



TEMPLE OF THE ORACLE

What a journey so far!

Up to this point you have practiced connecting to the cards through intuition and using number and suit to master the pip cards. You've also tasted the secret sauce of the Major Arcana cards.

Now we move on to the [Temple of the Oracle](#) to learn the art of asking questions.

HOW TO SPEAK TO THE ORACLE

"Ask a silly question, get a silly answer."

-Mothers everywhere

GARBAGE IN GARBAGE OUT

Here's something to ponder before jumping into the asking questions. If you ask a half-hearted question, you will get a half-hearted answer. If you ask an unclear question, you will get an unclear answer. If you ask a silly question, you will get a silly answer.

If you ask the same question over and over, the oracle will mess with your head.

If you try to interrogate, lead, or otherwise manipulate the oracle, the trickster will show up.

For best results, treat the oracle with respect, and ask a clear and sincere question.

THE ART OF ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking good questions is the key to a satisfying reading. If you are working with another person, or even just yourself, it's worth the time to clarify and dig a little deeper into questions.

Quite often there is a question behind the question. For example, someone might ask if they will be traveling in the future.

You ask if they have plans to travel and they answer, "not really." They are wanting to take a cruise, but haven't set any dates, picked a spot to go, or booked anything.

Perhaps what this person is asking is something different. How can I take time out from my busy schedule? When will I experience freedom and relaxation in my life? What's blocking me from taking a vacation, and how can I break through?

Or it could be something more mundane, so to speak, or logistical. When will work slow down enough so I can go? Is my assistant manager up to the job of holding down the fort while I'm gone?

This process of sifting through the question can take place with the client. It's okay to ask probing questions! It can also take place in your own mind before and during the reading.

I include this discussion because I often see people getting fuzzy answers because they asked fuzzy questions! As the beginning of this chapter states - garbage in, garbage out.

The more clear you are with the question - and open to the answer - the more fulfilling the reading.

HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS

I was doing a reading for a woman whose close friend was very ill with cancer. She wanted to know if she was going to die.

What happened during the reading is that we were able to uncover what the friend wanted most from life right now, whether she lived or died. That insight gave the woman I was reading for a new perspective, and she felt more at peace around her friend's illness.

Part of the art of reading is being able to ask good questions.

Good Question Guidelines:

- Unless you are using a yes/no spread, don't ask yes/no questions.
- The best questions use one of the following: who, what, where, or how.
- "When" questions can be tricky. See [Timing](#).
- "Why" questions need to be rephrased. Occasionally "why" questions can be useful. More often, though, they can cause us to get caught in a loop of useless information. Try to turn a "why" question into a "how" question. "Why did this happen?" becomes "how can I move forward?"
- "Should" questions need to be rephrased. Should is a subjective word. Rephrase "should" questions into "will" questions. Will I get the result I want, will it be beneficial to me, will it cost X amount to do X?

Now, let's break down questions into types or categories so that you will be better able to choose or create a spread for the question.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

I avoided yes/no questions for a long time. I felt they weren't helpful or valid. While it is true that yes/no questions are binary and don't readily give advice, they can still be useful.

The thing to keep in mind with yes/no questions is that they require drilling down with multiple questions to get an overview and course of action.

It's similar to a flow chart approach. You get your first answer. Based on the first answer, you ask the next question. Based on that answer, you ask the next question and so on.

For example: Should I take a trip to Italy?

Will I like Italy? Yes? Keep going. No? Stop. Try another question.

Do I have everything required for a trip to Italy? Yes? Keep going. No? Stop. Ask another question.

Do I have the funds needed to go to Italy? No? Stop. Try another question.

Do I lack the paperwork needed to go to Italy?

You get the idea.

YES/NO QUESTIONS WITH PLAYING CARDS

The technique of answering yes/no questions with a deck of cards is simple.

1. Ask the question and shuffle
2. Lay out three cards

Black cards are no. Red cards are yes.

The grid below shows the possible combinations. The order of the cards does not matter.

| card | card | card | prediction |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| red | red | red | 100% yes |
| black | black | black | 100% no |
| red | black | black | 60% no |
| red | red | black | 60% yes |


Combining the suits in a three-card layout creates a weather

forecast-type response. For example, there is a 60% chance of thunderstorms.

You can accomplish the same reading with Tarot by assigning two suits to yes and two suits to no. For example: wands and swords are no, cups and pentacles are yes.

Or, you can use upright and reversed cards. Upright is yes, reversed is no.

Here is a YouTube video demonstrating the technique. I go into more variations, but if that is too overwhelming, just keep to the basics shown in the very beginning of the video.

 [Yes No Tarot Card Reading](#)

WHEN OR TIMING QUESTIONS

Timing questions with Tarot can be tricky. I have seen many methods for determining timing. Let's explore a few.

USING THE SUITS FOR TIMING

Some readers will use the suits for timing. The system works more or less like this:

wands - days

cups - weeks

swords - months

pentacles - years

I'm not a fan of this system. It doesn't pan out well. But, the suits can give you a good idea of *relative* timing. This approach works when you compare the suits to one another.

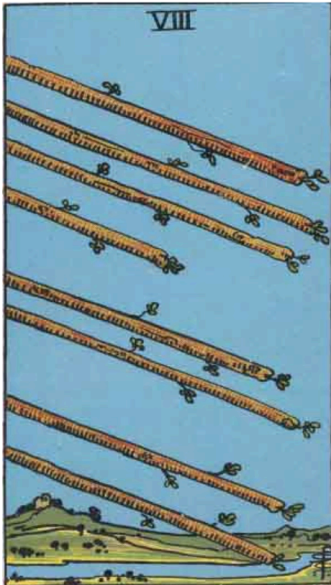
Wands are the fastest timing and pentacles are the slowest, with cups and swords being in the middle.

wands - fastest

cups - middle speed

swords - less than middle speed

pentacles - slowest



getting the house



getting the promotion

Imagine there are two positions within a spread: “moving to a new house” and “getting a promotion.” The house is wands and the promotion is swords. *Relative to one another*, the house will come before the promotion because wands are faster than swords.

In this example, we are looking *only* at the suit. Nothing else.

USING SPREADS FOR TIMING

The most straightforward and accurate method for timing is to create a spread based on the question asked.

If the initial question does not contain timing, but it comes up, make a side spread for the timing.

Creating a timing spread is quite easy.

Let’s suppose someone asks: I had a job interview last week. When will I hear back?

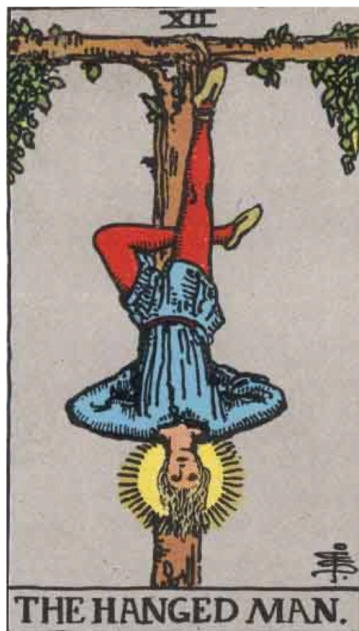
Step 1 - Determine the logical timing. This is a call back for a job interview. Even with the slowest HR departments or circumstances, the call should happen within a few weeks.

Step 2 - What kind of timing options are available? We could count days or weeks.

Step 3 - Create a spread with several options based on the question and the timing constraints you just determined.

Step 4 - Lay the cards and determine which position in the spread looks most promising. This is the trickiest part of the process. My suggestion is to go with your gut. Which card looks the most positive or promising in reference to the question? Don't be surprised if you see the outcome on the card itself.

When will I hear back about the job?



next week



2 weeks



1 month

In the example above, the 6 of Cups at the two-week mark looks the most favorable.

The Hanged Man shows no movement. The Majors won't always have an obvious correlation like the example of the Hanged Man. In the absence of a clear answer, just take it as a no.

The 9 of Wands looks like he's hanging on despite the discomfort. The 6 of Cups looks like a cup is being offered. So, my call on this one would be the two-week mark.

Play around with this method and see what kinds of "tells" come up from the cards. For instance, maybe the Moon is usually a positive omen. Or, maybe pentacles indicate a really long wait, longer than you think possible.

BUT I DON'T HAVE A QUESTION!

I read for parties and events, and quite often the person in front of me has never had a reading. When I ask for a question, it can sometimes be difficult for someone to formulate one.

What then?

Here are some suggestions to give a reading with no question. You can use this when reading for yourself, too.

1. Pull an oracle card to start the reading. Find out what resonates.
 2. If you read Lenormand or playing cards, have the person pull a couple of cards as a focal point.
 3. If you know some astrology, have the person throw the astro dice and start there.
 4. Draw one card for the person and one card for the conflict/the surprise/the advice.
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As with much of the advice in this book, you will need to gauge the situation when it happens.

I've had people ask very open-ended and vague questions such as, "Am I where I'm supposed to be right now?" I can usually feel how sincere and open the person is with their question. If they are "wide open" so to speak, I can work with the question. If the person is closed off and comes up with the question out of boredom or as a way to test me, I'll push for something more specific.

I share this with you so you can start thinking about your own reading style. Everyone handles reading cards differently. You don't need to take the same approach as I do.

Here are some questions to consider and some ideas to test out around your reading style:

1. Do you need a question?
2. How much background information around the question do you like to have? Any particular type of information?

3. Are there any types of questions you will not entertain?
Examples may include health, death, or questions about other people.
4. What types of questions do you love consulting the cards about?
5. Is there any particular order you like to use, such as asking the querent to hold all questions until the end?



BONUS TIMING METHOD

Throughout this book, I present intuitive and practical methods for you to interact with tarot cards. I have made mention of esoteric layers that exist within the cards and that have been laid upon the cards. I have also said to leave those layers for later.

Here I am breaking my own rule and including just one esoteric layer.

I do it for two reasons:

1 - So you get an idea of what an esoteric layer is, and how it can cause you to go down a rabbit hole.

2 - The layer I present is an astrological layer and, in my opinion, astrology and Tarot combine quite nicely.

What's more, more and more people are very familiar with astrology, so perhaps this layer won't feel as "out there" as it did 30 years ago. In fact, you may have already caught wind of these associations and are curious.

Caveats aside, if this seems like a bunch of gobbledygook to you at this point, skip it. There is no need to go down this rabbit hole right now.



GOLDEN DAWN TAROT ASSOCIATIONS

The Golden Dawn created a Tarot calendar, if you will, associating each Minor Arcana card 2 - 10 to a time period of the year. There are time periods for the Aces and the Court Cards as well, but we aren't going to get into that here.

The calendar is created by the time periods of the Sun as it passes through each zodiac sign.

For example, the Sun passes through the sign of Aries in March and April of every year.

Each zodiac sign is divided into 3 parts called decans. Each of these 10 degree sections

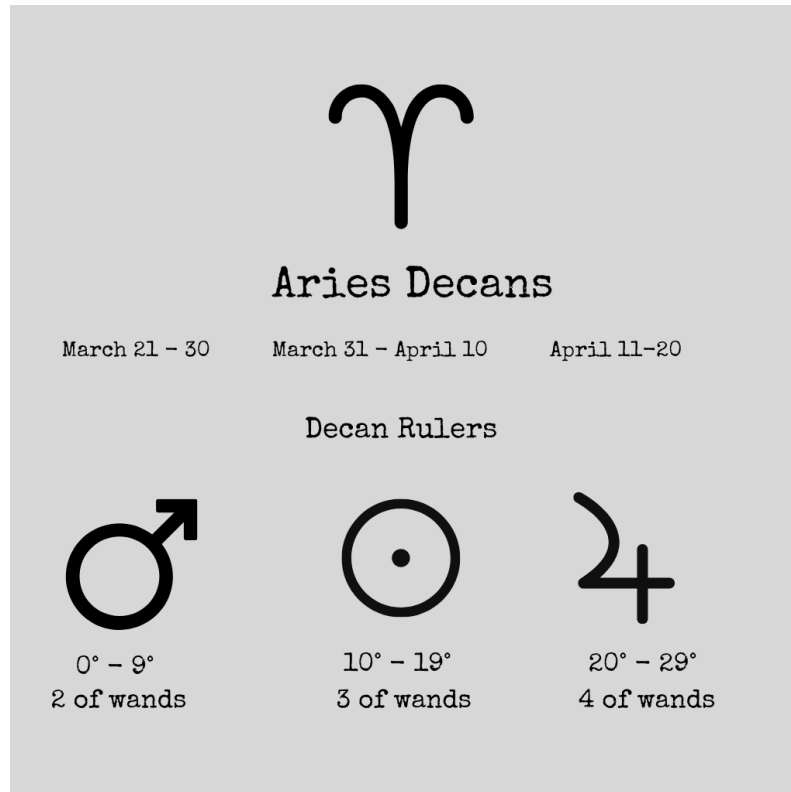
or decans represents the particular time period when the Sun passes through each year.




Each of the decans has a planetary ruler.

Back to the example of Aries.

Aries is ruled by Mars.

In addition, each decan has a planetary ruler as well. The ruler is noted in the illustration above, and the last column of the table that follows.



| Aries Decans | | |
|---|--|---|
| March 21 - 30 | March 31 - April 10 | April 11-20 |
| Decan Rulers | | |
|  |  |  |
| 0° - 9° 2 of wands | 10° - 19° 3 of wands | 20° - 29° 4 of wands |

I used to visit a particular reader at a local psychic fair who used this timing method. It was his style of reading to weave timing into every question whether it was asked about or not.

I often found that the timing wasn't relevant or I didn't remember the further off events anyway.

I tried it myself by writing the dates on a set of cards and using it, and it just didn't gel for me.

I have since returned to this rabbit hole and I now *do* find it useful. I find that the planets and sign combinations can point out time frames. For example, I pull two cards a day as part of a daily practice. Today, one of the cards was the 4 of Cups, which is Moon/Cancer. The Moon is in Cancer today. For me, it's one of the "tells" I spoke about earlier. It's a nod from the cards saying, "Hey, the Moon is in Cancer," or "Be alert for Moon topics today."

There's lots of ways this can play out, and your personal knowledge around astrology has a lot to do with it. This is why I say, if you aren't familiar with astrology, skip this section. You can always come back later.

If you are familiar with astrology, I've got another way you can use this.

Using the charts that follow, look up all the planets and any relevant points in your chart and write down the tarot cards that correspond. Next, see how these cards show up in readings for you.

They might be relevant in readings for yourself or friends or family. They could be relevant in readings for people you don't know well or strangers, but typically less so.

You can also lay out the cards of your chart and have a look at that. Record any observations. Try not to let any "nasty cards" throw you. For example, the card that corresponds to my Moon is the 10 of Swords. Does that mean I'm doomed? Fifty-five years of life experience says "no."

There's lots more we could do with these correspondences, but I'll leave that for another book.



2 of wands

March 21 - 30

0 - 9 Aries

Mars



3 of wands

March 31 - April 10

10 - 19 Aries

Sun



4 of wands

April 11-20

20 - 29 Aries

Venus



5 of wands

July 21 - Aug 1

0 - 9 Leo

Saturn



6 of wands

Aug 2 -10

10 - 19 Leo

Jupiter



7 of wands

Aug 11-22

20 - 29 Leo

Mars



8 of wands

Nov 23 - Dec 2

0 - 9 Sagittarius

Mercury



9 of wands

Dec 3 - 12

10 - 19 Sagittarius

Moon



10 of wands

Dec 13 -22

20 - 29 Sagittarius

Saturn



2 of cups

June 21 - July 1

0 - 9 Cancer

Venus



3 of cups

July 2 - 12

10 - 19 Cancer

Mercury



4 of cups

July 13 -20

20 - 29 Cancer

Moon



5 of cups

October 23 - Nov 1

0 - 9 Scorpio

Mars



6 of cups

Nov 2 - 11

10 - 19 Scorpio

Sun



7 of cups

Nov 12 -22

20 - 29 Scorpio

Venus



8 of cups

Feb 19 - Feb 28

0 - 9 Pisces

Saturn



9 of cups

March 1 -10

10 - 19 Pisces

Jupiter



10 of wands

March 11 -20

20 - 29 Pisces

Mars

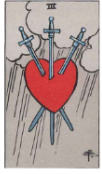


2 of swords

Sept 23 - Oct 2

0 - 9 Libra

Moon



3 of swords

Oct 3 -12

10 - 19 Libra

Saturn



4 of swords

October 13 -22

20 - 29 Libra

Jupiter



5 of swords

Jan 20 - 29

0 - 9 Aquarius

Venus



6 of swords

Jan 30 - Feb 8

10 - 19 Aquarius

Mercury



7 of swords

Feb 9 - Feb 18

20 - 29 Aquarius

Moon

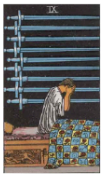


8 of swords

May 21 - May 30

0 - 9 Gemini

Jupiter



9 of swords

June 1 -10

10 - 19 Gemini

Mars



10 of swords

June 11 -20

20 - 29 Gemini

Sun



2 of pentacles Dec 21 - Dec 30 0 - 9 Capricorn Jupiter



3 of pentacles Dec 31 - Jan 9 10 - 19 Capricorn Mars



4 of pentacles Jan 10 - 19 20 - 29 Capricorn Sun



5 of pentacles April 21 -30 0 - 9 Taurus Mercury



6 of pentacles May 1 -10 10 - 19 Taurus Moon



7 of pentacles May 11 -20 20 - 29 Taurus Saturn



8 of pentacles Aug 23 - Sept 1 0 - 9 Virgo Sun



9 of pentacles Sept 2 -11 10 - 19 Virgo Venus



10 of pentacles Sept 12 - 22 20 - 29 Virgo Mercury