

TWOOFOWLS TAROT

Tarot Basics I

Tools you will need:

- a tarot deck (preferably a Waite-Smith style deck)
- a notebook
- pen

Tarot is a tool in cartomancy that consists of 78 cards. This deck can be split into three parts, the Majors, and then the Minors, and the Courts. Each card has its own meaning within the deck. In the coming texts included in this course, and the two courses coming after, we will be breaking down each of the three parts into simple, effective keywords. This course, Course I, will be looking specifically at the Majors. Course II will cover the Minors and Course III will breakdown the Courts.

The goal of Course 1 is to get you confident and comfortable enough with the keywords of the Majors to be able to conduct readings using the 22 cards we cover here. We will start with 0, The Fool, and end with 21, The World. Take as much time as you need studying and reviewing and repeating as needed. There is no ticking clock and everyone learns at their own pace. I recommend you print these documents so that you are able to mark and highlight at your leisure but using a notebook you already have at the ready is just as effective (and environmentally friendly!).

The great thing about the Majors is that most cards are labeled as exactly what they are. There is no guessing when a Major turns up in a reading. For example, Strength, the 8th card of the Majors, is very much what it says it is. No underlying secret message or decoder needed. This makes the Majors a perfect place to start when undertaking the journey to learn Tarot. I congratulate you on taking the first steps to learning and I welcome you to the amazing world of divining with the cards. As previously stated, take your time, absorb everything that resonates and if you get confused along the way, don't

get frustrated, applaud the efforts and take time to practice with the knowledge you have already acquired.

For the purpose of simplicity, we will not delve too deep into card meanings (save that thirst for knowledge for future courses). Every card will get a brief description and the most prevalent keyword associated with it. Take a moment now, if you haven't already, and separate the Majors from the rest of your deck and stack them in numerical order, face up, starting with card 21, The World on bottom and 0, The Fool on top. This will create a flip book for you to follow along with as we go card for card all the way through. First we will describe the card as was styled by Pamela Colman-Smith (artist for the Waite-Smith deck), then we will cover an upright keyword followed by a reversal meaning.

0, The Fool– A man standing on the edge of a cliff, aloof to the fact that he is about to take a nosedive into the abyss if he doesn't snap out of his daydream. His loyal companion, a white canine, tries to get his attention but he just isn't paying attention.

Upright Meaning– Lessons
Reversed Meaning– Neglect

1, The Magician– A magician stands behind his altar presenting all the tools of his trade, which just so happen to be all of the suits of the minors in a Tarot deck, cups, wands, pentacles, and swords.

Upright Meaning– Success
Reversed Meaning– Disgrace

2, The High Priestess– A woman seated on her throne holding a scroll of the Tora, she knows all and sees all. The secrets she knows are infinite. Her knowledge is vast. The crescent moon at her feet is proof of her prowess.

Upright Meaning– Intuition
Reversed Meaning– Haughtiness

3, The Empress– Seated and dressed in long flowing maternity gowns, this woman is the epitome of fertility and success in hard work. The symbol of Venus sits at her feet and the vegetation around her is bountiful.

Upright Meaning– Growth
Reversed Meaning– Unravel

4, The Emperor– A king upon his throne, he is immovable and yearns to lead with just decision and unyielding trust of his people. The mountains in the background are evidence of just how high his rule registers.

Upright Meaning– Execution (as in the act of doing something with confidence)
Reversal Meaning– Immaturity

5, The Hierophant– A priestly figure sits preaching to his people, his assistants eagerly awaiting to help in the foreground. He raises his hand in a very traditional Catholic gesture of blessing.

Upright Meaning– Teaching
Reversed Meaning– Weakness

6, The Lovers– Man and woman, the proverbial Adam and Eve stand in open fashion holding no secrets with one another. Adam stands with his full attention on Eve while she is distracted by a slithery little snake of temptation behind her.

Upright Meaning– Attraction
Reversed Meaning– Failure

7, The Chariot– A soldier plows ahead with two Sphinx, opposing in color, as his steeds. If anything gets in the way it will be the last thing they do in this life. This stampeding bullet stops for no one.

Upright Meaning– Triumph
Reversed Meaning– Dispute

8, Strength– The perfect picture of divine feminine is seen closing the mouth of an unruly tiger. She executes with grace and perfect elegance.

Upright Meaning– Power

Reversed Meaning– Abuse

9, The Hermit– A solitary presence stands illuminating the dark with a lantern alight with the power of a star. He finds his way in solitude, he needs no help from anyone else.

Upright Meaning– Prudence

Reversed Meaning– Fear

10, Wheel of Fortune– A wheel sits in the middle adorned with the letters T,A,R, and O. Two figures, one being a snake, take the ride around getting a bird's eye view of both the ups and the downs the wheel has to offer.

Upright Meaning– Revolution

Reversed Meaning– Increase

11, Justice– An androgynous figure sits in authority holding a sword in their right and a set of scales in their left. The crown adorned on their head suggests their ruling will be fair and just.

Upright Meaning– Rightness

Reversed Meaning– Bias

12, The Hanged Man– A man hangs upside down, by one leg, upon a wooden fixture. He should be in extreme discomfort but his face suggests he is just fine where he is. Enlightenment comes to those who are willing to make themselves uncomfortable.

Upright Meaning– Prophecy

Reversed Meaning– Selfishness

13, Death– A skeleton upon a white horse comes riding in to claim what is his. No man, woman, or child is safe from his final judgement. The rose symbol upon his flag should be some kind of comfort but, alas, when it's time, it's time.

Upright Meaning– End
Reversed Meaning– Lethargy

14, Temperance– An angel of unknown sex stands somehow precariously balanced between both land and liquid tempering wine with water. One foot dipped in the pond they don't seem to mind the temperature too much.

Upright Meaning– Moderation
Reversed Meaning– Disunion

15, The Devil– The devil sits overlooking his two newest captives. They seem to be loosely chained, suggesting they could escape if they wanted, but under the seductive allure of the great tempter they are quite content where they are.

Upright Meaning– Attachment
Reversed Meaning– Weakness

16, The Tower– Lightning strikes the ill fated watchtower sending two lost souls to their demise. The crown of Kether topples from the apex, flames spreading throughout the doomed obelisk.

Upright Meaning– Ruin
Reversed Meaning– Weakness

17, The Star– A large star, surrounded by her 7 sisters, overlooks a woman pouring jugs of water back into the earth, one by land, one by pond. Her nakedness suggests she has nothing to hide.

Upright Meaning– Vision
Reversed Meaning– Blindness

18, The Moon– Both wolf and dog are having a great time howling to the woman trapped within the phasing of the moon. Causing so much ruckus, even a lobster wants to see what all the commotion is about.

Upright Meaning– Deception

Reversed Meaning– Instability

19, The Sun– A child rides upon a white horse flying his banner proudly. The sun shines down rays of energy that the sunflowers are soaking up in full force. What a great day to be alive!

Upright Meaning– Happiness

Reversed Meaning– Same as upright, but less so

20, Judgement– An angel blows the trumpet heralding the dead into the next life. They rise, happy to have guidance into the next phase of their soul's journey.

Upright Meaning– Renewal

Reversed Meaning– Sentence

21, The World– The woman stands in the green wreath gracefully balanced on one leg while holding her wands. As a symbol of travel, this proves that the Fool has completed his journey and is ready to begin another.

Upright Meaning– Achievement

Reversed– Stagnation

Now that we have established key words it is time to put those into practice. The best first drill to do while your cards are still separated is to shuffle them and then use them as flashcards to stick those keywords into your brain. Continue to do this until you don't need to look at your notes for help. After you have mastered them it's finally time to start reading with them!

Start with single card draws. Shuffle the deck and when your intuition tells you you're ready, pick a card in any fashion you choose and lay it down face up in front of you. You've got the keyword, now what else does the card say to you? Everything your intuition is telling you in that moment is completely valid.

Let's say the card I drew for myself was the Emperor, my reading might go like this:

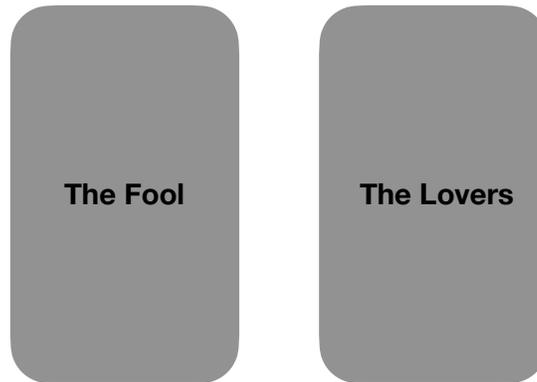


“Okay I’ve drawn the Emperor, I know his keyword is Execution. I have really struggled staying focused lately. This is a call to attention. The Emperor is giving me a swift kick in the butt telling me it's time to focus and just get my butt in gear. The staff in his hand is really calling to me, my intuition is telling me that the Emperor is also trying to communicate with me that I may not have the tools I need which is why I’m having such a hard time getting my projects done and is making me feel defeated, thus the lack of focus.”

By following this same format: “Okay I’ve drawn _____. The keyword is _____. The overall message is _____. My intuition is also telling me that _____.” You’ll start to see repeating patterns the more you read and it will become easier for you to trust your inner voice. Practice builds confidence, confidence is key to success. Once you’ve mastered this format, feel free to expand and change it at will. When reading single cards start feel like candy it’s time to up the ante.

Let's try this same drill but with two cards.

In this example I've drawn The Fool and The Lovers:



"I've drawn The Fool, who's keyword is Lessons and then I drew The Lovers, keyword is Attraction. Okay, Lessons and Attraction. My intuition tells me there is something I need to learn before pursuing a new relationship. The woman in the Lovers is distracted by the snake behind her telling me that my attention isn't where it should be right now in order to truly invest in a new partner. I'm distracted, just like the man in the Fool."

I used the same format that was set up from the single card draws we perfected but I had to depend mostly on my intuition to tell me what the correlation was between 'lessons' and 'attraction'. The same format can be used for any number of cards. Remember, there are no wrong answers, and practice makes confidence. I encourage you to go beyond just the two card pulls practiced here and try 3,4,5,6,7 and even 8 card pulls. The commonly used Celtic Cross Spread uses 10 cards, so go wild with the number of cards you practice with. The more cards you are comfortable with the easier it will be when integration of the Minors starts in Course II.

Remember, practice practice practice!

This concludes Course I