

# THE SYMBOLIST

*A Simplified Guide to Tarot Symbols and Terms*



**BY CORRINE KENNER**



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## Introduction

*“The entire universe is but one vast symbol of God.”*  
— Thomas Carlyle

**T***he Symbolist* was developed for tarot students and readers at every level of expertise. It’s one of the most comprehensive lists ever compiled of the symbols and images found in the tarot, especially the classic Rider-Waite Tarot and most of its derivatives. *The Symbolist* also includes a wide range of tarot-related terminology, as well as a summary of the basic mythology, astrology, and numerology that many tarot readers use in their work.

*The Symbolist* is easy to use. It’s arranged alphabetically, so you can quickly access the standard Western interpretation of hundreds of individual symbols and illustrations. The definitions are short and sweet, designed for quick reference. This guide assumes that you already are familiar with most of the background information to which the tarot’s symbols refer — and the listings you’ll find in the next few pages will simply jump start your memory.

If you’d like a more detailed analysis of the history and symbolism of the tarot in depth, you’ll probably want to refer to the works listed at the end of this guide. They’re all wonderful sources for enriching your work with the cards.

### **Please send me your suggestions**

I hope you enjoy working with *The Symbolist*, and that it enhances your tarot studies and readings. I’d love to hear what you think of it — and if you have any additions for future editions, please let me know! You can send them by e-mail to [Corrine@TwoOfCups.com](mailto:Corrine@TwoOfCups.com) or by regular mail in care of Two of Cups Tarot, PO Box 11350, St. Paul, MN 55111-0350.

Enjoy!

*Corrine K enner*



# **Quick Reference Guides**

Major Arcana

Minor Arcana

Court Cards

Tarot and Astrology



## Quick Reference Guide: The Cards of the Major Arcana

- 0. The Fool.** Technically, The Fool is the Major Arcana's only unnumbered card. A wanderer, most Tarot experts agree that The Fool represents each of us — naive travelers through life, off on a grand adventure, out to learn whatever experience and the tarot can teach us.
- 1. The Magician.** The Magician represents an individual in control of life's tools and techniques, like those on the table in front of him. Typically, they include a cup, a sword, a pentacle, and a wand — the four symbols of the Minor Arcana.
- 2. The High Priestess.** Secretive and guarded, The High Priestess knows the secrets life holds — but shares them only with the wise.
- 3. The Empress.** The archetypal mother, The Empress nurtures and protects all of nature, including humankind.
- 4. The Emperor.** The archetypal father, the authoritative Emperor brings order out of chaos so that civilization can prosper.
- 5. The Hierophant.** A symbol of traditional authority and influence, The High Priest is a spiritual link to humanity's higher powers.
- 6. The Lovers.** While an appearance by this couple could encourage any hopeless romantic, The Lovers also signify a choice to be made between two equally strong desires.
- 7. The Chariot.** The young charioteer is in command of his physical and emotional drives, symbolized by the two opposing forces that pull The Chariot.
- 8. Strength.** A woman gently holds the jaws of a powerful lion, patiently controlling a force that could otherwise eat her alive.
- 9. The Hermit.** Far removed from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, The Hermit reflects on spiritual concerns. He carries his light of wisdom as a beacon for others to follow.
- 10. The Wheel of Fortune.** Because nothing is certain but change itself, The Wheel of Fortune reminds us all that what goes up must also come down.
- 11. Justice.** In many representations of the Justice card, Justice is blind to superficial concerns. And in most, she holds a two-edged sword — a reminder that fairness cuts both ways.
- 12. The Hanged Man.** He sacrifices his comfort and passions for a time, like the Norse god Odin, knowing that better things will occur as a result.
- 13. Death.** Not the frightening specter that most of us expect, the card of Death is one of transition. It foretells the completion of one stage of life and the exciting beginning of a new phase.

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- 14. Temperance.** With dexterity and grace, Temperance demonstrates how balance can serve as a bridge to wholeness.
- 15. The Devil.** With tongue firmly in cheek, the Devil of the Major Arcana shows us that a selfish devotion to material possessions and ill-conceived passions ties us down and keeps us from true happiness.
- 16. The Tower.** Should we build ourselves up too high, The Tower card warns that a bolt from the blue could shake us to our very foundations.
- 17. The Star.** The card of faith and hope, The Star is a shining light in the darkness.
- 18. The Moon.** Deeply rooted in the unconscious, the dreamlike Moon symbolizes secrets and mysteries that may not be understood — or even recognized.
- 19. The Sun.** Nothing can hide in the bright light of day, and even the most dour individuals come out to celebrate.
- 20. Judgement.** All is revealed, as the Judgement card reminds us to forgive and be forgiven.
- 21. The World.** A card of completion and success, The World is the last stop on The Fool's journey.

## Quick Reference Guide: Major Arcana Keywords

0. **The Fool** New beginnings • The happy wanderer • Leap of faith • Adventure
1. **The Magician** As above, so below • Self-mastery
2. **The High Priestess** Intuition • Keeper of spiritual secrets • The gateway
3. **The Empress** Mother Nature • Fertility • Creativity • Growth
4. **The Emperor** Civilization • Order • Control
5. **The Hierophant** Spiritual teacher • Religious/Cultural hierarchy • Tradition
6. **The Lovers** Choices • Partnerships • Duality • Balance
7. **The Chariot** Travel • Movement • Independence • Mastery of drives
8. **Strength** Courage • Self-control • Mastery of one's "id" or primitive nature
9. **The Hermit** Solitude • Acquired wisdom • A light for others
10. **The Wheel of Fortune** Luck • Circle of the year • Inevitable cycles of life
11. **Justice** Fairness • Blind justice • The double-edged sword that cuts both ways
12. **The Hanged Man** Time out • Self-sacrifice • Odin • New perspectives
13. **Death** Transition • New beginnings • Make way for a fresh start
14. **Temperance** Balance • Moderation in all things • Steel tempered by fire
15. **The Devil** Materialism • Blind choices • Tongue-in-cheek "evil" • Human nature
16. **The Tower** A bolt from the blue • Sudden change • Disaster • Chaos • Liberation
17. **The Star** Make a wish • Guiding light • Inspiration
18. **The Moon** Reflection • Wax and wane • Ebb and flow • Monthly cycles • Secrets
19. **The Sun** Bright light of day • Full consciousness • Ego • Annual events
20. **Judgement** Karma • Destiny • Responsibility • Forgiveness
21. **The World** Conclusions • Full circle • Completion • A new cycle begins

## Quick Reference Guide: Minor Arcana Keywords

	<b>WANDS</b> <b>(Spiritual life)</b>	<b>CUPS</b> <b>(Emotional life)</b>	<b>SWORDS</b> <b>(Intellectual life)</b>	<b>PENTACLES</b> <b>(Physical life)</b>
Ace	Spiritual Potential	Emotional Beginnings	Intellectual Possibilities	Physical Foundations
Two	Partnership, Dominion	Commitment, Love, Attraction	Balance, Peace	Juggling Act, Harmony
Three	Opportunity, Establishment	Friendships, Celebration,	Heartache, Sorrow, Divorce	Skill, Work, Artistic Mastery
Four	Prosperity, Foundations, Perfect Work	Boredom, Discontent	Rest, Recuperation	Possessions Power
Five	Challenge Strife	Sorrow, Loss, Spilled Milk	Defeat, Poor Sportsmanship	Poverty Material Trouble
Six	Victory Conquest, Heroism	Nostalgia, Pleasure	Retreat, Travel, Earned Success	Generosity, Gifts
Seven	Defiance, Valour, Courage	Choices, Illusions, Fantasy, Daydreams	Dishonesty, Instability	Planning, Cultivation
Eight	Swiftiness, Travel, Speed, Messages	Seek, Quest, Abandon	Restriction, Imprisonment	Apprenticeship, Prudence
Nine	Resilience, Great Strength	Pleasure, Drunkenness, Material Success	Cruelty, Despair, Victimization	Comfort, Gain, Luxury
Ten	Burden, Oppression	Contentment, Perfect Happiness	Ruin, Overkill, Martyrdom	Wealth, Attainment

## Quick Reference Guide: Minor Arcana Correspondences

	WANDS	CUPS	SWORDS	PENTACLES
Playing Cards	clubs	hearts	spades	diamonds
Element	fire	water	air	earth
Quality	hot	cold	moist	dry
Realm	spiritual	emotional	intellectual	physical/material
Expression	action	reflection	communication, conflict	stability
Jungian Psychology	intuition	feeling	thinking	sensation
Astrological Sign	Aries, Leo, Sagittarius	Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces	Gemini, Libra, Aquarius	Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn
Yin/Yang	yang/active	yin/receptive	yang/active	yin/receptive
Male/Female	male	female	male	female
Family	father	mother	son	daughter
Season	spring	summer	fall	winter
Direction	south	west	east	north
Universe	sun	ocean, rivers	sky	land
Plant	seeds	leaves	flowers	roots
Time of Day	noon	sunset	sunrise	midnight
Medieval Class	farmers/peasants	clergy	soldiers/nobility	merchants
Humor	choleric	sanguine	phlegmatic	melancholic
Animal	lion	serpent, eagle	man, angel	bull
Elemental	salamander	undine	sylph	gnome
Angel	Raphael	Gabriel	Michael	Uriel
Gospel	Mark	John	Matthew	Luke
Hebrew Letter	Yod	Heh	Vau	Heh
Function	divine spark	initial chaos	development of form	finished creation
Color	yellow	red	blue	green
Metal	gold, iron	quicksilver	copper, tin	lead, silver

## Quick Reference Guide: Court Cards

**C**OURTCARDS — the page, knight, queen and king of each suit — have a wide range of functions. They can represent other people or they can reflect aspects of our own personality. Sometimes, they can even illustrate what we think of ourselves, by depicting qualities that we like and dislike in others.

**Pages** are young, with childlike enthusiasm and an unbounded capacity to learn. They also are willing messengers, eager to deliver news and greetings to appreciative adults.

**Knights** are adventurers, eager to go out into the world. They're on a sacred quest — for success, for honor, and for the ever-elusive gifts of the spirit. Even so, they don't hesitate to rescue and defend others along the way.

**Queens** are mature women, gracious and wise in the ways of the world. They're especially good at working with others. Queens nurture and direct unbridled energy into useful channels.

**Kings** are seasoned, experienced men. Most have successfully completed the quests they began as knights, and they've moved on to accept the corresponding responsibility of their achievements. Kings are authoritative rulers and strong protectors.

### Wands

**Page of Wands:** imminent spiritual growth, typically through flashes of inspiration and an abundance of creative energy.

**Knight of Wands:** the beginning of spiritual adventures, or the availability of spiritual aid.

**Queen of Wands:** the power to foster and guide your creative energy.

**King of Wands:** the power to govern and safeguard your creative energy.

### Cups

**Page of Cups:** imminent emotional growth, typically through flashes of intuition and increased sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others.

**Knight of Cups:** the beginnings of emotional adventures or emotional healing.

**Queen of Cups:** the power to foster and guide your emotional energy.

**King of Cups:** the power to govern and safeguard your emotional energy.

### Swords

**Page of Swords:** imminent intellectual growth, typically through flashes of understanding and an increased ability to think creatively.

**Knight of Swords:** the beginning of intellectual adventures or a sudden understanding of heady new concepts.

**Queen of Swords:** the power to foster and guide your intellectual energy.

**King of Swords:** the power to govern and safeguard your intellectual energy.

### Pentacles

**Page of Pentacles:** imminent physical change, typically through a strengthened sense of one's self and comfort in the physical world.

**Knight of Pentacles:** the successful resolution of physical adventures or the availability of financial and material support.

**Queen of Pentacles:** the power to foster and guide your physical energy and career.

**King of Pentacles:** the power to govern and safeguard your physical energy and career.

## Quick Reference Guide: Tarot and Astrology

### By Sign and Planet

Aries .....The Emperor  
 Taurus .....The Hierophant  
 Gemini .....The Lovers  
 Cancer .....The Chariot  
 Leo .....Strength  
 Virgo .....The Hermit  
 Libra .....Justice  
 Scorpio .....Death  
 Sagittarius .....Temperance  
 Capricorn .....The Devil  
 Aquarius .....The Star  
 Pisces .....The Moon  
 Sun .....The Sun  
 Moon .....The High Priestess  
 Mercury .....The Magician  
 Venus .....The Empress  
 Mars .....The Tower  
 Jupiter .....The Wheel of Fortune  
 Saturn .....The World  
 Neptune .....The Hanged Man  
 Uranus .....The Fool  
 Pluto .....Judgement

### By Major Arcana Card

The Fool .....Uranus  
 The Magician .....Mercury  
 The High Priestess .....The Moon  
 The Empress .....Venus  
 The Emperor .....Aries  
 The Hierophant .....Taurus  
 The Lovers .....Gemini  
 The Chariot .....Cancer  
 Strength .....Leo  
 The Hermit .....Virgo  
 The Wheel of Fortune .....Jupiter  
 Justice .....Libra  
 The Hanged Man .....Neptune  
 Death .....Scorpio  
 Temperance .....Sagittarius  
 The Devil .....Capricorn  
 The Tower .....Mars  
 The Star .....Aquarius  
 The Moon .....Pisces  
 The Sun .....The Sun  
 Judgement .....Pluto  
 The World .....Saturn

## Astrological Glyphs and Symbolism

☉ **Sun** .....Illumination, the self, the ego  
 ● **New Moon** (1st Quarter) .....Inspiration, beginnings  
 ☽ **Waxing Moon** (2nd Quarter) .....Growth, development  
 ☾ **Full Moon** (3rd Quarter) .....Maturity, completion  
 ☾ **Waning Moon** (4th Quarter) .....Reflections, planning  
 ☿ **Mercury** .....Speed, communication  
 ♀ **Venus** .....Love, attraction, spiritual treasure, fertility  
 ♂ **Mars** .....Energy, aggression, self-defense, action  
 ♃ **Jupiter** .....Luck, growth, expansion, enthusiasm  
 ♄ **Saturn** .....Discipline, limits, boundaries, tradition  
 ♅ **Uranus** .....Independence, rebellion, freedom  
 ♆ **Neptune** .....Glamour, illusions, sensitivity  
 ♇ **Pluto** .....Death, regeneration, unavoidable change



# **Alphabetical Entries**



# The Symbolist

## A

**Abbey** refuge; holy place; symbol of the divine within one's self

**Above** the Higher Self

**Above/Below** heaven and earth

**Abyss** depth; the underworld

**Acorn** potential

**Adam Kadmon** original man

**Air** one of the four elements; active; masculine; corresponds to the Minor Arcana suit of Swords and the intellect

**Air Signs** The "thinkers" of the Zodiac: Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius

**Alchemy** Greek and Arab attempts to make gold; symbolic of salvation. The four stages include 1) prime matter, symbolic of origins and guilt 2) the first transmutation, symbolic of early efforts at transformation 3) purification, symbolic of passion 4) gold, symbolic of spiritual attainment

**Allegory** a descriptive story that includes symbolic or hidden meaning, used for imparting ideas and principals

**Alpha and Omega** first and last letters of the Greek alphabet; beginnings and endings

**Altar** focus for worship

**Amulet** a charm carried to ward off evil

**Anchor** Christian symbol of salvation and hope

**Angels** invisible forces; Four archangels appear in tarot: Raphael, angel of air (The Lovers); Michael, angel of fire (Temperance); Gabriel, angel of water (Judgement); and Uriel, angel of earth (The Devil).

**Ankh** ancient Egyptian cross of life, with the perfect balance of masculine (Osiris) and feminine (Isis)

**Antlers** the divine masculine; the father god

**Anubis** ancient Egyptian jackal-headed god of wisdom; represents the evolution of consciousness

**Anvil** earthly matter

**Ape** Thoth, Egyptian god of wisdom

**Apple** health; healing

**Arcana** plural of the Latin Arcanum

**Archer** offers direction; symbol of the astrological sign Sagittarius

**Archetypes** innate ideas or patterns in the psyche, expressed as symbols and images. Carl Jung's description of archetypes include the anima, the feminine aspect of a man's personality; the animus, the masculine aspect of a woman's personality; the

mother, which typifies a nurturing, emotional parent; the father, a material, protective parent; the trickster or rebel; and the shadow, the hidden, antisocial side of human nature

**Armor** defense; protection

**Ashes** spiritual purification

**Ass** humility; patience; courage

**Astrological Correspondences** (Golden Dawn assignments)

- **Aries** The Emperor
- **Taurus** The Hierophant
- **Gemini** The Lovers
- **Cancer** The Chariot
- **Leo** Strength
- **Virgo** The Hermit
- **Libra** Justice
- **Scorpio** Death
- **Sagittarius** Temperance
- **Capricorn** The Devil
- **Aquarius** The Star
- **Pisces** The Moon
- **Sun** The Sun
- **Moon** The High Priestess
- **Mercury** The Magician
- **Venus** The Empress
- **Mars** The Tower
- **Jupiter** The Wheel of Fortune
- **Saturn** The World
- **Neptune** The Hanged Man
- **Uranus** The Fool
- **Pluto** Judgement

**Aura** energy field

## B

**Backpack** tools; karma

**Bandages** newborn's swaddling and corpse's shroud; wounds

**Basket** womb

**Bat** blindness; darkness; chaos; leathery bat wings offer a striking contrast to pristine angel wings

**Bear** lunar animal; prime matter; unconscious; Great Mother

**Bed** sexuality; intimacy; rest; illness; nurturing

**Bee** creative activity; monarchy

**Bell** joy; victory

**Bird** symbol of the soul; good news; soaring spirit

**Black** negative; passive; receptive

**Blood** sacrifice; passion

**Blue** associated with spirituality

**Boar** magic and prophecy

**Boat** cradle; womb; the body

**Boaz and Jachin** The pillars of light and darkness, mercy and severity, or spirit and matter, that held the veil in the Temple

**Book** education; the universe

**Bow and Arrow** sunlight; pangs of love

**Box** feminine; maternal; unconscious

**Branch** see garland

**Bread** fertility; communion with others; staff of life; money

**Breast** love; nurturing; mothering

**Bridge** connection between worlds; transition from life to death and from the secular to the divine

**Buckle** self defense; protection

**Bud** new beginning

**Bull** symbol of the astrological sign Taurus

**Butterfly** transformation

## C

**Cabalah** (also spelled *cabbala*, *kabala*, *kabbala*, *kabbalah*, *qabala*) An ancient Jewish system used to explain the order and workings of the universe

**Caduceus** (a winged wand entwined by two serpents) symbol of Mercury, messenger of the gods; the wand represents power, the snakes represent wisdom, and the wings represent diligence; also, the wand represents earth, the wings represent air, and the serpents represent fire and water

**Canal** passage; childbirth

**Candle** faith in spiritual things; enlightenment; the light and spirit of the individual

**Canyon** vast unconsciousness

**Cartomancy** the art of divination with cards

**Castle** physical and spiritual refuge; stronghold of good or evil; guarded treasure

**Castle** watchful; embattled; otherworldly

**Cat** domesticity; liberty; vanity; witch's familiar

**Cave** the feminine; the unconscious; an entrance to the underworld; initiation

**Celtic Cross** a traditional 10-card tarot spread

**Cernunnos** Celtic horned god

**Chain** bondage; restriction; communication

**Chakras** seven energy centers of the body

**Chalice** human heart

**Chalice** covered heaven and earth

**Chariot card** The young charioteer is in command of his physical and emotional drives, symbolized by the two opposing forces that pull The Chariot.

**Chariot** the human body

**Charioteer** the self

**Chasm** division between worlds

**Child** innocence; the future

**Church** refuge; holy place; symbol of the divine within one's self

**Circle** completion; the feminine; heaven

**Cliff** division between worlds

**Cloak** veil; separation; something hidden

**Clocks** under the law of time; or something that is possible but not yet firmly in the future

**Clouds** mysterious; sacred

**Cock** resurrection

**Cold** solitude

### **Colors**

- **Black** midnight; death; alchemical prime matter
- **Blue** heaven; clarity; thought; spirituality
- **Brown** earth
- **Gold** the sun; active solar energy; majesty
- **Green** vegetation; growth; fertility
- **Gray** depression; neutrality; indifference
- **Orange** fire
- **Pink** sensuality; emotions
- **Red** blood; wine; passion; will; ambition; anger ("seeing red")
- **Silver** the moon; passive lunar energy; intuition
- **Violet** spirituality; royalty; power
- **White** purity; reflection
- **Yellow** the sun; active solar energy; majesty

**Collective Unconscious** Carl G. Jung's term for the underground stream of psychic energy and shared archetypes that link all people to each other

**Columns** duality; choice; civilization

**Corn** fertility

**Cornucopia** the union of male and female; horn of plenty

**Crab** symbol of the astrological sign Cancer

**Crane** justice; longevity

**Crest** thought

**Crescent Moon** symbol of Isis, the ancient Egyptian queen of heaven; the newborn; the ship of light that carries the soul through the dark night into dawn; emblem of Islam

**Cross** protection

**Cross, Blue** spiritual leader

**Cross, Celtic** popular tarot layout; fertility; union of heaven and earth

**Cross, Inverted** humility; tree of life

**Cross, Red** health; healing; and medicine

**Cross, Rosy** fertility; spilled blood of Christ; seven stages of initiation

**Cross, Solar** equal arms indicated union of male and female; positive and negative

**Cross, Yellow** philosopher or philosophy

**Crossed Keys** unlock knowledge and truth. The gold depicts solar energy; the silver depicts lunar energy.

**Crossroads** choice

**Crow** messenger

**Crown** attainment and mastery

**Crux Ansata** (Egyptian ankh) union of male and female; heaven and earth; eternity; immortality

**Crystal** transmits and magnifies energy

### **Crystals, Gems, and Stones**

- **Agate** a stone of strength and protection
- **Amber** symbolizes cycles and longevity
- **Amethyst** enhances wisdom, tranquility, sobriety
- **Aquamarine** offers protection and calm
- **Bloodstone** improves circulation
- **Blue Lace Agate** improves self-expression
- **Citrine** relieves emotional and physical congestion
- **Crazy Lace Agate** enhances self esteem and courage
- **Diamond** hardest of all elements, symbolizes permanence and incorruptibility
- **Emerald** strengthens memory, increases intelligence, preserves relationships
- **Garnet** stimulates creativity and love

- **Geodes** encourages freedom of spirit and independence
- **Green Moss Agate** a gardener's talisman
- **Hematite** grounds and connects with the earth; helps vent suppressed anger
- **Jade** assures long, healthy life and peaceful death; strengthens relationships
- **Jasper** promotes clear thinking, restrains dangerous desires and whims
- **Lapis Lazuli** a symbol of wisdom, power, and royalty, as well as the journey into darkness in search of the Higher Self
- **Malachite** absorbs energy; focuses inner vision
- **Marble** protects the home; attracts money
- **Moonstone** symbolizes the lunar cycle and femininity
- **Obsidian** useful during grief and growth
- **Onyx** transforms negativity; strengthens the will; helps separate from unhealthy relationships
- **Opal** contains all the colors of the chakras; aids expression and purifies the spirit
- **Pearl** symbolizes the hidden wealth of the soul
- **Peridot** can teach self-parenting; stimulates physical healing; calms
- **Petrified Wood** represents longevity and evolution; aids past-life recall; helps deflect negativity
- **Pyrite** brings money and luck; aids in grounding
- **Quartz Crystal** conducts and amplifies energy and thoughts
- **Rose Quartz** comforts and heals wounded hearts
- **Ruby** symbolizes strength, compassion, and life force; aids immunity; arouses passion
- **Sapphire** a stone of prophecy and wisdom
- **Shell** represents watery qualities of fluidity, movement, and a change
- **Smokey Quartz** grounds and purifies the base chakra
- **Tiger's Eye** represents integrity and personal power; promotes confidence, courage, and perception
- **Topaz** brings strength and energy to the body
- **Turquoise** a guardian of the soul; a connection between heaven and earth

**Cube** earth; material world; four elements

**Cup** emotion

**Curtain** separation of worlds

## D

**Daffodils** springtime

**Dagger** phallus; masculinity

**Dance** union of space and time; creation; metamorphosis

**Death** end of an era; sacrifice; destruction; leads to rebirth

**Death card** Not the frightening specter that most of us expect, the card of Death is one of transition. It foretells the completion of one stage of life and the exciting beginning of a new phase.

**Devil** subconscious desires; materialism

**Devil card** With tongue firmly in cheek, the Devil of the Major Arcana shows us that a selfish devotion to material possessions and ill-conceived passions ties us down and keeps us from true happiness.

**Desert** asceticism; deprivation; transcendence; abstract thought

**Dew** spiritual illumination; approaching dawn

**Directions** (Pagan/Wiccan assignations)

- **East** air
- **South** fire
- **West** water
- **North** earth

**Disk** spherical bodies, especially the earth but also the sun and the moon; the heavens; the pentacle

**Dog** faithful companion; conscience; tamed beast

**Dolphin** salvation

**Door** access; opportunity; new situation; a barrier through which only initiates may unlock and pass

**Dove** peace; harmony; spirit; soul; holy spirit

**Dragon** adversary

**Drum** the heart; the spoken word

**Duality** balance; equilibrium; opposing forces; choices; attraction of opposites

## E

**Eagle** keen vision and comprehension; symbol of the astrological sign Scorpio

**Earth** concrete physical manifestation

**Earth Signs** the “maintainers” of the zodiac: Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn

**Earthquake** sudden change for better or worse

**Eclipse** drama

**Egg** potential; the world

**Eight** infinity (the lemniscate); caduceus; eternal spiral; regeneration

**Elements** fire, water, air, earth

**Elephant** physical strength

**Emperor card** The archetypal father, the authoritative Emperor brings order out of chaos so that civilization can prosper.

**Empress card** The archetypal mother, The Empress nurtures and protects all of nature, including humankind.

**Esoteric** secret; intended for and understood by only a chosen few

**Eve** primordial woman; mother of all

**Exoteric** public; suitable for the uninitiated

**Eye of Horus** symbol of the watchful Egyptian lord of the skies

## F

**Feather** wind; flight; words

**Feather, Red** victory

**Fertile Crescent** the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, sometimes hypothesized to be the Biblical Garden of Eden and/or the birthplace of civilization

**Fire** one of four ancient elements; represents spirit, will, inspiration, desire

**Fire Signs** the “initiators” of the zodiac: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius

**Fish** creative inspiration; ideas; Jesus Christ; symbol of the astrological sign Pisces

**Five** the five senses; the five appendages of man; five vowels

**Flag** victory

**Flame** spirit; will

**Fleur-de-lis** illumination; royalty; the triple majesty of God; the trinity of body, mind, and spirit

**Flute** erotic or funereal anguish; masculine shape, feminine sound

**Forest** the unconscious

**Fool card** Technically, The Fool is the Major Arcana’s only unnumbered card. A wanderer, most Tarot experts agree that The Fool represents each of us — naive travelers through life, off on a grand adventure, out to learn whatever experience and the tarot can teach us.

**Fool’s Journey** the archetypal stages of life depicted by the cards of the Major Arcana, starting with the Fool and culminating in The World

**Fountain** life force

**Four** wholeness; stability; four suits of the Minor Arcana; four elements; four cardinal points; four seasons; four ages of man; four horsemen of the apocalypse

**Fox** slyness

**Fruit** fertility

## G

**Garden** control of nature; cultivation of the human soul

**Gargoyles** captive cosmic forces

**Garland** universal connections; links; fellowship; completion

**Gazelle** the soul

**Globe** dominion

**Globe, Winged** sublimation of matter through evolution

**Glove** traditionally, the right-hand glove is removed before a superior

**Glyph** a mark or a symbol

**Gnome** elemental creature of earth

**Goat** symbol of the astrological sign Capricorn

**Gold** solar energy; material treasure

**Golden Dawn** A mystical organization that popularized the tarot and other occult studies at the turn of the last century. Members included A.E. Waite and Pamela Colman Smith, creators of the Rider-Waite Tarot.

**Grapes** abundance; celebration

**Grapevines** growth; coming harvest

**Green** material; healing

**Griffin** guardian of the tree of life; vigilance

## H

**Halo** Living people are portrayed with square or hexagon halos; dead saints are pictured with round halos; God is portrayed with a triangular halo

**Hanged Man card** He sacrifices his comfort and passions for a time, like the Norse god Odin, knowing that better things will occur as a result.

**Hare** love; fertility; the menstrual cycle; the moon

**Harp** passage to the next world

**Hat** thought

**Heart** love

**Hearth** the home; feminine receptacle for masculine fire; love; security

**Heat** sexuality; maturity

**Hermaphrodite** integration

**Hermes Trismegistus** Hermes the thrice great; Greek name for Thoth

**Hermetic** derived from Hermes Trismegistus and his lore; magical; alchemical

**Hermit card** Far removed from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, The Hermit reflects on spiritual concerns. He carries his light of wisdom as a beacon for others to follow.

**Hexagram** six-pointed star; combination of material and spiritual

**Hierophant** A symbol of traditional authority and influence, The High Priest is a spiritual link to humanity's higher powers.

**High Priestess card** Secretive and guarded, The High Priestess knows the secrets life holds — but shares them only with the wise.

**Holy Grail** Christ's chalice at the last supper; receptacle for Christ's blood

**Horn** an enemy's approach; the end of the world

**Horse** controlled life force; solar animal

**Hourglass** mortality; passage of time; cyclical nature of the universe; God's grace descending onto the earth

**House** the human body; floors of a house symbolize levels of consciousness; rooms symbolize private thoughts; windows symbolize possible understanding and communication;

## I

**Ibis** ancient Egyptian bird, symbolic of thought and inspiration

**IHVH** Hebrew initials of the holy name of God; also symbolic of the four Minor Arcana suits

**Iris** Greek mythological personification of the rainbow connecting heaven and earth

## J

**Jester** the inverse counterpart of the king

**Jewels** spiritual truths

**Judgement card** All is revealed, as the Judgement card reminds us to forgive and be forgiven.

**Jupiter** planet of expansion

**Justice card** In many representations of the Justice card, Justice is blind to superficial concerns. And in most, she holds a two-edged sword — a reminder that fairness cuts both ways.

## K

**Karma** cause and effect; the affect of past actions on the present and on future choices

**Key** a new opening; change

**Keys** The numbered Major Arcana cards; often referred to as keys to higher knowledge

**King** active expression of the highest qualities of the suit

**Knife** vengeance; instinct

**Knight** fast-moving people and events related to the suit; Knight on a horse: mind over matter

**Knot** infinity; bondage; luck

**Kundalini** the path of energy as it moves through the chakras

## L

**Lake** the occult; mystery; contemplation; consciousness; revelation

**Lamb** martyrdom

**Lamp/Lantern** intelligence; wisdom; the light and spirit of the individual

**Layout** spread, pattern, or design for card reading

**Leaves** growth, life and vitality

**Left** negative; feminine

**Left** receptive

**Lemniscate** (figure 8) infinity

**Lightning** a flash of illumination; a bolt from the blue

**Lightning** inspiration; intuition

**Lily** transformation; afterlife

**Lily, White** purity

**Lingam** Eastern phallic-shaped symbol of masculine energy (see Yoni)

**Lion** symbol of the astrological sign Leo; the ego; untamed will

**Lotus** spiritual awakening; in India, Brahma's dwelling place and the manifestation of his work

**Lovers card** While an appearance by this couple could encourage any hopeless romantic, The Lovers also signify a choice to be made between two equally strong desires.

**Lyre** wisdom; moderation; prophecy; the seven strings connote the mystical properties of the number seven

## M

**Magician card** The Magician represents an individual in control of life's tools and techniques, like those on the table in front of him. Typically, they include a cup, a sword, a pentacle, and a wand — the four symbols of the Minor Arcana.

**Major Arcana** The tarot's 22 "Greater Secrets"; often represent cosmic forces beyond our control

**Mandala** geometric, circular design, representative of the divine

**Mars** planet of energy, aggression, warlike emotions

**Master Numbers** 11, 22, 33, 44 indicate the highest quality of the numbers themselves

**Meadow** sanctuary; rest; rejuvenation

**Mermaid** idealized, elusive form of female beauty; vanity; fickleness

**Minor Arcana** the tarot's 56 "Lesser Secrets"; often represent mundane events and forces within our control

**Miter** the official headdress of the pope, bishops, abbots, and ancient Jewish high priests

**Moon** Reflects light; inspires thought; measures time and cycles of life; astrologically, the emotions and intuition; subconsciousness

**Moon card** Deeply rooted in the unconscious, the dreamlike Moon symbolizes secrets and mysteries that may not be understood — or even recognized.

**Moon Phases** new; waxing; full; waning

**Mountain** meeting of heaven and earth; ascent; struggle; obstacles

**Mushrooms** decay and regeneration; home to fairies

**Music** the pure manifestation of will

## N

**Necklace** unity; continuity; erotic links

**Neptune** watery planet of illusion

**Nimbus** halo or aura

**Night** mystery; the unconscious; passive; feminine; anticipatory

**Nine** months of pregnancy

### Number Symbolology

- **Zero** non-being; the cosmic egg; the wheel of the year; the circle of life; completion
- **One** existence; unity; occasionally a graphic phallic symbol
- **Two** duality; partnerships; choices; combinations; creative power; echo; reflection; conflict; occasionally a graphic female symbol
- **Three** body, mind, and spirit; birth, life, and death; past, present, and future; holy trinities
- **Four** wholeness, stability; four suits of the Minor Arcana; four elements (earth, air, fire, and water); four cardinal directions or points on the compass; four seasons; four ages of man; four horsemen of the apocalypse

- **Five** the five senses; the five appendages of man; five vowels; the “fifth element,” or Spirit
- **Six** the human soul
- **Seven** seven heavens; seven planets; seven musical notes; seven chakras; seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; seven stages of initiation; seven days of creation; seven deadly sins
- **Eight** infinity (the lemniscate); caduceus; eternal spiral; regeneration
- **Nine** months of pregnancy
- **Ten** completion; perfection; ten fingers and toes
- **Eleven** graphic representation of pillars
- **Twelve** twelve signs of the zodiac; twelve months of the year; twelve tribes of Israel
- **Thirteen** lunar months

**Numerology** the language of numbers

1. thesis/beginning/ideas
2. antithesis/duality/opposites
3. synthesis/ideal vs. real
4. completion/stability
5. competition/conflict
6. reconciliation/reciprocation
7. limitation//self-reflection
8. expansion/spending
9. integration/solitude
10. culmination/consolidation/regeneration
11. excess (exceeds the perfect 10)

**Nymphs** spirits of running water, fountains, springs, and waterfalls; the immature feminine; temptation, multiplicity; may preside over some aspects of fertility, birth, and death

## O

**Octagon** spiritual regeneration; the intermediary between the square and the circle

**Oracle** a tool for divination; anyone who practices divination

**Orange** color of balance and seeking

**Orb** dominion; the world; temporal power; when surmounted with a cross, a sign of spiritual authority

**Ouroboros** the snake swallowing its tail is a symbol of totality, immortality, and infinity

**Oval** female genitalia

**Owl** spiritual wisdom

## P

**Page** messages, news; beginnings; and young people related to the suit

**Palm** masculine, active energy

**Pansy** five petals represent man and thought

**Peacock** immortality

**Pelican** self-sacrifice

**Pentacle** materialism; values; treasures

**Pentagram** an unending symbol of perfection and wholeness. Each point symbolizes one of the five appendages of the human body head, arms, and legs, as well as the four elements plus ether.

**Phallus** perpetuation of life, power, and propagation

**Phoenix** ancient Egyptian bird which sets itself aflame and then is reborn from its own ashes

**Pillars** duality; choice; civilization

**Pine Tree** a sturdy character

**Pip Cards** The numbered cards of the Minor Arcana

### Planets

☉ **Sun** Illumination, the self, the ego

● **New Moon** (1st Quarter) Inspiration, beginnings

☽ **Waxing Moon** (2nd Quarter) Growth, development

◯ **Full Moon** (3rd Quarter) Maturity, completion

☾ **Waning Moon** (4th Quarter) Reflections, planning

♿ **Mercury** Speed, communication

♀ **Venus** Love, attraction, spiritual treasure, fertility

♂ **Mars** Energy, aggression, self-defense, action

♃ **Jupiter** Luck, growth, expansion, enthusiasm

♄ **Saturn** Discipline, limits, boundaries, tradition

♅ **Uranus** Independence, rebellion, freedom

♆ **Neptune** Glamour, illusions, sensitivity

♇ **Pluto** Death, regeneration, unavoidable change

**Plow** fertilization; cultivation

**Pluto** endings; death; regeneration; change

**Pomegranate** countless seeds symbolize fertility and diversity

**Pregnancy** creativity

**Primroses** fall season

**Purple** color of spirituality

**Pyramid** earth in its material aspects; suggest trinity of thought, action, and deed

## Q

**Queen** Passive expression of the highest qualities of the suit

**Querent** one who queries, or asks; subject of a reading

**Quilt** synthesis; comfort; protection

## R

**Rabbit** fertility; spring

**Rags** wounded spirit; holes in the soul

**Rainbow** God's promise of protection

**Ram** symbol of the astrological sign Aries

**Reins** intelligence; will

**Ribbons** symbolic of immortality; victory; fulfillment

**Right** active; positive; masculine

**River** time; change

**Rock** permanence; stability; solidity

**Rope** lifeline; attachment; organization

**Rose** love; appreciation

**Rose, Red** passion

**Rose, White** purity

**Rota** Latin for *wheel*; anagram of *tarot*

## S

**Salamander** elemental creature of fire

**Saturn** planet of limitations, restrictions, time

**Scales** justice; balance; symbol of the astrological sign Libra

**Scarab** renewal; regeneration; endurance

**Scorpion** symbol of the astrological sign Scorpio

**Scrolls** hidden mysteries; divine law

**Scythe** harvest; mutilation; death

**Seal of Solomon** two triangles form a six-pointed star, a symbol of spiritual potential and the connection between the conscious and unconscious

**Seasons** (Two of Cups Tarot assignments)

- **Spring** Wands
- **Summer** Cups
- **Fall** Swords
- **Winter** Pentacles

**Sephira** one of ten spheres on the Kabbalistic tree of life. Each sphere represents one facet of God's being.

1. Crown/Kether — the Godhead; the Source
2. Wisdom/Chokmah — God the Father
3. Understanding/Binah — God the Mother
4. Mercy/Chesed — God the Merciful and Benevolent
5. Severity/Geburah — Almighty God; God the Forceful
6. Beauty/Tiphareth — God the Balancer and Healer
7. Victory/Netzach — God the Inspiration
8. Splendor/Hod — God the Intellectual
9. Foundation/Yesod — God the Etheric; Earthly heaven
10. Kingdom/Malkuth — The physical world

**Serpent** energy; knowledge; temptation; a serpent biting his tail represents infinity and endless transformation.

**Seven** seven heavens; seven planets; seven musical notes; seven chakras; seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; seven stages of initiation; seven days of creation; seven deadly sins

**Shadow** alter ego; primitive instinct

**Sheaf** unification; integration; and strength

**Shell** fertility; protection; defense

**Ship** wealth; a rudder symbolizes steering ability and safe passage; sails symbolize the creative breath; oars represent creative thoughts and words and the source of action

**Shoes** base nature

**Signature** binding agreement; contract

**Silver** lunar energy

**Six** the human soul

**Skeleton** personification of death; putrification and decay

**Skull** mortality

**Smoke** combines air and fire, symbolizing the path of fire to heavenly salvation

**Snow** sterility; cold; rigidity

**Spark** creation of souls

**Sphinx** a combination of four creatures — a human head, a bull's body, lion's feet, and eagle's wings — that represents all four elements and symbolizes the riddle of human existence

**Spider** creativity; aggression; a spider in the center of a web symbolizes the spiral structure of the universe; the Great Mother in her devouring aspect

**Spinning** giving life

**Spiral** the flow of energy through the universe

**Spread** layout, pattern, or design for card reading

**Square** most stable of all forms; firm foundations; strength; stability

**Staff** power; authority; support; instrument of punishment

**Stag** wisdom

**Star card** The card of faith and hope, The Star is a shining light in the darkness.

**Star, Eight-Sided** cosmic order and radiant energy of life

**Star, Six-Sided** union of male and female; intersection of material and spiritual

**Stairs** a climb; an ascent

**Stream** flows into the sea of cosmic consciousness

**Strength** A woman gently holds the jaws of a powerful lion, patiently controlling a force that could otherwise eat her alive.

**Styx** the Greek mythological river encircling Hades, over which Charon ferries the souls of the dead

**Suitcases** travel; emotional baggage; karma; necessities

**Sun** illumination; gives life; astrologically, the self, the ego, consciousness

**Sun card** Nothing can hide in the bright light of day, and even the most dour individuals come out to celebrate.

**Sunrise** beginnings; initiation

**Sunflower** joy; attraction

**Swan** love; solitude; music; poetry; self-transformation

**Sword** intellect; conflict; justice and authority

**Sylph** elemental creature of air

**Synchronicity** meaningful coincidence

## T

**Tarock/Tarocco** traditional card games of Italy, Austria, and other European countries, played with a 78-card tarot deck

**Temperance card** With dexterity and grace, Temperance demonstrates how balance can serve as a bridge to wholeness.

**Temple** refuge; holy place; symbol of the divine within one's self

**Ten** completion; perfection; ten fingers and toes

**Tent** impermanence; movement; travel; battlefield; communion with nature

**Thirteen** bad luck; number of witches in a coven; the number of men at the last supper; number of full moons in a calendar or lunar year

**Thoth** ancient dog-headed Egyptian god of wisdom; scribe of the gods

**Three** body, mind, and spirit; birth, life, and death; past, present, and future; holy trinities

**Three-Leaf Clover** the Holy Trinity

**Throne** monarchy; wisdom; divinity

**Ticket** exclusive entrance

**Tide** the ebb and flow of life; the emotions

**Tomb** gateway to another life

**Tower** man's creation

**Tower card** Should we build ourselves up too high, The Tower card warns that a bolt from the blue could shake us to our very foundations.

**Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil** bears five fruits, representing the five senses

**Tree of Life** The roots are planted in heaven and the branches extend to earth. Its twelve fruits represent the twelve facets of personality, as well as the months of the year and the disciples of Christ.

**Tree** the mind

### **Trees**

- **Almond** early bloomer; sweetness; delicacy
- **Apple** the world; totality; earthly desires
- **Ash** sacred to the Norse god Odin (the Tarot's Hanged Man); the mythic World Tree *Yggdrasil* was an ash
- **Aspen** the autumnal equinox; old age; the tree of shield makers; associated with Hercules; ancient Irish undertakers used rods of aspen wood to measure the dead for their caskets
- **Cypress** the tree of cemeteries, death, and resurrection
- **Fig** associated with Dionysus, Juno, and fertility
- **Hazel** useful for water dowsing and rainmaking
- **Holly** symbolic of mid-winter and the December solstice
- **Juniper** protection against evil spirits, witches, and thieves
- **Oak** strength and long life; Hercules' club; sacred to Jupiter; lightning rod

- **Olive** peace and prosperity
- **Palm** fertility, fruitfulness, victory, and birth; the nesting place of the Phoenix
- **Pine** immortality
- **Poplar** sometimes symbolizes the tree of life, because the two sides of a leaf are different shades of green; those two colors also relate to the moon and sun, water and fire, and positive and negative
- **Sandalwood** love; self-defense; and divination
- **Yew** death; used in bow making

**Triangle** interest in metaphysics; see *Three*

**Trickster** cultural variant of the *Fool*

**Triple Goddess** maiden, mother, and crone; comparable to other triple deities such as father, son, and holy spirit

**Trump Cards** The cards of the Major Arcana

**Twins** symbol of the astrological sign Gemini

**Two** duality; partnerships; choices; combinations; creative power; echo; reflection; conflict; occasionally a graphic female symbol

**Typhon** the serpent; the five senses

## U

**Undine** elemental creature of water

**Unicorn** chastity; purity; lunar; feminine

**Uranus** planet of rebellion and the unexpected

## V

**Valley** fertility; cultivation; water

**Veil** hidden emotions, actions, thoughts, and ideas

**Venus** planet of love; morning and evening star

**Virgin** symbol of the astrological sign Virgo

**Virtues** The cardinal virtues of ancient Greece were philosophy, justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance. Justice, Strength, and Temperance are represented in the Major Arcana.

## W

**Wand** channel for spirit and creative energy; creative power

**Water Lilies** eternal life

**Water Signs** the “feelers” of the zodiac: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces

**Water-Bearer** symbol of the astrological sign Aquarius

**Wave** swelling emotional force and energy

**Web** the snare of Satan

**Wells** offer water and refreshment from the womb of Mother Earth; source of wish fulfillment

**Werewolf** underlying violence and fear, especially among civilized people

**Wheat** abundance; growth; harvest

**Wheel** cycle of cosmic expression; the year; time

**Wheel of Fortune card** Because nothing is certain but change itself, The Wheel of Fortune reminds us all that what goes up must also come down.

**White** positive; active

**Wine** celebration; harvest; blood

**Wolf** untamed; wild; uncivilized

**World card** A card of completion and success, The World is the last stop on The Fool's journey.

**Wreath** victory

## Y

**Yin-Yang** Chinese symbol of the balance between masculine and feminine; active and passive

**Yggdrasil** the World Tree of Norse mythology

**Yod** Hebrew letter; the hand of God; divine intervention; gift; drop of light; descent of life force from spirit into material

**Yoni** Eastern symbol of receptive, feminine energy (see Lingam)

## Z

**Zero** non-being; the cosmic egg; the wheel of the year; the circle of life; completion

### Zodiac Signs:

♈ **Aries** (the ram): (March 21-April 20) The initiator; ruled by Mars

♉ **Taurus** (the bull): (April 21-May 20) The maintainer; ruled by Venus

♊ **Gemini** (the twins): (May 21-June 20) The questioner; ruled by Mercury

♋ **Cancer** (the crab): (June 21-July 20) The nurturer; ruled by the Moon

♌ **Leo** (the lion): (July 21-August 20) The loyalist; ruled by the Sun

♍ **Virgo** (the virgin): (August 21-September 20) The modifier; ruled by Mercury

♎ **Libra** (the scales): (September 21-October 20) The judge; ruled by Venus

- ♏ **Scorpio** (the scorpion): (October 21-November 20) The catalyst; ruled by Pluto
- ♐ **Sagittarius** (the archer): (November 21-December 20) The adventurer; ruled by Jupiter
- ♑ **Capricorn** (the goat): (December 21-January 20) The pragmatist; ruled by Saturn
- ♒ **Aquarius** (the water bearer): (January 21-February 20) The reformer; ruled by Uranus
- ♓ **Pisces** (the fish): (February 21-March 20) The visionary; ruled by Neptune



# **Additional References**

Mythology

Bibliography

About the Author



## **Mythology**

**Achilles** Greek hero of the Trojan war; son of the sea nymph Thetis and King Peleus

**Acrisius** the father of Danae

**Agamemnon** King of Mycenae, brother-in-law to Helen, and a key participant in the Trojan war

**Ajax** Greek warrior, second only to Achilles during the Trojan war

**Andromache** the wife of the Trojan Hector

**Andromeda** the wife of Perseus; daughter of Cassiopeia

**Antigone** the daughter of Oedipus who sacrificed herself in the name of justice and honor

**Aphrodite** (also known as Venus) goddess of love and beauty ; born of sea foam from the severed genitals of Uranus that were cast into the sea by Cronos; wife of the metal smith Hephaestus; mother of Eros, god of love; bore several children as a result of her love affair with Aries, including Fear and Terror

**Apollo** the Sun god; patron of the arts (especially poetry and music), archery, medicine, and divination; twin brother of Artemis; son of Leto and Zeus

**Arachne** lost a spinning contest against Athena and was turned into a spider

**Arcadia** Zeus' birthplace

**Argonauts** the men who sailed with Jason to find the Golden Fleece

**Ariadne** daughter of King Minos; she helped Theseus to escape from the island of Crete by giving him a spool of thread by which he could retrace his steps through the Labyrinth

**Aries** (Mars) god of war; son of Zeus and Hera; fathered several children as a result of his love affair with Aphrodite, including Fear and Terror

**Artemis** (Diana) virgin goddess of the waxing moon and the hunt; guardian of childbirth; twin sister of Apollo

**Astarte** the lover of Adonis

**Atalanta** a warrior huntress who agreed to marry any suitor who could beat her in a foot race; Hippomenes defeated her by dropping three golden apples in her path, which she couldn't resist stopping to collect

**Athena** (also known as Minerva) warrior goddess of justice; favorite child of Zeus, from whose head she was born, fully armed; patron of Athens; her familiar was the owl

**Atlas** the giant who supported the world on his shoulders

**Bacchus** (Dionysus) god of wine, mysteries, and the theater

**Bellerophon** he was ordered to kill the Chimera; he did so by taming Pegasus and fighting from his mount on the flying horse

**Cassandra** her scorned lover Apollo gave her the gift of prophecy, but cursed her by ensuring that no one would believe her visions of the future; brother of Paris

**Castor and Polydeuces** (also known as Castor and Pollux) brothers referred to as the “heavenly twins”; also known as the Dioscuri

**Centaur** the demi-god with the head, arms, and torso of a man and the body of a horse

**Cerberus** the three-headed guard dog at the gateway to Hades’ realm; a hybrid of lioness, lynx, and sow

**Ceres** (also known as Demeter) the Earth mother, goddess of fertility and the harvest; her mourning for her lost daughter Persephone made the earth barren for a third of each year

**Chaos** the yawning void that preceded creation

**Charon** the ferryman across the river Styx who guided souls to their destination in the afterlife

**Charybdis** a deadly whirlpool personified as a female monster

**Chimera** a fire-breathing monster with the head of a lion, body of a goat, and tail of a serpent; killed by Bellerophon

**Chiron** king of the centaurs

**Clytemnestra** his wife Agamemnon killed him for sacrificing their daughter to Artemis

**Cronos** sometimes referred to as Father Time, his name also means “heaven”; the youngest Titan; he castrated his father Uranus with a scythe and liberated the rest of the Titans; later devoured his own children by Gaea — Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, and Poseidon — but Zeus was spared

**Cyclops** giant with a single eye in its forehead

**Cyrene** the powerful princess of early Greece who wrestled lions for entertainment

**Daedalus** the artisan who built the Labyrinth for King Minos that confined the Minotaur

**Danae** the mother of Perseus; confined to a tower so she could not conceive, she was nevertheless impregnated when Zeus disguised himself as a shower of gold

**Deimos** (“Fear”) the horse partnered with Phobos (“Terror”)

**Delphi** home of the Sanctuary of Apollo and the famous Oracle at Delphi

**Demeter** (also known as Ceres) the Earth mother, goddess of fertility and the harvest; her mourning for her lost daughter Persephone made the earth barren for a third of each year

**Deucalion** a son of Cronos and Rhea; he and his wife Pyrrha built an ark to save humanity from Zeus’ nine-day flood and later repopulated the earth by casting stones behind them

**Diana** (also known as Artemis) virgin goddess of the moon and the hunt; protector of children

**Dike** goddess of natural law and the personification of justice; her assistant was Poena, goddess of retaliation and retribution; daughter of Zeus

**Diomedes** a great Greek warrior who fought against the Trojans

**Dionysus** (also known as Bacchus) the god of wine and fertility; the son of Zeus and the mortal Semele

**Echo** a nymph and a confidant of Zeus, who was struck mute by Zeus’ jealous wife Hera; Zeus counter attacked by giving her the power to repeat anything she heard; a lover of Pan who also fell in love with the self-centered Narcissus; she transformed herself into a rock in the pool in which he drowned

**Eos** goddess of dawn; she drove a chariot that dragged light across the morning sky

**Erebus** darkness

**Eros** god of love

**Eurynome** the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys; her union with Zeus produced the Graces

**Eurystheus** an evil king favored by Hera

**Furies** (also known as Erinyes) female spirits who exacted vengeance against those who committed crimes against nature; Gaia’s children

**Gaia** (also known as Rhea) the earth mother; she mothered the Titans in her partnership with their father Uranus

**Giants** Gaia’s children born from drops of Uranus’ blood after Cronos severed his testicles

**Gorgons** a trio of terrifying females

**Graeae** three crones who shared one eye and foresaw the future

**Griffin** creature with a lion's body attached to the head, wings, and claws of an eagle

**Graeae** the three sisters of the Gorgons who lived at the edge of the world, guarding the path to their sisters' sanctuary; they were gray-haired from birth

**Hades** (also known as Pluto) god of the underworld and ruler of the dead; son of Cronos and Rhea

**Harmonia** daughter of Aries and Aphrodite

**Harpies** three fair-haired monstrosities, with the pale faces of starving women, bodies of vultures, claws, and bear's ears; they snatched the living

**Hecate** (also known as Trivia) Trojan ruler of the night and goddess of the dark moon; patron of magic, and enchantment, as well as childbirth and death; the daughter of Zeus and Hera

**Hector** Trojan prince who fought against the Greek hero Achilles

**Helen** queen of Sparta; wife of Menelaus; she was abducted by Paris, an act which precipitated the Trojan war; she was the daughter of Zeus and Nemesis

**Hephaistos** (also known as Vulcan) the lame god of smiths and metal-workers; husband of unfaithful Aphrodite; creator of the first mortal woman, Pandora; he split open Zeus' head and Athene was born; he also forged a tool so that could steal fire from the gods

**Hera** (also known as Juno) goddess of marriage and childbirth; Zeus' sister and most permanent wife; their union produced Hebe (god of youth) and Eileithyia (goddess of childbirth), and Aries (god of war). Alone, she produced Hephaestus.

**Hercules** (also known as Heracles) famed for his invincible strength and notorious twelve labors; the son of Zeus and the mortal Alcmena

**Hermaphroditus** the child of Hermes and Aphrodite

**Hermes** (also known as Mercury) messenger of the gods; skilled at divination; son of Zeus and the nymph Maia; father of Pan

**Hestia** (also known as Vesta) goddess of hearth, home, and the larger social contract; daughter of Cronos and Rhea

**Horae** the goddesses of the seasons

**Hubris** a term that describes excessive pride and arrogance in the face of the gods, the downfall of many mortals

**Hyacinthus** a male lover of Apollo, who killed him accidentally with a discus; the namesake of the flower Hyacinth

**Hydra** a water serpent with nine poisonous heads

**Io** her lover, Zeus, turned her into a heifer to hide her from his jealous wife Hera; Hera then sent a gadfly to torment her

**Iris** goddess of the rainbow; messenger of Hera; embodiment of Temperance

**Irene** goddess of peace

**Jason** as leader of the Argonauts, he completed the quest for the Golden Fleece

**Juno** (also known as Hera) goddess of marriage and childbirth; Zeus' sister and most permanent wife; their union produced Hebe (god of youth) and Eileithyia (goddess of childbirth), and Aries (god of war). Alone, she produced Hephaestus.

**Jupiter** (also known as Zeus) the king of the gods and ruler of Mount Olympus; the sixth son of Uranus and Gaia

**Kore** (also known as Persephone) the maiden who ate pomegranate seeds and was condemned to the underworld a good portion of the year; wife of Hades, god of the underworld; daughter of Demeter, whose grief at the annual loss of her daughter led to the winter season

**Leto** a Titan woman whose union with Zeus produced twins Artemis (the moon) and Apollo (the sun)

**Maia** a Nymph whose union with Zeus produced Hermes (Mercury); she was the daughter of Atlas

**Mars** (also known as Aries) god of war; son of Zeus and Hera; fathered several children as a result of his love affair with Aphrodite, including Fear and Terror

**Medusa** once a beautiful mortal lover of Poseidon, an offended Athena turned her into a snake-haired Gorgon; after Perseus killed her, the creatures Pegasus and Chrysaor sprang from her body

**Menelaus** brother of Agamemnon and ruler of Sparta

**Mercury** (also known as Hermes) messenger of the gods; skilled at divination; son of Zeus and the nymph Maia

**Metis** goddess of wisdom; the first wife of Zeus; Zeus swallowed her when she was pregnant with Athena, and Athena was later born from his head

**Minos** the wealthy and powerful king of Crete

**Minotaur** the shame of Minos; it had a man's body and a bull's head, and fed on human flesh; inhabited the Labyrinth

**Mnemosyne** (whose name means “Memory”) her union with Zeus produced the nine Muses, patrons of the arts

**Moirai** the three goddesses of fate, who wove the thread of life in the secret darkness of their cave: Clotho, the spinner; Lachesis, the measurer; and Atropis, the cutter; they were the daughters of Mother Night and Zeus

**Mount Olympus** the home of the gods

**Mount Othrys** the home of the Titans

**Muses** the nine patrons of the arts; daughters of Mnemosyne and Zeus

**Narcissus** the beautiful Thespian youth who fell in love with his reflection and drowned; son of the river god Cephissus and a nymph; the namesake of the flower that Persephone was collecting when she was abducted by Hades

**Nemean Lion** its pelt was as invincible as iron; Hercules killed and wore it like armor

**Nemesis** Helen was born of her affair with Zeus

**Neptune** (also known as Poseidon) god of the sea and earthquakes

**Nyx** goddess of the night

**Oceanus** the great rivers born of Gaia and Uranus

**Odysseus** hero of the eponymous *Odyssey*, a great adventurer; inventor of the Trojan horse; king of Ithaca

**Oedipus** king of Thebes; the tragic story of how he unwittingly killed his father and married his mother forms the basis for the Sophoclean trilogy

**Orpheus** the son of Apollo, the lyre-playing musician and poet whose song was so mellifluous that it charmed inanimate objects; he descended into Hades’ underworld to retrieve his dead wife Eurydice

**Ouranos** (an alternate spelling of Uranus) his name means heaven; he was created by Gaia, the earth mother, as an equal and a consort; he fathered the Titans with her

**Pan** the half-man, half-goat creature best known for playing pipes and chasing nymphs; the son of Hermes and the nymph Dryape

**Pandora** the first woman, created by Zeus; her name means “all gifts.” She opened Zeus’ box of Spites: Old Age, Labor, Sickness, Insanity, Vice, and Passion. Only Hope did not escape.

**Paris** the Trojan prince who, under orders from Zeus, was forced to judge a beauty contest between the three goddesses Hera, Aphrodite, and Athena. The son of King Priam of Troy, he was left to die as an infant but was rescued and raised by a shepherd.

**Pasiphae** Minos' wife

**Pegasus** immortal winged horse

**Penelope** the circumspect wife of Odysseus, who wove by day and unraveled her work each night

**Persephone** (also known as Kore) the maiden who ate pomegranate seeds and was condemned to the underworld a good portion of the year; wife of Hades, god of the underworld; daughter of Demeter, whose grief at the annual loss of her daughter led to the winter season

**Perseus** the hero who destroyed Medusa; he also rescued Andromeda; son of Zeus and the mortal Danae

**Phobos** ("Terror") horse partnered with Deimos ("Fear")

**Pluto** (also known as Hades) god of the underworld and ruler of the dead; son of Cronos and Rhea

**Polydectes** a suitor of Danae

**Poseidon** (also known as Neptune) god of the sea and earthquakes; son of Uranus/Cronos and Rhea/Gaia

**Prometheus** the Titan who defied Zeus and stole the fire of the gods for man; his name means foresight. The forge he used to hold the fire was made by Hephaistos

**Psyche** her name means "Soul"; she was married to Eros (the loving heart); their children were Love and Delight

**Python** the female serpent guardian of Delphi

**Rhea** (also known also as Gaia) the earth mother; she mothered the Titans in her partnership with their father Uranus

**River Styx** the river between the mortal world and the afterlife; rings the realm of Hades; no living person could cross without Hades' permission; the immortals bound themselves to their oaths with water from the Styx

**Satyr** (faun) companions of Dionysos, who had the legs of goats and bestial natures

**Scylla** malevolent monster with six heads and twelve feet

**Selene** goddess of the full moon

**Siren** women with bird-like bodies who lured sailors to their deaths by singing enchanted songs

**Sphinx** the head of a woman and the body of a lion; she guarded Thebes by posing a riddle to would-be interlopers (“What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three in the evening? A human, who first crawls, then walks, then relies on a cane”): Oedipus solved her riddle and defeated her

**Styx** goddess of the sacred River Styx; mother of Nike (whose name means “Victory”), Strength, and Valor

**Tartarus** the dark place below the earth

**Thanatos** god of death

**Themis** (whose name means “Law”); a female Titan; her union with Zeus produced the Seasons and the Moirai (or Fates)

**Theseus** king of Athens; the Argonaut who conquered the deadly Minotaur; son of Poseidon

**The Three Graces** Thaleia (flowering abundance), Aglaia (radiance, splendor), and Euphrosyne (joy); also described as the grace of movement, grace of manners, and gift of love; sometimes pictured on the Three of Cups

**Thunder and Lightning** the symbols and weapons of Zeus

**Titans** the earth gods born of Rhea/Gaia and Cronos/Uranus: they were Koios, Kreius, Iapetos, Hyperion, Theia, Rhea, Themis, Mnemosyne, Tethys, Phoebe, and Cronos

**Typhoeus** a monster with a hundred fire-breathing dragon heads; the son of Gaia and Tartarus

**Uranus** father of Cronos

**Zephyrus** the west wind; consort of Iris

**Zeus** the king of the gods and ruler of Mount Olympus; the sixth son of Gaia and Uranus; born in a mountain cave in Crete

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