

Pocket Tarot

1. Buy a new deck, preferably the Rider Waite deck by AE Waite and Pamela Colman Smith
2. Take the deck with you everywhere, shuffle it, look at it, sleep next to it
3. Read TAROT by Richard Cavendish, the best overview on Tarot available
4. Practice readings by laying out pairs of cards, and reviewing the meanings against each other
5. Practice readings for friends and family with the "Celtic Cross" spread
6. Learn about the symbolism employed in the cards, from encyclopaedias of symbols
7. When ready, buy an alternative deck (such as Crowley's Thoth deck) and compare decks
8. Build your experience by going to a market or suchlike and offering readings to strangers
9. Attempt to design your own deck, even for fun, using a personal theme (e.g. cats, Hindu myths)
10. Use your deck for dream work, meditation and pathworking practices

Notes

Begin with the Tarot as anything else – analysis then synthesis! Take the major cards and break them down into their component symbols. See how many symbols you can spot in a card. Over time, you will become familiar with these disparate ideas and an overall 'gestalt' for the card will develop. Rather than learning a set meaning, you will develop a feel for the card which will allow intuitive readings to take place. For example, although the 5 of Pentacles "means" poverty, I always find it turning up in readings I do for students, so I now often read it as embarking on a course of study, or putting aside instant material rewards for long-term rewards after sacrificing time and money to do so. This fits in neatly with the position of the card in the deck and its pictorial symbolism, but came with experience rather than learning the meaning. Learn the meanings, certainly, but approach the deck openly as well, and it will teach you all by itself!

In Real Life ...

I once practiced a meditation whereby one takes each card of the major Arcana and puts it out on an altar, by the bed, or somewhere obvious. Looking at the card each day, you await an event that ties in with the meanings of the card. Once that event has taken place, you move onto the next card. This practice can take a couple of months to work through. One interesting thing was that the events related to each card not only tied in with the meanings of the card, but the way in which the event took place also corresponded. For example, the event related to the Blasted Tower card took place suddenly, and almost instantly, the Moon card event took place a number of times before I realised what it was! One warning. After beginning with the Fool card, I went onto the Magician Card expecting a magical or mystical event. The following day, I was **mugged in the street**, which corresponded to Mercury as God of Thieves, and although it taught me about the personal liberty aspect of the card, I would not have chosen the manner of its teaching!

Links

- <http://www.aeclectic.net/tarot/>

Books

- Tarot (Cavendish, R)
- Encyclopaedia of the Tarot in 3 Volumes (Kaplan, S.)
- Discover Tarot (Peach, E.)
- Meditations on the Tarot (Anon, published by Elements, an unrecognised classic)

<http://www.templum.com>

Cognitacione sui secumque colloquio firmitatem petere.
A Site for Enquiring Minds.