

"On Opening a New Deck"

By the Denver Tarot Meetup Leadership Team

"I usually ease into a deck. After unboxing it, I spend a fair amount of contemplative time with the cards before attempting a divination. This gives me a better feel for the deck's personality, symbolic dialect and modes of behavior, so I can work with it more effectively. I use a clearing method with all my decks pre- or post-reading, in which I put the deck 'in order': Majors first, then the four suits (Wands/Cups/Swords/Pentacles, Ace through 10 and then the Court Cards, Page up to King). To paraphrase Lon Milo DuQuette, it arranges the deck into an ordered universe prior to being shuffled into a disordered one." –John Michael Allen, Tarot Social Central, Tarot Geeks Social

"I like to clean a space and wash my hands. Light a candle, sometimes have music, be undisturbed and carefully open the new deck. I look at each card closely and check that everyone is there. Then I like to shuffle and see who shows up! Even as an amateur collector, I respect every deck I have and I can sincerely say that I Love all of my decks! For me the Tarot is truly magical!" –Linda Bean, Tarot Social South

"When I open a new deck, I am curious to see what order the suits are in, which gives me insight into the traditions that might have influenced the underlying structure of the deck. I look through the cards noting my first reaction. I hope to see interesting, insightful perspectives that work within an identifiable tarot lineage, or that feel creative and fresh. I note cards that are predictable or limit the card meaning to too narrow an interpretation. I hope with each deck that I don't find a card that I don't like! After this assessment, I decide how I will use the deck: for teaching, for illustrating blog posts, for public readings, for creative writing prompts, or as a personal deck. I try to use all my decks one way or another!" –Joy Vernon, Tarot Geeks Social

"With a new deck, or any deck, I sometimes like to pull cards while watching a reality tv show. You can pull cards on the situation or the specific people to see what may be happening next or what a specific character may do. I shuffle while watching the show and when a moment comes up that you go "oh no, I hope ____ doesn't do that...." throw a card or two down to see what energies may be coming up next. These are one or two cards for a situation, nothing in-depth. This will give you an idea of the language your new deck uses. Is it bare bones, straight forward, maybe a bit snarky or sarcastic, maybe it's more clear when you do this for a relationship show vs. a survival show. This is just a fun way to practice on a situation or person that you don't know." – Sherry Hungsberg, Tarot Social North

"When I open a new deck, I usually shuffle a up to 5 minutes initially. I get the feel of the cards in my hands, how the cards bend and move. Do they want to flee or are they content. Then, I take my time dealing cards upside 5 at a time until I am through with the deck. I see the individual cards and learn its voice." – Jennifer McKissack, Tarot Social East

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