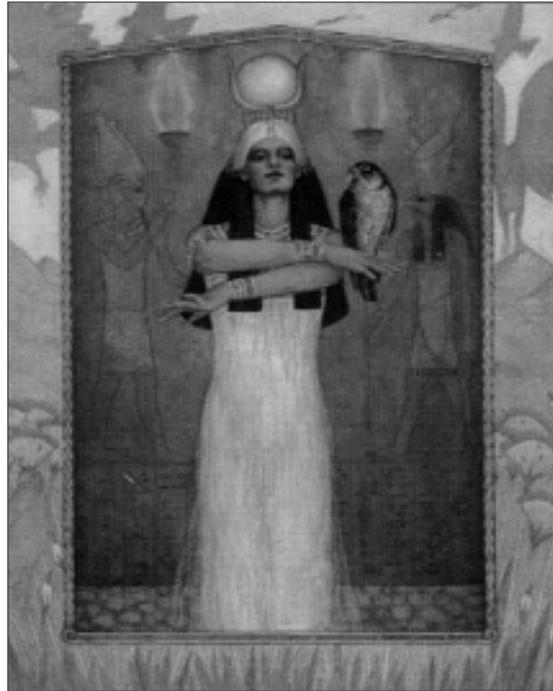


THE GODDESS TAROT



created by
Kris Waldherr

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INTRODUCTION

The Goddess Tarot is a celebration of the Divine Feminine. Drawing inspiration from the many goddesses honored throughout history and around the globe, *The Goddess Tarot* uses goddess myths and imagery to update traditional tarot symbolism; it acknowledges women's contemporary needs as well as her mythic past.

Through my own personal experiences with tarot cards over the past fifteen years, I've come to think of the tarot as a potent archive of what I call "soul pictures"—pictures revealing what Carl Jung called the collective unconscious, those subconscious rivers of archetypal experiences held deep within our psyches. The stories told by these soul pictures speak to our condition today; they address our common experiences as humans attempting to make sense of our lives and the world around us.

From the earliest times, stories and myths have been used to impart wisdom and heal the spirit. When we feel overwhelmed by life's demands, stories allow us a more detached perspective of events; when we stand too close to the trees to see the forest path, they shed light so we can find our way home. As ancient and rich in stories as the symbolism of the tarot may be, goddess myths are even more so—for these myths are *the* original women's stories. Revealing and reflecting our collective past, these stories speak to us through history's veils, telling us of women's innate divinity, dignity, and magic.

My intention in creating the art and design for *The Goddess Tarot* was to create a tarot deck that would speak directly to women using *our* stories, while incorporating the archetypal power and symbols of the tarot. In this way *The Goddess Tarot* is meant as an accessible alternative deck for tarot readers already familiar with the popular Rider-Waite deck who seek a deeper experience of the Divine Feminine in their readings. It has been designed to be readily accessible to lovers of goddesses and mythology without any tarot experience as well.

Whichever group you feel yourself affiliated with—tarot expert, goddess aficionado, or feminist—this offering of *The Goddess Tarot* is for you. As you work with *The Goddess Tarot*, I hope you will find it an essential instrument for personal growth—as well as the reclamation of the Divine Feminine.

—KRIS WALDHERR

THE MAJOR ARCANA

Like a traditional tarot deck, *The Goddess Tarot* contains seventy-eight cards divided into 22 Major Arcana cards and 56 Minor Arcana cards.

Each Major Arcana card is related to a goddess and her story, and symbolizes an important aspect of life's journey. When these cards are chosen in a tarot reading, they can represent recurrent themes or major changes in the situation being examined.

Some consider the Major Arcana to hold all the world's wisdom distilled into 22 potent images as concentrated in symbolism as any dream. But, like the symbolism of a dream, the meanings ascribed to these cards should be made pertinent to your life experiences; look upon these descriptions as a guide to spark your imagination and feelings.

Also included are descriptions for reversed or upside-down cards. Again, these can be used according to your judgment; I personally prefer to think of cards as being strong or weak by taking into consideration the question being asked, their relative position in a spread, and the cards surrounding it.



O. BEGINNINGS: TARA

Tibetans believe that the goddess Tara has the power to heal all sorrows and grant all wishes. Tara is honored as the protectress against the many fears that block men and women from living in happiness and harmony.

Meanings: Innocence which protects. New beginnings. Optimism. Innocent trust. *Reversed:* Folly, carelessness, naiveté, lack of focus.

I. MAGIC: ISIS

Associated with the Suit of Swords

The great Egyptian fertility goddess Isis is a potent symbol of the alchemic transformation suggested by this card. She alone was the possessor of the secret name of Ra, the Egyptian ruling god, giving her unlimited magical powers.

Meanings: A growing awareness of the magic within yourself. A yearning to grow beyond perceived limitations. You are able to transform your life through the strength of your originality and power—all you need to do is own it. Renewed creativity and vigor. *Reversed:* A need to control. Secrecy.

II. WISDOM: SARASVATI

Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and culture, is the embodiment of true wisdom. Sitting upon her lotus throne, she symbolizes spiritual knowledge as well as the refinement of the arts.

Meanings: An interest in spiritual knowledge. A teacher who will share with you what you seek—or perhaps you are that teacher. Wisdom gained in a graceful manner. *Reversed:* Lack of trust in intuition. Superficial knowledge. Fear of looking within for answers.

III. FERTILITY: ESTSANATLEHI

This benevolent Navajo corn goddess symbolizes the ever-changing, ever-fertile earth. Like the earth itself, Etsanatilehi appears as a young maiden for the spring and summer months; as the wheel of the year changes to fall and winter, she changes in age to a crone.

Meanings: Feelings of fertility and abundance. A new relationship which celebrates one's growth as a woman. Creativity. A pregnancy. *Reversed:* Time to look at where your life needs fertilizing. Deprivation or sterility.

IV. POWER: FREYJA

Associated with the Suit of Staves

Freyja, the Norse goddess of creativity, love, and beauty, shows that true power lies in the ability to discriminate between aggression and passivity—and the ability to choose between them at the right time.

Meanings: The ability to use power wisely. Awareness of one's power. The ability to lead and inspire others. Knowledge of how to “work the system.” *Reversed:* Oppressed by another's power and authority. Insecurity. Loss of personal power.

V. TRADITION: JUNO

Juno was honored as the patroness of marriage and other traditional rites of passages in women's lives. This Roman goddess was believed to watch and protect all women—from their first breath to their last.

Meanings: Following established social structures and traditions. In love relationships, the desire for marriage or declaration of intentions for the sake of security. *Reversed:* Nonconformity. Questioning of traditions for traditions sake. Possible rigidity.

VI. LOVE: VENUS

Associated with the Suit of Cups

Created from the happy union of sea and sky, Venus, the Roman goddess of love, has been

described by many as the queen of pleasure and passion.

Meanings: A renewed awareness of the nature of passionate love and what is needed to encourage it. Artistic creativity. Sexuality. Integration of the masculine and feminine. A new, important relationship. *Reversed:* Manipulating others with sexuality. Inability to find a loving partner.

VII. MOVEMENT: RHIANNON

The British horse goddess Rhiannon is believed to appear to her followers while riding an unearthly white horse. In this way, Rhiannon symbolizes the unceasing force of movement which pulls all of life along with it.

Meanings: Movement into the next phase of life. If you are feeling impatient, don't worry: transitions will go smoothly. Career advancement. Good timing! *Reversed:* Impatience. Disregard or insensitivity to the signs around yourself.

VIII. JUSTICE: ATHENA

Often depicted with an owl as a symbol of enlightenment, the Greek goddess Athena's brilliance of reason was said to be as penetrating as her clear, gray eyes. Skilled without equal in the art of battle, she gave just protection to those in need of defense.

Meanings: The need to take a more detached viewpoint of a troublesome situation. Imagine yourself as wise as Athena: are you being fair to yourself and those around you? The ability to defend oneself so that justice may be done. *Reversed:* Frustration with bureaucracies or organizations. Impatience with red tape.

IX. CONTEMPLATION: CHANG O

Chang O, the Chinese moon goddess, was exiled to the moon because of her need to obtain divinity. With a white hare as her only companion, she spent much time alone contemplating life's mysteries.

Meanings: The need to go within to gain knowledge, to own one's divinity. Withdrawal to better contemplate life. *Reversed:* Distracted by the world. Refusal to listen to intuition. No time to think or reflect.

X. FORTUNE: LAKSHMI *Associated with the Suit of Pentacles*

The Hindu goddess of fortune and prosperity, Lakshmi is believed to be attracted to sparkling jewels, which are like the riches she bestows upon her favored worshippers.

Meanings: The generosity of the universe. The ability to be open to abundance. Positive expectations. Awareness of beauty and love. *Reversed:* Feelings pessimistic, disappointed, unexpected endings or beginnings.

XI. STRENGTH: OYA

Oya, the Yoruba goddess of the Niger River, is considered a patroness of female leadership and strength. Because of this, women will often ask her for the right words to gain power.

Meanings: The strength to create peace between opposing forces. These forces may be inside you or personified in a situation. Tame them: you have the strength! *Reversed:* Discord. Imbalance. Valuing lower energies over the higher.

XII. SACRIFICE: KUAN YIN

Honored as the holy mother of compassion, Kuan Yin is one of the most beloved goddesses of China. Instead of allowing herself to enjoy heaven's delights, Kuan Yin vowed never to leave the earth until the last human was free from pain, sacrificing herself for the greater good of all.

Meanings: A surrender to higher principles, higher goals. Self abnegation. Taking care of others. Sacrifice in order to gain wisdom. Empathy. *Reversed:* Lack of compassion. Avoiding pain for gain. Focus on materialism to the detriment of spiritual values..

XIII. TRANSFORMATION: UKEMOCHI

After her death, the Japanese food goddess Ukemochi's body transformed to supply food to humanity. Her head turned into cows; grain sprouted from her forehead; rice plants sprouted from the goddess's belly—and so, life was transformed from death.

Meanings: Transformations. The need to allow something to die in order to create room for the new. Painful change that is necessary. Creating life out of death. *Reversed:* Fear of change. Resisting transformation.

XIV. BALANCE: YEMANA

Yemana, the Santeria goddess of the ocean, is often called upon to provide rain: water that brings forth life and nurtures the earth, like the waters of the womb. She symbolizes the divine balance between heaven and earth.

Meanings: Experiencing or seeking a deep sense of harmony and union. Integration.

Moderation. Balance between the spiritual (symbolized by water) and the physical (symbolized by earth or sand). *Reversed*: Imbalance. Inability to find peace within or with others. Lack of moderation.

XV. TEMPTATION: NYAI LORO KIDUL

Within the green waves of the Pacific Ocean resides the seductive mermaid goddess Nyai Loro Kidul. Her powers reflect the temptation of illusion; of beauties which may be enslaving; of obsessions which control.

Meanings: Tempted by forces one cannot control. Something deep within the psyche—the shadow—personified as temptation or addiction. Sensual desires. Gluttony or envy. *Reversed*: Freedom from temptation. Mastery over something previously controlling—a habit, a person, or a wound from the past.

XVI. OPPRESSION: THE WAWALAK

During the Dreamtime, the Australian aboriginal sister goddesses, the Wawalak, were swallowed whole by Yurlungur, the Great Rainbow Serpent. Oppressed by darkness in the belly of the serpent, the Wawalak wept until they were reborn from Yurlungur back into the light.

Meanings: Feeling overwhelmed, oppressed by circumstances or emotions. Like the Wawalak, the “light” has left your life; you are waiting to be released from the darkness. *Reversed*: Though your situation may feel overwhelming and intimidating, hidden forces are at work to transform things for the better. Be patient.

XVII. THE STAR: INANNA

Clothed with the stars, Inanna, the great goddess of the Bronze Age, was honored with the title “Queen of Heaven.”

Meanings: Follow your dreams without fear—don't be afraid to make them happen! Success, good fortune, creativity. *Reversed*: Not following your bliss. Insecurity. Feelings of unworthiness.

XVIII. THE MOON: DIANA

In ancient Rome, Diana was honored as the goddess of the moon as well as of wild forests and animals. The changing moon reflects the cycles of nature and of life.

Meanings: Support of women who truly care for you. Intuition. The receptive aspects of

the Divine Feminine. Intense dreams. *Reversed*: Feeling as changeable as the moon. Discomfort with intuition, the mother.

XIX. THE SUN: THE ZORYA

In Russian mythology, the three Zorya are goddesses-attendants to the sun god. As well as bringing warmth and light to the world, the sun represents the brightness of intellect, creativity, and fertility.

Meanings: An expansive, life-affirming energy. Creativity. Relationships with children. Fertility. Love. Masculine, or yang, energy. *Reversed*: Unwillingness to accept affection. Blocked creativity. Problems with expanding to the next phase of a project. Feeling thwarted.

XX. JUDGMENT: GWENHWYFAR

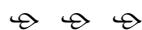
Gwenhwyfar, the Welsh first lady of the islands and sea is believed to have existed as long as there was surf to pound against rocky shore. Praised for her judgment and wisdom, it was believed that no man could rule Wales without her by his side.

Meanings: Time for a major and necessary change in life: often welcome, but frightening because of its magnitude. Confidence in this change. *Reversed*: Inability to decide on action. Blockage.

XXI. THE WORLD: GAIA

In ancient Greece, the earth was personified as Gaia, a goddess who existed before all life and created all life. The story of Gaia reminds us of the interconnection of all of the world—and the importance of living in harmony with her resources.

Meanings: Experiencing connection with the universe. A sense of expansion and hope. An awareness of the fragile ecological balance. Travel and communications. *Reversed*: Desire for positive change, though uncertainty on how to make it happen. Fear of expansion.



THE MINOR ARCANA

The Minor Arcana of *The Goddess Tarot* is divided into four suits. Each suit is related to one of the four elements—earth, air, water, fire—as well as to a particular goddess. The suit of cups is associated with Venus, the Roman goddess of love; staves, Freyja, the Norse goddess of creativity and beauty; swords, Isis, the great Egyptian goddess who symbolizes magic, loss, and redemption; and pentacles, Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of prosperity.

Each card in each Minor Arcana suit (except for the court cards) depicts a woman as she undergoes the journey symbolized by each suit. She is meant to represent “every-woman”—or the querant herself—as an aspect of the goddess honored in the suit. Court cards (princess, prince, king, and queen) can symbolize different aspects or energies of the querent’s psyche in different times and areas of life—masculine, young, mature, feminine. They can also signify people in the querent’s life.

When Minor Arcana cards appear in a reading, think of them as filling in the particulars of a situation—the people involved, the emotions, the details, the everyday unfolding—as opposed to the sweeping life changes often reflected by the Major Arcana cards. In the Minor Arcana, sacred issues explored in the Major Arcana are made human.

Reversed, or upside-down, card meanings are also included here. These meanings can also be used according to the appropriateness of the issue being examined in the reading.



THE SUIT OF CUPS

THE PATH OF VENUS

element: water, the moon

corresponds to Love, Major Arcana card 6

The suit of cups is associated with Venus, the Roman goddess of love and beauty. Cups symbolize the fertile receptive aspect of the Divine Feminine. Conceived and born of fertile sea herself, Venus is the bringer of joy to gods and humans as well as to the plant world.

The cups proffered by Venus are an invitation for us to drink deeply of the magical water of life, love, inspiration, and pleasure. They offer us our first experience of the Divine Feminine in her purest form.



ACE OF CUPS

Here the full moon is contained—but not captured—within a golden cup surrounded by the ocean, source of all life.

Meanings: Great emotional satisfaction. Beginning of a new important relationship. Receptivity to creative inspiration. *Reversed:* Emotional disappointment. Creative blockages.

TWO OF CUPS

In a moonlit garden, a bride and groom pledge their faith. The woman, dressed in white, looks like the moon come to earth.; she is as enchanting as Venus, the goddess of love.

Meanings: Integration of masculine and feminine aspects within oneself. An attraction that may become a serious relationship. Harmony. Love. Enchantment. *Reversed:* Blinded by infatuation. Disillusionment within a love relationship or close friendship. Overindulging in sensuality.

THREE OF CUPS

Three women dance in a circle, celebrating the round of life. Together, these dancing women symbolize all of life's joys, potentials, and riches.

Meanings: A celebration involving women. Possibly a wedding feast. Peace between family generations. A reason to celebrate. *Reversed:* Overindulgence. Too much celebration—time to get to work!

FOUR OF CUPS

After overindulging, the woman sits beneath a tree, hoping to ground herself after the excitement of intoxication. Four cups rest before her, but she has drunk enough.

Meanings: Too much of a good thing. Taking something for granted—love, talents, beauty. Discontent or boredom. *Reversed:* Acceptance of the situation, though discontent is still present. A passing phase.

FIVE OF CUPS

Three cups have tipped over, spilling their magical water. But not all is lost—two cups are still full.

Meanings: Disappointment with intimate relationships, disillusionment, sadness.

Concentrating on problems instead of assets. Desire to move on. *Reversed:* A growing awareness that relationships are what you make of them.

SIX OF CUPS

Pulled by the moon's gravity, the tide has risen and flooded around six cups. They are filled with flowers as an offering to Venus, symbolizing the rejuvenative aspect of the Divine Feminine.

Meanings: Harmonious home. Children and childhood memories. Longing for the sweetness and innocence of the past. *Reversed:* Need to incorporate the past—and perhaps painful memories—into the present.

SEVEN OF CUPS

Surrounded by cups, each containing objects symbolizing different possibilities, a woman tries to decide. Her eyes are closed, suggesting the need to look within.

Meanings: Overindulging in thoughts of what the future may bring. Daydreams. Time to wake up and rejoin the world. *Reversed:* Allowing fantasies to influence how you view life—more objectivity is needed. Projecting onto others.

EIGHT OF CUPS

The moon has waned; the tide has gone out. Searching for more substantial fare, the woman leaves behind eight empty cups she has drunken of .

Meanings: Time to move on. Need for more substance in life—whether that be more satisfying relationships, a more authentic way of life. Leavetakings. *Reversed:* Lingered too long in a difficult or superficial situation. Uncertainty about a relationship, to stay or leave.

NINE OF CUPS

Finally satisfaction! A rainbow leads the woman to a banquet table set with nine cups. Worth waiting for, this feast will nurture many hearts and bodies.

Meanings: Satisfaction. Contentment. Some consider this card the wish card, meaning a wish will be granted if it appears in a spread. *Reversed:* Delay in the granting of your wishes. Complacency. Taking a relationship for granted.

TEN OF CUPS

Ten cups form an arc over a rainbow and are reflected in a calm ocean. The moon is full, promising satisfaction and abundance.

Meanings: Happy family life. Emotional satisfaction and endurance in love relationships. Great happiness. *Reversed:* An inability to experience joy. Dissatisfaction, though uncertain why—everything looks perfect on the surface.

PRINCE OF CUPS

The Prince of Cups, a gentle boy, proffers a cup. The water within it is a magical potion—it can invite love, passion, creativity, or intuition into life.

Meanings: An invitation or offer. Young children who, with their gentleness, allow one to experience innocence anew. *Reversed:* Disillusionment with a relationship that promised more substance. Fickleness of affection. Unreliable messages.

PRINCESS OF CUPS

The Princess of Cups, an adolescent girl as beautiful as Venus, is crowned with a waxing moon. Anticipating love, pleasure, and the ripeness of womanhood, she drinks fully.

Meanings: Artistic inspiration and receptivity. A young woman who symbolizes the gifts of Venus—love, beauty, and emotional richness. Movement in these areas of life. Grace. *Reversed:* The need to be more receptive to beauty and love. Overindulgence in imaginative fantasies.

KING OF CUPS

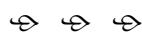
The King of Cups, a quiet, serene older man sits upon his throne surrounded by water. Masterful and artistic, he is able to express himself in both relationships and work.

Meanings: Ability to live one's ideals. Combining artistic integrity with the needs of the marketplace. Someone who symbolizes these forces. *Reversed:* Desire to have control over one's creativity. Need to stop dreaming and get to work.

QUEEN OF CUPS

The full moon is a halo around the crown of the majestic Queen of Cups. Her regal mysterious being inspires people to look within to nourish their souls.

Meanings: Mastery of all that Venus and the suit of cups represents—art, beauty, intimacy, love. The ability to express love, to nurture others. An older woman who inspires others to live harmoniously. *Reversed:* Overwhelmed by emotions that need sorting. Need to take control of these feelings.



THE SUIT OF STAVES

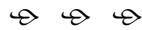
THE PATH OF FREYJA

element: fire, the sun

corresponds to Power, Major Arcana card 4

The suit of staves is related to Freyja, the Norse goddess of creativity, fertility, and beauty. Like conduits of the sun's procreative force, staves channel energy to areas where it can encourage growth. Staves bring movement to a reading, much like the movement displayed by Freyja as she rides through the sky in her chariot drawn by magical gray cats.

Pragmatic goddess that she is, Freyja is associated with the Aesir, a group of Norse gods and goddesses who came into existence with the Iron Age, when the first tools and weapons were developed with forge and fire.



ACE OF STAVES

A staff grows from a grassy hill. Verdant leaves twist from its surface, showing growth encouraged by the rising sun.

Meanings: Beginning of a focused, creative period. Inspiration that inspires action. The masculine, or yang, aspect of life. Great energy. *Reversed:* Difficulties with new ventures. Being "burnt" out by too much energy, too much expenditure, too many thoughts. The need to focus.

TWO OF STAVES

Dressed in a red gown—the color of vigor and beginnings—the woman decides to bring her ideas into the world. Her confidence and talent assures success.

Meanings: Beginnings of a business venture. Possible partnership. New ideas that transform lives, bring inspiration, and energize people. *Reversed:* A good start to a venture that loses momentum. Disappointment in projects.

THREE OF STAVES

Looking out over a calm sea to the distant mountains, the woman contemplates her plans. Grasping one of the three staves next to her, she is waiting for her ships to come in, knowing they will bring.

Meanings: An enterprise about to cumulate in success. The ability to transform goals into

realistic action. *Reversed:* Ambitious plans which may not be grounded in reality. A frustrating delay in receiving success.

FOUR OF STAVES

Four staves are tied together by generous garlands of flowers; they suggest the stable foundation of a home.

Meanings: Stability of ventures. A new home. Accomplishing goals. Satisfaction. Putting down roots. *Reversed:* The desire to put down roots, but elusiveness in doing so. Wanting stability. Frustrations at home.

FIVE OF STAVES

Different aspects of the same woman fight against each other. The broiling sun heats their tempers, making it difficult to distinguish what they're really fighting for.

Meanings: Conflict for the sake of conflict. Ego-oriented competition. Losing sight of what's important because of petty disagreements. *Reversed:* Moving beyond pettiness to realize what's important. Unifying forces. Overcoming obstacles.

SIX OF STAVES

Crowned with the laurels of victory, the woman rides a pure white horse. The six staves surrounding her are raised in tribute to her success and courage.

Meanings: Victory. Acknowledgment and honor. *Reversed:* Victory is elusive. You've done the work, you deserve the honors, but recognition has yet to come.

SEVEN OF STAVES

The hot sun scorches the woman. Using a stave to fight six others, she is unable to get out of the heat. Despite her position of advantage, she is still forced to defend herself.

Meanings: Though you may have the upper hand in this situation, there is still struggle. Success is possible, but only after dealing with difficult people who may not be supportive. *Reversed:* Indecisiveness in the face of opposition. Feeling overwhelmed.

EIGHT OF STAVES

Eight staves are positioned like lightning cracking across a sky. They move like electricity, bringing news and exciting communications.

Meanings: Sudden communications—unexpected telephone calls, surprise letters. Energetic movement. *Reversed:* Waiting too long for communication. Perhaps it is time to take the initiative.

NINE OF STAVES

Protected by a wall of staves, the woman rests for the moment to regroup her thoughts. There is still much to do before success is secured.

Meanings: A pause in work to reconsider plans. Completion is so close, yet so far away!

Reversed: Feeling overwhelmed by work. A break is needed.

TEN OF STAVES

Ten staves, rich with green leaves and life, radiate from the sun. They are extensions of the sun's life-giving force.

Meanings: The culmination of the creative venture begun with the one of staves. Success that becomes overwhelming with its responsibility. *Reversed:* Overwhelmed and burdened by responsibilities.

PRINCE OF STAVES

The Prince of Staves, a boy able to speak with passion but sometimes unable to carry out his ideas, brings an important message. They will jolt one into action.

Meanings: Important communications. New ideas. However, these should be weighed according to practicality. *Reversed:* Too much energy and not enough focus. Ideas and messages that fizzle out after initial excitement.

PRINCESS OF STAVES

The Princess of Staves, a fiery-haired young woman, is as stalwart as the rocks surrounding her. She is an inspiration to others to live passionately without compromise.

Meanings: The ability to create beauty that is useful, like Freyja. Energy, integrity, creativity. Initiative. New ideas or ventures to be acted upon immediately. A young woman who inspires others to live this mission. *Reversed:* Scattered energy. Inability to focus on matters at hand.

KING OF STAVES

Regal, expansive, and energizing, the King of Staves is the epitome of the sun's power. He has the ability to inspire others to grow because of his enthusiasm.

Meanings: Dynamic, stable enthusiasm. Mastery over business ventures. The ability to bring ideas to fruition. *Reversed:* Wanting to harness these forces, but unable to do so. Someone who seems supportive, but when push comes to shove has already lost interest.

QUEEN OF STAVES

Power and energy are held by the Queen of Staves. Like Freyja, her majesty can inspire the creation of beauty through practical applications.

Meanings: Intelligence applied to creating material goods, business expansion. Cleverness. A woman who embodies these ideas and inspires action. *Reversed:* Waiting too long to act. Not showing the world your talents. Undermining your authority. Lack of self-worth.



THE SUIT OF SWORDS

THE PATH OF ISIS

element: air, salt

corresponds to Magic, Major Arcana card 1

The suit of swords is associated with Isis, the Egyptian fertility goddess. Swords symbolize the incisive forces of the intellect—they cut through to refocus the energy grown in the preceding suit of staves.

Swords also symbolize the magical ability to transform painful situations into areas of personal growth. The story of Isis and her consort Osiris illustrates this principle beautifully. Because of Osiris's tragic death, Isis was able to give birth to their son Horus, the most powerful of the Egyptian gods.

Like Isis, we can choose how to use our swords. We can turn them against ourselves when we are in pain. Or we can transform the situation through knowledge and understanding.



ACE OF SWORDS

A single sword is stuck into a desert landscape surrounding several pyramids, the final resting place of the monarchs of ancient Egypt. The sword is decorated with the horned symbol of Isis and the lotus.

Meanings: Pure understanding and wisdom. The ability to wield the sword wisely to gain order. Clarity and good judgment. *Reversed:* Need for thought. Are you using your swords against yourself? Confusion.

TWO OF SWORDS

An impasse is met. The woman has blindfolded herself so she can better look within. Surrounded by lotuses, water flows behind her, symbolizing the confusing emotions she has rejected for now.

Meanings: Peaceful truce. Balance attained, but eventually issues will have to be confronted. *Reversed:* Discomfort with a decision that was made. Overreliance on intellect, leaving emotions unconsidered. Uncomfortable relationship.

THREE OF SWORDS

A heart, floating in a stormy sky, is pierced by three swords. The eye of Isis is superimposed upon it, representing an eye-opening experience that can bring tears or wisdom.

Meanings: A sharp pain to the heart—disappointment, end of a love relationship, separation. Sorrow that can enlighten or can debilitate. Oversensitivity. *Reversed:* Indulging in grief for the sake of drama. Slow easing of sorrow.

FOUR OF SWORDS

The woman rests in recuperation. Four swords are suspended above her, protecting her from the outside world.

Meanings: Need for introspection and healing. Recuperation from illness. Time to take a break from stressful situations. *Reversed:* Enforced isolation. Loneliness. More recovery time needed.

FIVE OF SWORDS

Two swords are laid down in truce. However, the woman still grasps three others, showing that the fight isn't over just yet.

Meanings: An uncomfortable truce. Possible defeat, or feelings of defeat—but is it really over? Discomfort or struggle with a situation. Need for self-protection. *Reversed:* Defeat because of indecisiveness. Lack of trust.

SIX OF SWORDS

The woman is traveling in a boat to a better place. She has gathered six swords to take with her; these symbolize the new clarity and wisdom she possesses, which will be used in her new life.

Meanings: New knowledge that helps one to move beyond current limitations. The lessening of difficulties. Travel. *Reversed:* More understanding of the situation is needed before it can change. Delays in departures, travel.

SEVEN OF SWORDS

The woman is trying to carry seven swords, but only five will fit in her arms. As she looks over her shoulder she hopes the swords left behind will not be used against her.

Meanings: The ability to defend oneself in a difficult situation. However, energy should not be placed in recriminations. Need for caution and examination. *Reversed:* Paranoia. Possible guilt. Need to protect oneself.

EIGHT OF SWORDS

Surrounded by eight swords, the woman is entrapped. If she would only look up, she would see her way out. But she is too overwhelmed by difficulties to do so.

Meanings: Inability to move. Incapacitating depression. Feeling victimized or entrapped by others. *Reversed:* Obsession with problems to the detriment of others. Things may not be as bad as they seem.

NINE OF SWORDS

Nightmares torment the woman, leaving her no rest. These dreams are bringing up nagging worries that need to be examined and understood.

Meanings: Insomnia. Worries that keep one awake. An issue that needs to be looked at more closely; only then will it be transformed. A nagging anxiety. *Reversed:* The gradual fading away of these worries. Understanding. Someone close who is suffering from depression, anxiety, or illness.

TEN OF SWORDS

Ten swords are interwoven against a cloudy gray sky. These swords symbolize the ability to transform difficult situations into wisdom and action.

Meanings: The perfection of understanding. Wisdom gained after struggle. The ending of a difficult situation. *Reversed:* More needs to be considered before complete understanding can be gained. Overwhelmed by too much information—things need to be prioritized.

PRINCE OF SWORDS

Courtly but strong-willed, the Prince of Swords is able to use language in such a way that there can be no confusion about his intentions. He is a messenger bringing needed information or clarity.

Meanings: News that brings sense to a situation. Messages, communications. The ability to create influence. Someone who personifies this role. *Reversed:* Waiting for news. Feeling inarticulate, unable to stand up for oneself. Confusing messages.

PRINCESS OF SWORDS

Holding her sword as a staff rather than as a tool of defense, the Princess of Swords is able to cut her way through the marsh. At one with her intentions, she does not allow herself to be confused by anything.

Meanings: Incisive movement. Cutting through confusion. Focus. *Reversed:* Not understanding as much as one would like to. The desire to move, but feeling thwarted.

KING OF SWORDS

A home with his intellect, the King of Swords is able to bring wisdom, and clarity to any situation. He is the authority able to show in any plan what is needed and what can be cut away.

Meanings: The ability to bring calm authority to a situation. A helpful older man who won't sugarcoat his words. Incisive intellect. *Reversed:* Wanting authority to take over to avoid responsibility. Placing too much trust in the intellect. Being too critical.

QUEEN OF SWORDS

Brilliant and strong, the Queen of Swords rules over all aspects of intellectual understanding. This is the woman to consult when confused because of her willingness to tell it like it is—even to the point of sometimes being a little harsh.

Meanings: An older woman who has these qualities. Dazzling intellect and understanding. The ability to clarify through language. *Reversed:* May symbolize loss or wounds; for all her good intentions, her sharp words can cut.



THE SUIT OF PENTACLES

THE PATH OF LAKSHMI

element: earth, gold

corresponds to Fortune card 10

The suit of pentacles is associated with Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of fortune and prosperity. Pentacles, as gold and shiny as the sparkling jewels Lakshmi is so fond of, symbolize the riches contained within the earth.

The suit of pentacles can be thought of as the grand harvest that arrives after we master the lessons of the previous three suits. Cups water the seed of inspiration planted by the Divine Feminine; encouraged by the sun's energy, staves are the first growth that sprout vigorously from the earth; staves are pruned by swords for the sake of strength and growth; finally, in the suit of pentacles, the tree bears fruit so the cycle may start again.

Pentacles tell the story of the bounty of the earth—so often symbolized in many cultures as a generous earth goddess. Lakshmi, the Hindu personification of this fertile, prosperous, and distinctly feminine force, is honored to this day for these very qualities.



ACE OF PENTACLES

A lush tree bears a fantastic fruit—a single golden pentacle. It is decorated with symbols of the lotus and the five-pointed star.

Meanings: The purest evocation of prosperity, fertility, and generosity. The beginning of a new phase of life that promises all of these things. *Reversed:* The desire to reap the so far elusive fruits of labor.

TWO OF PENTACLES

The woman juggles two pentacles. Completely focused upon her act, she does not drop the pentacles.

Meanings: The ability to juggle several situations at once. Jobs, opportunities. Grace and bounty. Commerce and expansion. *Reversed:* Taking on too much. Time to concentrate on one thing at a time; master these before expanding.

THREE OF PENTACLES

Three pentacles are suspended upon the golden roof of a palatial building. This palace is the cumulation of talent, material goods, and constructive plans.

Meanings: Constructive and pragmatic building—career, relationships, home. Ability to transform talents into material goods or business success. *Reversed:* Need to develop talents before bringing them to the marketplace. Recheck plans for expansion—are they appropriate to your abilities?

FOUR OF PENTACLES

The woman is draped in richly embroidered robes, laden with jewels like the goddess Lakshmi herself. Surrounded by four pentacles, she is the epitome of luxury.

Meanings: Wealth and prosperity. Stabilizing material forces in life. A family inheritance—this could be a talent, money, land. *Reversed:* Possibility of being miserly. Or being overly generous. Need to protect resources.

FIVE OF PENTACLES

Wrapped in rags, two beggars wander through a snowy landscape. One woman covers her face against the harsh cold; the other looks up at the snow and notices its beauty.

Meanings: Poverty that forces one to look within for greater resources. This poverty may be personified as a lack of wealth or in a sense of emotional sterility. *Reversed:* These feelings are transitory. A more prosperous phase of life is on its way.

SIX OF PENTACLES

The richly dressed woman decides to help the two beggars. She is so wealthy that giving only adds to her prosperity.

Meanings: Philanthropy and generosity. Sharing talents with the world. Helping others. Generosity. *Reversed:* Jealousy or envy from those less fortunate. Need for appreciation.

SEVEN OF PENTACLES

The woman tends to a tree, weeding around its roots and pruning its boughs. She is waiting for its fruit, symbolized by seven pentacles, to ripen.

Meanings: Expectations of reward. Waiting for a harvest—a creative project, money, or personal relationship—to occur. *Reversed:* Impatience. Insecurity about whether the reward received for work rendered will be worth it. Need for hard work.

EIGHT OF PENTACLES

Drawing upon her talents, the woman paints a gold pentacle upon a canvas. She is encircled by an arc of seven pentacles.

Meanings: The appearance of this card in a reading for an artist or craftsperson is an affirmation of skill and talent. Fair payment for hard work. Meeting deadlines. Developing talents. *Reversed:* Avoiding work. Unhappiness with money received for work given; need to adjust the balance.

NINE OF PENTACLES

In an enchanted garden with perfumed flowers and singing birds, the woman enjoys all the luxuries and pleasures she has worked so hard to create.

Meanings: Pleasure or sensuality. Fertility and luxury. Material prosperity—now that this has been accomplished, perhaps it is the time to create a family. *Reversed:* Overindulgence in material pleasures. Guilt over having so much; inability to enjoy it.

TEN OF PENTACLES

Here the suit of pentacles is expressed in its strongest form—an ornately carved gateway leads to a verdant landscape where there is more than enough for all to enjoy.

Meanings: The cumulation of business plans. Prosperity. The creation of a home and family to share wealth with. Expansion. *Reversed:* Discontent at home. Wanting greater prosperity, but uncertainty how to create it.

PRINCE OF PENTACLES

Pragmatic and loyal, the Prince of Pentacles is a bringer of messages and ideas. He is able to show where businesses can expand and when it is time to harvest.

Meanings: Business ideas, deals. Mail or messages bring opportunities for expansion,

money on the way. *Reversed*: Too much thinking, not enough doing. Business deals need to be examined. Waiting.

PRINCESS OF PENTACLES

Seductive and sweetly perfumed, the Princess of Pentacles offers all of life's bounties. To possess them, though, desire is not enough—constructive action must be taken.

Meanings: The ability to create opportunities for growth and beauty. A woman who personifies these forces. The ability to work hard to create prosperity. *Reversed*: Inertia or laziness; not taking action or responsibilities. Oversensuality.

KING OF PENTACLES

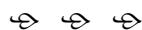
Crowned and enthroned with all of the earth's riches, the King of Pentacles is a stabilizing force able to bring business and real estate deals to fruition.

Meanings: Steadfastness. The ability to create wealth. Someone who personifies these forces. Real estate transactions. *Reversed*: Unstable, pie-in-the-sky business deals. Need to be more realistic.

QUEEN OF PENTACLES

The Queen of Pentacles is the personification of life itself. The archetypal earth mother, this expansive, joyful older woman has the talent to create heaven upon earth.

Meanings: Fertility, possibly parenthood. Creating prosperity and harmony. Beauty, wealth, the home. Regality. *Reversed*: Need to ground oneself. Perhaps an overmaterialistic orientation to life; disappointment in the home, or lack of focus.



USING THE GODDESS TAROT

Tarot cards have been used throughout history by humans searching to understand their life journey more completely. The most common way to utilize the wisdom of the tarot is, after concentrating upon a specific issue, to place a number of them into a special pattern called a spread; each card position within the spread reflects an aspect of the question being considered.

Cards are usually chosen for the spread by shuffling the cards a preordained number of times to assure randomness. The deck is cut and cards for the spread chosen from the top. Some tarot readers prefer to shuffle the cards themselves, allowing the querent (the person asking the question) only to handle the deck while cutting it; they feel this allows them a greater intimacy with their cards, making it easier to give an accurate reading. Others prefer to have the querent choose their cards themselves; they believe the querent will choose the most appropriate cards for their situation.

Whichever way you decide to proceed, it is important to focus yourself before the actual reading. A simple ritual, such as lighting a candle or closing your eyes for a moment, can help create the properly receptive atmosphere to the information about to be shared by the cards.

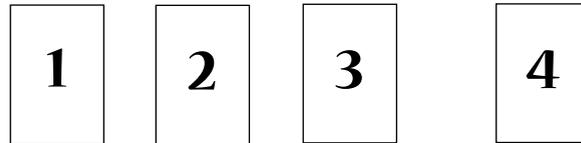
THE GODDESS TAROT ORACLE

The simplest spread—and a good way to familiarize yourself with each card in *The Goddess Tarot*—is to close your eyes and choose one card while concentrating on the issue at hand. Consider this card an oracle granting you the information you need. Take several minutes to meditate upon your chosen card: what do its colors, images, and symbols bring to mind for you?

One variant of this is to limit yourself to choosing cards from the Major Arcana only. This is a wonderful opportunity to become better familiarized with each goddess represented in *The Goddess Tarot* and the divinely feminine experience she represents.

THE PAST/PRESENT/FUTURE SPREAD

Slightly more complex is the Past/Present/Future spread. Choose four cards from your deck and lay them out as so:

*The Past / Present / Future Spread*

Each card is placed face down; it is turned over as each is examined.

Card 1: the past, or the foundation of the matter being considered.

Card 2: the present, or as things stand now.

Card 3: the possible future, if things continue as they are now. Remember, the future can be influenced by our attitudes, our actions, and our intentions.

Card 4: the overall message, or lesson, of the spread. This card sums up everything examined so far.

THE CELTIC CROSS SPREAD

Perhaps because of its versatile ability to cover many aspects of a situation in great depth, the Celtic Cross is a staple of tarot spreads. For this reading, give yourself at least twenty minutes or longer, if possible.

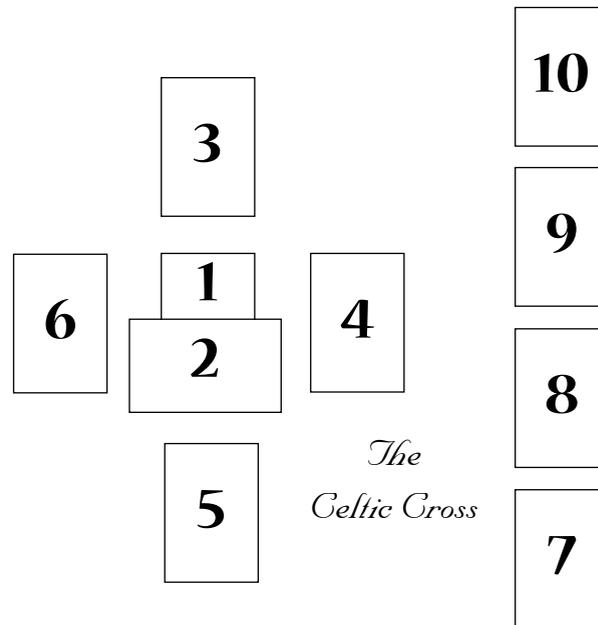
The first step in creating the Celtic Cross is to choose a card from the deck to signify the querent. One way is to choose the Major Arcana card associated with the goddess who has sovereignty over the matter being examined: for example, spiritual issues could be symbolized by Sarasvati, love relationships by Venus.

More traditional ways of choosing a significator include selecting a court card (prince, princess, king, or queen) according to the age, sex, and coloring of the person; a young woman with light hair could be represented by the Princess of Cups, a dark haired older woman by the Queen of Swords, and so on.

You could also choose the significator according to astrological sign. However, this involves knowledge of the person's birthdate, astrology, and its accordant symbols. Using this method, a person born under the water signs of Pisces, Scorpio, and Cancer would be represented by the cups; fire signs such as Sagittarius, Aries, and Leo would be staves; the air signs of Aquarius, Libra, and Gemini, swords; and finally, the earth signs of Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn would be represented by the suit of pentacles. The age and sex of the querent would determine which court card is chosen.

After the significator card is chosen and the question considered, the deck is shuffled, cut, and ten cards chosen.

They are placed as so, with the significator beneath card 1:



Each card represents one area of the question or issue being examined in the reading:

Card 1: the overall situation, or atmosphere, surrounding the querent in regards to the question.

Card 2: what is influencing the situation for better or for worse. What to be considered.

Card 3: the foundation of the issue.

Card 4: the past, or influence that is now passing away.

Card 5: what is on the querent's mind at this time.

Card 6: near future, or the influence now coming into play.

Card 7: how the querent sees the situation, or how it is influencing them at this time.

Card 8: how others view the querent in this situation; ways they may help or hinder.

Card 9: hopes and fears; the emotions surrounding the situation. This card can also be used as a guide for the querent.

Card 10: possible outcome, if things continue on the path now taken.

As you read the Celtic Cross spread, try to think of each card as a chapter in a story you are telling—what do the pictures tell you? What overall themes emerge in the story? How can this story be changed, if change is desired? And what lesson is being taught? Remember that card interpretations can be influenced by several factors, including the proximity and position of a card, a preponderance of any one suit or Arcana.

One of my favourites, the Goddess Tarot deck incorporates Goddess images and lore from many cultures into a very beautiful and well-made Tarot deck of 78 cards. Created by Kris Waldherr Tarot Deck - 78 Cards - US Games 1997. Buy from Amazon.com Buy from Amazon.com (Mini) Buy from Amazon.co.uk Buy from Amazon.ca. Reviews of the Goddess Tarot. Card Images from the Goddess Tarot. Buy from Amazon.com Buy from Amazon.com (Mini) Buy from Amazon.co.uk Buy from Amazon.ca. Meet the maker. The Intuitive Night Goddess Tarot and Companion Guide were created and designed by me, Linzi Silverman of Eye of Astro . I am an intuitive healer, artist, and witch. Interested in the cards from a young age, I felt they held a deep wisdom. The beautiful Goddess Tarot deck uses goddess stories and imagery to update traditional Tarot symbolism, addressing women's contemporary needs through ornate illustrations and details. Buy This Deck View Any Card In This Deck View All Decks. Goddess Deck Preview: From the Kris Waldherr Goddess booklet: The Goddess Tarot is a celebration of the Divine Feminine. Drawing inspiration from the many goddesses honored throughout