

Joy's Quickie, DIY 5-Minute Guide to Reading Tarot

Exercise 1: The Visual Cue Method of Reading Tarot

BOTTOM LINE: Ask a question and choose a card. Let your eyes sweep over the image until one visual detail stands out for you. How does this visual cue answer your question?

Step-By-Step Instructions for the Visual Cue Method

1. Ask a question. Don't have one? Try, "How will learning to read tarot benefit me?"
2. Mix the cards up. Cut the deck and select the top card, or fan the deck out on the table and choose one card.
3. Look closely at the card. With a curious mind, contemplate the image you see. Notice the details. Let your mind wander across the card until one particular detail catches your eye. What is it? Why does it stand out to you? What purpose does it serve in the image? What personal meaning does this visual detail have for you?
4. Hold the visual cue in your mind at the same time as you think about your question. How does the visual cue answer your question?

Exercise 2: Compare and Contrast Method of Reading Tarot

BOTTOM LINE: Ask a question and pull two cards. Note the similarities and differences between the cards. What is the most striking similarity? How does this address your question? What is the most striking difference? How does this address your question?

Step-By-Step Instruction for the Contrast and Compare Method

1. Ask a question. Don't have one? This time try, "What should I focus on today?"
2. Mix the cards up. Cut the deck and select the top card and bottom card, or fan the deck out on the table and choose two cards.
3. Examine and contemplate these two cards. Note similarities and differences between them. Observe details that pop out at you. Feel the general emotional mood of the cards. Compare and contrast the characters, actions, directions, environments, details, colors, shapes, moods, and anything that catches your eye. Pick at least one similarity and one difference that stand out the most to you.
4. Consider your chosen similarity and difference in relationship to your question. What does the similarity say to answer your question? How does the difference answer your question?

Exercise 3: Tell Stories About Your Life

BOTTOM LINE: Don't do readings. Instead, use the cards to tell stories. Think of something that happened yesterday and use your 3-5 cards to describe it.

Step-By-Step Instructions for the Tell Stories About Your Life Method

1. Pick a significant happening (as significant as you can get for an ordinary day) Maybe your cat got out. Perhaps you had a piano lesson but hadn't practiced. Possibly you cooked dinner from scratch, or bumped into an old friend (or enemy), or found a great deal. Something distinguished yesterday from the day before.
2. Write down what happened in a few short sentences. This is your story.
3. Break up the story into 3-5 key events.
4. Look through your deck, and focusing on the images, choose the card that best reminds you of each event.

This technique is perfect for the brand-new beginner for several important reasons. First, right off the bat you start looking through your deck at the cards rather than shuffling them face down. This helps you familiarize yourself with the card images.

Second, you're in charge of the process and that makes you confident. There's no way to be wrong. You get to tell your story your way.

Most importantly, you assign the meaning to the cards.

Bonus: Fifteen Tarot Questions To Ask When You Don't Have A Question

Most tarot readers eventually find themselves in a situation where they want to do a reading but don't know what to ask. Cruise control is on. Straight road ahead. Blue skies as far as you can see. But for one reason or another, the cards come out. You might have to do a reading as an assignment for a class. Perhaps you'd like to practice. Or you might want to test drive a new deck. Sometimes you know you need something but don't know what. Situations like these find tarot readers shuffling cards with no intention. You know it doesn't work to keep asking the same question over and over, even if you try to mix it up a bit. Want to do a tarot reading but don't know what to ask? Look no further. Here are fifteen tarot questions to ask when you don't have a question (plus one bonus question!).

Keeping It Real

Sometimes you have a topic that you've been asking about, but you've gotten off track in your line of inquiry. You don't want to pursue the same question doggedly, but you don't know what else to ask. General questions on the theme itself, regardless of whether they produce clear or cloudy outcomes, don't always tell the whole story. These five questions will help you break your topic down, revealing practical information so you know how to proceed.

1. How will the next time period (day, week, month, year, etc.) unfold?
2. Where should I focus my attention/efforts at this time?
3. What resources will provide me the best support at this time?
4. What will be the outcome if I take such-and-such an action?
5. What's my first step or next step?

Don't Miss Out

When that nagging feeling comes around that you're missing something, you might not even know where to begin with a line of questioning. Job's satisfying, relationship's fulfilling, life's happy. Maybe your Spidey-sense says something is about to go down and you'd like a heads-up. On the other hand, maybe you caught a case of wanderlust. You wouldn't want to admit this to anyone, but is this all there is? You're ready to grow and wonder what adventure awaits. Delve into these five questions to turn the fog lights on.

6. What am I missing or overlooking?
7. What unknown factors are at play?
8. How can I prepare for the unexpected?

9. Where am I going?
10. What can I look forward to?

Connecting With Spirit

Not all questions are mundane in nature, not all about the nuts and bolts of life. When you want to feed your soul, asking a question might seem too prosaic, even worse, irrelevant. And yet, how can you receive the message you know you need? If you're ready to hear the truth, your cards will take the deep dive with you. These five questions are waiting for the querent who is willing.

11. What does the Universe need me to know?
12. What does my soul need to hear?
13. How can I become more "me"?
14. What am I ready to let go of?
15. What am I ready for?

Returning To The Cards

Perhaps the best use of your cards is simply to ask them what to ask. The cards are like your best friend, trusted advisor, and higher self all rolled into one. They are the counselor who knows how to listen and patiently waits for you to ask for help. So ask!

16. What question do the cards recommend I ask?

Returning To You

Don't stop here! Let these fifteen tarot questions (plus one bonus question!) inspire the right question for you.

Use these questions with your favorite spread, or pull only two cards to bottom line it if you need extra focus. If you're in the market for new spreads, please check out all the [spreads](https://joyvernon.com/category/tarot-2/tarot-spreads/) I've posted on my blog (<https://joyvernon.com/category/tarot-2/tarot-spreads/>).