Reversed: jealousy, unfaithfulness, arguments, and separation or divorce



Meaning: The Chariot represents willpower and drive; the intense focus we need to establish our identities and stand out in some important and useful way. The Chariot archetype is the seventh encounter for the Fool, teaching us how important it is to have conviction and intensity in our lives.

Symbolism: A prince stands in a chariot drawn by two horses; he is ready to act should a problem arise. The garland at the feet of the horses show that he has been victorious and knows how to succeed. He is in line to become the next Emperor.

Upright: willpower, intensity, drive, and control

Reversed: anger, delay, indecision, and interference



Meaning: Strength represents our fortitude to live life, overcome struggles, and persevere. The journey through life will require strength to live fully and completely. Strength, as an archetype, is the eighth lesson for the Fool, showing us that life is a marathon and not a sprint. We must find the strength within that will help us survive and thrive.

Symbolism: A young queen gently opens the mouth of a lion; she rests her feet on his body. Neither fears the other.

Upright: courage, compassion, and gentle strength

Reversed: weakness, anger, abuse of power, and threat

The Hermit (VIIII)



Meaning: The Hermit represents our individual pursuit for personal truth in a world of competing truths. The Hermit archetype is the ninth encounter for the Fool, teaching us that sometimes we must detach from the flow of life to discover ourselves, bringing what we learn in isolation back into the world of social connections.

Symbolism: A elderly man makes his way slowly; he is bent over with age. He carries a lantern, which symbolizes his desire to know what is true.

Upright: introspection, discovery, wisdom, truthseeking, and taking time away from society

Reversed: escapism, loneliness, depression, and being cast out



WHEEL OF FORTUNE

Meaning: The Wheel of Fortune represents experiences and circumstances outside our control. The Wheel of Fortune archetype is the tenth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we exist in a dance between fate and free will. This card teaches the lessons of fate, the external world, and how others with more power than us force us to react.

Symbolism: An angel sits on top of the wheel while a fox climbs towards him. Fruits lie on the ground and fire burns in the urn on the pedestal. All things pass with time except what is above the limits of earthly life.

Upright: destiny, and the passage of time

Reversed: powerlessness, and unpleasant circumstances



Meaning: Justice represents detached decisionmaking, logic, and the power of knowledge outside emotions. Justice, as an archetype, is the eleventh teacher for the Fool, showing us the importance of objectivity and analysis for determining outcomes and making important decisions. Life can be fair if we act with integrity.

Symbolism: An angel sits ready to receive complaints and solve disputes. She holds a scale in one hand and a sword in the other. She will judge the complaint fairly (scales) and use her authority (sword) to see to it that her judgement is enforced.

Upright: detached decision-making, responsibility, consequences, logic, and cause and effect

Reversed: injustice, missing information, indecision, and bureaucracy

The Hanged Man (XII)



Meaning: The Hanged Man represents knowing sacrifice, when we realize we must accept a shortterm difficulty for a long-term gain. The Hanged Man archetype is the twelfth encounter for the Fool, showing us the importance of devotion, surrender, and sacrifice as ways forward that are just as powerful as the willfulness of the Chariot lesson.

Symbolism: A young man hangs upside down, with his hands behind his back. It is possible he can free himself, or he may have his hands bound. Either way he is seeing the world from a different perspective.

Upright: knowing sacrifice, change in perspective, and patience

Reversed: helplessness, impatience, confusion, and selfishness


Meaning: Death represents endings in the cycle of life, and the power of regeneration. Death, as an archetype, is the thirteenth encounter for the Fool. This card reminds us that life is finite, which helps us appreciate how well, or poorly, we are doing in our pursuit of life experience and soul growth.

Symbolism: The skeletal figure of death uses his scythe like a broom, to sweep away all the temporary efforts of humanity, be it power, art, or civilization.

Upright: transformation, inevitability, and cycles

Reversed: hopelessness, depression, and severe grief



Meaning: Temperance represents balance and equilibrium that has the chance to develop with greater life experience. Temperance, as an archetype, is the fourteenth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we need to step back, from time to time, and assess where we are to determine if we are in or out of balance.

Symbolism: An angel pours water down from one urn into another, representing the constant flow of life from one container to another (a soul from one body to the next, through reincarnation).

Upright: calm, health, well-being, balance, common ground, and harmonious action

Reversed: imbalance, disruption, anxiety, frustration, and pettiness



Meaning: The Devil represents consequences we face as our choices become more significant the farther into life we travel. The Devil archetype is the fifteenth encounter for the Fool, teaching us that we are responsible for our lives and our choices. If we make selfish choices that harm others, we will not enjoy the outcomes.

Symbolism: A satyr sits on a figure who is being punished while a serpent looks up at him and his foot rests on the head of a beast.

Upright: self-interest, temptation, consequences, and choice.

Reversed: unwise choices, lust, wanton abandon, and manipulation



Meaning: The Tower represents sudden, unexpected change that takes something we have built over time and quickly forces us to start over or reset. The Tower, as an archetype, is the sixteenth encounter for the Fool, teaching the lesson that life is a construct; it can be "blown up" at any time and force us to make unexpected adjustments.

Symbolism: A tower is destroyed by lightning and a man is falling to his death. One man is already dead on the ground. The structure, no matter how well made, cannot stand against nature's fury.

Upright and Reversed: unexpected change, sudden catastrophe, and traditions failing



Meaning: The Star represents hope, and a positive vision for the future. What do we see as our life purpose and how do we get to it? The Star, as an archetype, is the seventeenth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we all need hope and optimism about the future. We need to have dreams to enjoy this life.

Symbolism: A nude woman pours water from her urns into a pond. Above her is an owl on a branch, representing wisdom, and stars in the sky. She is preparing to bathe and cleanse herself.

Upright: hope, inspiration, promise, purpose, and faith

Reversed: despair, confusion, delusion, and doubts



Meaning: The Moon represents the feelings we need to explore and express. The Moon, as an archetype, is the eighteenth encounter for the Fool, illuminating our deepest feelings so we can understand the emotional framework that gets reinforced, suppressed, and shaped by our family and closest relationships.

Symbolism: The moon looks down upon the valley while two dogs look up into the sky, which is parting to allow the light of the moon to shine on the land. The lobster represents an animal that is extremely vulnerable without the protection of its hard outer shell.

Upright: dreams, positive emotions, intuition, and soul purpose

Reversed: delusion, nightmares, negative emotions, and despair



Meaning: The Sun represents revelation and the light of truth. The Sun, as an archetype, is the nineteenth teacher for the Fool. It teaches us the lesson of honest revelation and how we deal with clear truths in our lives. What do you learn when you see a situation, or a person, for what they really are?

Symbolism: The sun shines on a happy couple who are dancing in a garden. They enjoy the bright and warm day together.

Upright: revelation, greatness, vitality, and truth

Reversed: lies, excessive pride, arrogance, and blocked action



Meaning: Judgement represents significant and life-changing decisions, as well as the judgements from the world around us. Judgement, as an archetype, is the twentieth lesson for the Fool. This card teaches the importance and necessity of serious decisions at crucial times in our lives. Sometimes we get to make these judgements and sometimes they are made for us.

Symbolism: An angel blows her trumpet to call the departed souls for judgement. They answer her call, as they must, and will be judged to determine if they are to be punished or rewarded.

Upright: consequences, deciding for others, being judged, and closure

Reversed: stereotyping, prejudging, lazy thinking, and abuse of power



Meaning: The World represents the ending of a cycle to prepare for a new, repeating journey for the Fool. The World, as an archetype, is the twenty-first encounter for the Fool, showing us that life is constantly changing, and we are meant to build on our experiences. In this ending is another beginning.

Symbolism: An angel stands inside a garland woven with flowers and fruit. The representatives of the four fixed signs of the Zodiac – Aquarius, Scorpio, Leo, and Taurus – occupy each corner of the card. These "fixed" signs symbolize the stability needed for a new beginning or leveling up in life.

Upright: fulfillment, completion, conclusion, the sum of your efforts, and success

Reversed: stagnation, failure, and final obstacle

The Minor Arcana

The Suit of Cups

The Suit of Cups is associated with the element of water, representing emotions, feelings, and relationships. Cups indicate what is happening in the heart rather than the head. Because these classical decks simply used a number of objects visually in the cards, we have added keywords to make the cards more functional for a modern audience. Ace Meaning: Open your heart to a new relationship or reinvigorate an old one.

Upright: new love Reversed: negative feelings



Two

Meaning: Enjoy a mutual attraction and shared positive feelings with someone.

Upright: attraction Reversed: rejection



Three

Meaning: Gather your closest friends and celebrate something ... anything! Upright: celebrating

Reversed: discord



Four

Meaning: Find some time to meditate, or at least rest; your emotions need soothing.

Upright: rest

Reversed: boredom



Five

Meaning: You have a disappointment you must accept; hidden possibilities have not revealed themselves yet.

Upright: regret Reversed: resignation



Six

Meaning: Reach out to someone you care about and share a memory or create a new one.

Upright: sharing Reversed: greediness



Seven

Meaning: You have an important decision, and you need to know what motivates you to make the choice you want or need to make. Upright: motivations Reversed: wishful thinking



Eight

Meaning: You must let go of someone who was once emotionally important to you, but no longer has any value.

Upright: letting go Reversed: denial



Nine

Meaning: Embrace and accept what truly makes you happy. Your fulfillment is most important right now. Upright: satisfaction Reversed: dissatisfaction



Ten

Meaning: Profound joy in relationship is what you need, or need to appreciate (if you have it). Happiness with a partner is key.

Upright: harmony Reversed: disharmony



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Meaning: Emotions are strong but flowing wildly; they need a proper container.

Symbolism: A young woman holds an urn in front of her; she symbolizes youthful feelings.

Upright: curiosity Reversed: confused

Knight

Meaning: Pursuing something you love and using your imagination.

Symbolism: A young woman rides her horse carrying an urn; she symbolizes the imagination.

Upright: passion Reversed: possessiveness





Queen

Meaning: You need to act with conviction regarding a significant relationship.

Symbolism: A regal female wearing a crown, holding a scepter, and an urn represents mature emotions and compassion.



Upright: nurturing **Reversed**: vindictive

King

Meaning: Accept and embrace your responsibility for the care of others as your way to be empowered and lead.

Symbolism: A wise man is seated; he has a crown, scepter, and a giant chalice. He is a symbol of compassionate leadership.

Upright: responsibility Reversed: narcissism



The Suit of Pentacles

The Suit of Pentacles is associated with the element of earth, representing prosperity, health, security, and stability. Pentacles deal with tangible possessions. Money may be the first thing that comes to mind with this suit, but the cards more generally refer to the material world and what we need to take care of ourselves.

Ace

Meaning: Now is the time to start something that will be real in the world.

Upright: getting started Reversed: blocked



Two

Meaning: Time to experiment and try different actions to get better results.

Upright: routine

Reversed: habit



Three

Meaning: Hard and consistent work is what is needed to succeed and push forward.

Upright: dedication Reversed: laziness



Four

Meaning: Be careful with your resources; it's a good time to save and be conservative with finances.

Upright: savings Reversed: hoarding



Five

Meaning: Be prepared to face material difficulty; you may need to ask for help or borrow money to get through a difficult time.

Upright: perseverance Reversed: hardship



Six

Meaning: Share your wealth and success; be grateful for what you have achieved.

Upright: charity **Reversed**: stinginess



Seven

Meaning: Time to consider how you will invest your resources; put them back into what you have that is successful, or start a new venture.

Upright: abundance Reversed: wastefulness



Eight

Meaning: Use your skill and experience to improve your financial status and your security.

Upright: expertise Reversed: obsolete



Nine Meaning: Focus on your purpose and use it to attain the wealth you desire; be your best to earn the most.

Upright: successful Reversed: workholic



Ten

Meaning: Embrace or seek the fulfillment that comes with a partnership that will help you both attain a great and safe life.

Upright: inheritance Reversed: burdens



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Meaning: Experiment; try not to get lost in starting but not finishing anything.

Symbolism: A young man holds a single coin, which is the promise of his talent.

Upright: practice Reversed: procrastination



Knight

Meaning: Time to take decisive action that leads to concrete results; find the solution and act on it.

Symbolism: A knight quests for wealth and prestige.

Upright: self-disciplined

Reversed: stubborn



Queen

Meaning: Get your life in order; review your finances and make sure all important legal documents are in place. Assess your material life and fix anything that needs attention.

Symbolism: A regal female holds a pentacle in front of her while she waits for people to approach her for guidance.

Upright: stability Reversed: instability



King

Meaning: Use your wealth, status, and influence wisely; others look to you for leadership.

Symbolism: An accomplished man has attained enough wealth that others come to him to borrow money and receive guidance to succeed in their earthly affairs.

Upright: prosperity Reversed: corruption



The Suit of Swords

The Suit of Swords is associated with the element of air, representing intellect, logic, thought, and decisions. Since this suit deals with the mind, many of the cards reflect the dangers of negative thinking and poor decision-making. When these cards appear in a reading, they often provide a warning for the Querent.
Ace

Meaning: Time to decide; consider a new way of thinking; use logic regarding the situation or relationship.

Upright: logic

Reversed: misinformation



Two

Meaning: Be at peace with your decisions; do not look back or revisit decisions that brought you to this point. Upright: moving forward Reversed: self-deception



Three

Meaning: You are getting mixed results and must find a way to face the frustration and sorrow of the situation or relationship.

Upright: sorrow Reversed: heartbreak



Four

Meaning: You need a mental break; you need to disengage to save your sanity.

Upright: meditation

Reversed: stress



Five

Meaning: There is a loss or defeat you must accept and work to overcome.

Upright: defeat Reversed: distrust



Six

Meaning: You need to move from one "shore of thinking" to another; you are currently in-between and need to complete the journey.

Upright: transition Reversed: resistance



Seven

Meaning: It's time to take your ideas and thoughts elsewhere. You may need to do so quietly and secretly.

Upright: stealth

Reversed: theft



Eight

Meaning: You need to address and break a pattern of negative thinking. Seek advice from someone trustworthy.

Upright: restricted Reversed: victimhood



Nine

Meaning: There is a fear you need to face. This card also warns you to protect yourself from the cruelty of others.

Upright: warning Reversed: torment



Ten

Meaning: A warning card indicating that you need to accept that a situation or relationship is ruined and it is time to move on.

Upright: ruin Reversed: escape



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Meaning: Lots of ideas, but no focus. Great energy for generating new thoughts, but eventually choices must be made.

Symbolism: A young man trains to be knight. Upright: open-minded Reversed: unfocused



Knight

Meaning: Use clear-headed and logical thinking to achieve your goals; be decisive.

Symbolism: An officer rides into battle.

Upright: decisive

Reversed: fanatical



Queen

Meaning: The situation or relationship calls for detached and logical thinking; be strategic.

Symbolism: A regal woman sits ready to answer questions and offer guidance with her wisdom and clarity.



Upright: strategic

Reversed: insensitive

King

Meaning: You oversee the decision and do not need input from others; make your choice and inform others once you have decided.

Symbolism: A king makes important decisions; his sword represents his clarity and decisiveness as a leader.

Upright: visionary Reversed: authoritarian



The Suit of Wands

The Suit of Wands is associated with the element of fire, representing passion, energy, willpower, and strength. The cards of this suit provide archetypes of human actions and reactions. The Fool takes his or her journey through this suit to make choices, seek adventure, and deal with challenges.

Ace

Meaning: You need to be inspired or excited; something or someone needs your spark.

Upright: inspiring Reversed: dull



Two

Meaning: You need to choose a direction and take steps to move forward.

Upright: choosing

Reversed: hesitating



Three

Meaning: The path is clear; you need to invest your time and energy to succeed.

Upright: adventure Reversed: delays



Four

Meaning: Gather friends and family around you and celebrate together.

Upright: socializing Reversed: insincerity



Five Meaning: Conflict and competition are necessary to keep moving forward. Upright: competition Reversed: troublemaking



Six

Meaning: Victory and success are yours; be sure you act with dignity.

Upright: victory

Reversed: public humiliation



Seven

Meaning: You are right; hold your ground. Any lack of integrity will be your downfall.

Upright: valor

Reversed: treachery



Eight

Meaning: Be focused and intense; let nothing distract you from your goal.

Upright: focus

Reversed: frustration



Nine

Meaning: You have a duty to uphold; others look to you as a role model.

Upright: loyalty Reversed: disloyalty



Ten

Meaning: It is time to say "no" and set limits; you do not have enough energy right now.

Upright: devotion

Reversed: oppression



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Meaning: You have a lot of excitement, but you need to find some focus.

Symbolism: A young man holds a club, ready to act.

Upright: enthusiasm Reversed: unpredictability



Knight

Meaning: You need to go on an adventurous quest; get out of your routine and explore.

Symbolism: A cavalier rides his steed with his club at his side, ready for adventure.

Upright: exploring Reversed: reckless



Queen

Meaning: You need to show confidence; if not, fake it until you feel it!

Symbolism: A powerful woman displays her energy confidently awaiting supplicants for her favor. Her club is a symbol of her power.



Upright: confident

Reversed: insecure

King

Meaning: Show others how it is done; you need to lead by doing.

Symbolism: A powerful man is seated waiting for the right moment to act; he contemplates battle strategies.

Upright: maverick

Reversed: selfish

