

COSMIC TAROT

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The tarot springs from ancient knowledge whose beginnings are lost in the shadows of time. Its roots reach back into ancient Egypt and India. Some sources suggest its origin was in the legendary lost island of Atlantis.

In the west, the tarot first appeared in the 15th century at the noble courts of Italy and then later in France. These cards always appeared as beautiful, handpainted single decks. Because of their cost, these “mystical pages” were restricted to the rich and noble. With the invention of the printing press, this elitism changed and tarot became accessible to a larger audience.

Although it has sometimes been damned by churches as the work of the devil, and even forbidden by governments, the tarot has remained an important part of esoteric wisdom over the centuries. The first writings to link tarot and occultism appear at the end of the 18th century (Court de Gebelin and Etteilla). The tarot has grown in seclusion until modern times, and now it is blossoming into a cherished flower offering expanded awareness.

INTRODUCTION

In our times, the search for transcendent meaning and self-redemption has replaced the old mystical religions of a distant god. The tarot's age-old knowledge is always quiet and reserved, yet it welcomes the seeker like an old friend. The tarot, with its dynamic concept of constant change, offers a doctrine for the New Age and thus becomes a reliable guide in this chaotic world of shifting social values.

THE TAROT'S STRUCTURE

The tarot has 78 cards grouped under two headings: 22 cards in the Major Arcana, 56 cards in the Minor Arcana.

The 22 cards of the Major Arcana are numbered from 0, The Fool, to XXI, The World.

The 56 cards of the Minor Arcana are divided into four elements: The suit of Wands=fire; the suit of Cups=water; the suit of Swords=air; the suit of Pentacles=earth. Each suit is subdivided into court cards (king, queen, prince, princess) and into numerical cards (ace through ten).

0. The Fool

A colorfully dressed fool dances at the edge of a cliff. *Meaning:* The wisdom of innocence, originality, annulment of reason, frivolity without discipline, ecstasy, delirium, madness, foolishness.

I. The Magician

With his mental power the Magician rules the four elements: fire (Wands), water (Cups), air (Swords) and earth (Pentacles). *Meaning:* Elementary knowledge, determination, skill, juggling, initiative, agitation, disgrace, immaturity.

II. The High Priestess

The High Priestess protects all secrets in nature with her power. *Meaning:* Mystery, hidden knowledge, intuition, initiation, the unconscious, mental power, silence, superstition, presumption, superficial.

III. The Empress

A beautiful woman with a crown of stars amidst a fertile landscape. *Meaning:* Feminine wisdom and power, sensuality,

beauty, culture, abundance, boredom, lethargy, temptation through earthly things.

IV. The Emperor

A powerful emperor sits on his throne, the insignia of power in front of him. *Meaning:* Masculine power, shaping of the material world, rulership, will, severity, stability, power and its danger, force.

V. The Hierophant

A church leader with his followers celebrates in a temple. *Meaning:* Intellectual leadership, initiation, occult powers, secret knowledge, religion, humility, false guru, hypocrisy, theoretical knowledge, hierarchy, disbelief, distrust.

VI. The Lovers

Two lovers, surrounded by birds and flowers, stand at the shore of a lake. *Meaning:* Union, love, blend of opposites, tantra, understanding of the cosmic dance, harmony, discernment, decision, enticement, temptation, doubts.

VII. The Chariot

Underneath a canopy of stars, a man in his chariot is pulled by two fast horses. *Meaning:* Triumph, mental and physical balance, commitment, dynamic, examination, hard work, obstacles, failure.

VIII. Justice

A kind but severe woman guards justice, represented by a scale. *Meaning:* Justice through knowledge of a higher order, union of opposites, balance, virtue, kindness, dignity, fairness, law, selfishness, lack of principles, injustice, prejudice, lack of harmony, stubbornness.

IX. The Hermit

A hermit lives in the mountains. At his feet, a light in form of a lantern. *Meaning:* Seclusion, solitude, wisdom, cleverness, distance, discernment, self-control, discipline, awareness, autonomy, guidelines, reliability, alienation, loneliness.

X. Wheel of Fortune

The world is a mandala. The zodiac turns around the center. The planets are arranged to represent the tree of life. In the four corners there are the symbols of the four elements. *Meaning:* Realization of the cosmic order, application of higher laws, dance of energies, constant changes, "as above, so below," turning point, search for the center, out of control, seeking power.

XI. Strength

A mysterious woman holds a magic cloth which mirrors a lion. *Meaning:* Creative energy, enjoying the dance of life, strength, wildness, transformation of energies, determination to live, strive for power.

XII. The Hanged Man

A young man hangs with one foot from the branch of a tree. His hands are folded as a symbol of inner concentration. *Meaning:* Overcoming obstacles through devotion. Changes, prudence, insight, peace of mind, widened consciousness, sacrifice, renunciation, self-deceit, selfishness, loss.

XIII. Death

The skeleton stands on a plain, together with his scythe and a black bird. Behind him, the sun rises. *Meaning:* The end, transition, transformation, giving up the existing, boundary reached, time elapses, separation, settlement, stagnation, release, sorrow.

XIV. Temperance

A beautiful woman celebrates the ritual of temperance by pouring water into water. *Meaning:* Harmony, mental equilibrium, the middle path, improvement, union, rejuvenation, patience, coordination, carelessness, indecision.

XV. The Devil

A terrible demon oppresses prisoners in his reign of evil. *Meaning:* Victory of materialism, black magic, occult powers, dependence, slavery, passion, egoism, perversion, wrong proportions, overcoming own fears, perception of the inner demon.

SAMPLE



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