

# **sun and moon tarot**

by **vanessa decort**



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U.S. GAMES  
SYSTEMS, INC

U.S. GAMES SYSTEMS, INC.  
179 Ludlow Street, Stamford, CT 06902 USA  
203-353-8400 • Order Desk 800-544-2637  
FAX 203-353-8431  
[www.usgamesinc.com](http://www.usgamesinc.com)

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## Introduction to Tarot and the Sephirot

Tarot, a centuries old card system, summarizes universal wisdom with symbolic visual representations. The 78 cards of the tarot are traditionally subdivided into: the Major Arcana, comprised of the trumps 0 through XXI; and the Minor Arcana, consisting of four suits, 10 numbered cards and four court cards.

The four suits of the Minor Arcana represent the four elements and the four realms of human experience.

Wands = fire = spiritual

Cups = water = emotional

Swords = air = rational

Pentacles = earth = material

The Major Arcana cards symbolize the journey of the soul in 22 steps, and its evolution from the material world to the spiritual realm. In the beginning, the traveler is a fool (0), who is unaware of life's dangers. He does not yet have a sense of his own ego or limitations, and approaches all things with innocence and carelessness.

The early stages of the fool's journey lead to the splitting of the self into dualities, represented in the tarot by two pair of male and

female cards (I to IV) and through the worldly cards of awakening (cards I to VII). The discovery of the self via the subconscious occurs with cards VIII through XIV, and leads toward the spiritual series of higher consciousness (cards XV to XX). At the end of journey the fool has become wiser. He has overcome duality by reconciling and uniting the opposites within himself. At this point, he is sufficiently equipped to step into the world (card XXI). After this journey, a new cycle can start at a higher level.

The 22 tarot cards of the Major Arcana have also been associated with the 22 paths of the Sephirot, the tree of life in Judaic mysticism. These kabalistic paths are given considerable attention in tarot, because they present powers of transformation. For this reason, each card of the Major Arcana is linked to a symbol from the 22-character Hebrew alphabet.

Tarot images have numerous other associations including the symbolic expression of Jungian archetypes, which describe behavioral patterns stored in our collective unconscious. These archetypes have been symbolically expressed in religion, fiction, mythology, folklore and fairy tales, as well as in the tarot. In this way, the Major Arcana are associated with the elementary energy of the ancients.

Tarot symbols are also associated with astrology, alchemy, freemasonry and the teachings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the I Ching, runes, yoga and Hindu wisdom, Egyptian and Greek mythology, and numerology.

Because astrology, numerology and tarot are interrelated systems, you can use numerology to find your personal archetype within the tarot cards. To do so, count up the numbers of your birth date, including the date, month and year.

For example, February 19, 1976 would be:

$$2 + 1 + 9 + 1 + 9 + 7 + 6 = 35$$

If the number is higher than 21, add the numbers together again. For 35,  $3 + 5 = 8$ .

In the tarot, card number 8 is Justice.

Tarot is a powerful tool for gaining access to deeper layers of the subconscious, and to learn from the immense knowledge of the collective conscience. The Sun and the Moon Tarot considers universal archetypes and cultural symbols, and also incorporates the artist's own personal symbols.

—Vanessa Decort



# The Major Arcana

## 0. the fool

Linked with Uranus. Associated with principles of courage, ecstasy without fear. Acting impulsively. Encourages us to take risks and to develop our female and male sides to reach wholeness. The tiger is the oriental symbol for fear. This card depicts Caduceus, the staff of Mercury or Hermes, and the Egyptian wand of vision. It represents intuition, health, well-being, and healing. The butterfly and the spiral symbolize the transformational process. From caterpillar to butterfly, the self grows and evolves. The crocodile denotes creative vision and strength. The sun and sea unite fire (energy/vision) and water (feelings). The Hebrew character *Aleph* is the symbol of the ox, and represents wholeness.

## I. the magician

Linked with Mercury. Associated with communication and timing. Aware that the ego does not create itself alone, magicians open themselves to the magic of life. They have intuitive feelings for all aspects of communication. The coin indicates material and financial fields. The wand with the head of Anubis represents philosophical, religious or spiritual arenas. The cup symbolizes communication of feelings. The

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