

# Tablora Rasa

## A table-less, tarot based TTRPG Oracle

**Tablora Rasa** is a table-less, tarot-based, and TTRPG system agnostic oracle. With enough creativity and the following rules, this oracle can answer **any question** during an adventure in your TTRPG sessions.

- yes/no questions (50/50, Likely, Unlikely)
- open questions
- generating random events
- generating NPCs
- generating Locations

**You're only limited by your imagination!**

With a little practice, or for those who already know how to interpret tarot cards, the complete oracle works without tables! To get you started, this guide contains a small introduction to tarot cards.

**The functionality of this oracle is strongly dependent on your creativity and interpretation. It is, in no way, a predetermined narrative oracle.**

But if you go for it, you will be rewarded with an oracle with endless possibilities for which no books with tables have to be rolled!



# Introduction

Long before tarot cards got their „magical“ reputation, they were already used as normal playing cards.

In contrast to today's pack of cards, however, there are three main differences:

1 • Today's suits *spades, diamonds, hearts & clubs* are in the tarot deck, in the same order, *swords, pentacles, cups & wands*.

2 • Instead of 13 cards in each suit, there is an additional court card (face card in today's deck), *the knight*.

3 • In addition to the 56 suit cards, each tarot deck also has 21 *trump cards* and *the Fool*.

It was not until centuries later that the cards were attributed to prophetic powers. The terms *minor arcana*, the 56 suit cards, and *major arcana*, the trump cards and *the fool*, originate from this period.



*Upright Knight of Pentacles*

These terms are also used in the following rules to distinguish between the different types of cards. In addition, the interpretations of each card, used by card readers, are used inspire answering the questions posed to the oracle.

The meaning of a card usually differs depending on which orientation it has when drawn. For example, an upright *Six of Wands* can mean *Success, Victory & Recognition*.

If the card is reversed, upside down, then it stands for the opposite. *Failure, lack of recognition & loss*. However, it does not necessarily mean the direct opposite. But perhaps only that something is still standing in the way of *victory*, for example, but that the foundations for it are already in place.

This guide is not intended to be a course in card reading but will give a basic introduction to the meanings of the suits, numbers, and trumps.

Don't take them too seriously, as they should only give some inspiration to answer the presented questions. For the *major arcana*, it is also absolutely viable to only get inspiration from the name and image of the card. Any deeper knowledge about the meanings of each card only gives more possibilities to interpret them and many more inspirations to answer the posed questions.

# Suits, Numbers & Court Cards

The different suits of a tarot card deck represent different elements & themes. Each number and court card of the same suit represents a sub-area of this theme. This goes so far that each card has its own meaning.

However, once you have internalised what the individual suits and numbers stand for, there is already plenty of room for interpretation.

## SUITS

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**Wands** • This suit stands for thirst for *action*. A spirit of discovery, self-confidence, and therefore for the element *fire*.

**Swords** • This suit stands for the *intellect*. For the thirst for knowledge, justice, truth, and therefore for the element *air*.

**Cups** • This suit stands for *emotions*. For relationships, love, inner balance, and therefore for the element *water*.

**Pentacles** • This suit stands for the *physical*. For prosperity, and work, but also nature, and our interaction with it and therefore for the element *earth*.

## NUMBERS

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**Aces - The Beginning** • The aces introduce a theme and thus stand for the beginning and the purest idea of every theme (wands, cups, swords, pentacles).

**Four - The Stability** • Slowly a certain structure and stability have been established in living together with the theme.

**Two - The Duality** • The aces introduce a theme to you and now you slowly enter a partnership with it. You get to know it and try to live in balance.

**Five - The Conflict** • However, the first conflicts now open up in everyday life. Living together becomes unstable.

**Three - The Synthesis** • After some time, you try to deal with the theme a little more creatively, trying new things, and you both grow with the new experiences.

**Six - The Cooperation** • An attempt is made to live in harmony again through communication and cooperation.

**Seven - The Reflection** • You reflect on past actions and thereby gain new knowledge in dealing with the theme.

# Suits, Numbers & Court Cards

**Eight - The Mastery** • Through learning, conflict and reconciliation, you are mastering the theme.

**Nine - The Climax** • Overcoming past difficulties is finally bearing fruit! The theme slowly comes to a conclusion.

**Ten - The End** • Stands for the end or fulfilment of each theme.



## COURT CARDS

**King** • The king stands for *mature behaviour* and *mastery* of a theme. He is energetic and tries to be a *good example* to others with his actions.

**Queen** • She stands for the *purity* of each theme. She has internalised it and tries to pass on her knowledge through *advice* and *teaching* rather than deeds.

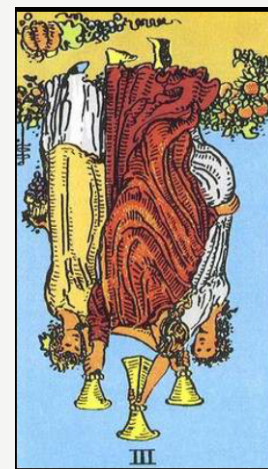
**Knight** • Is in search of a deeper understanding of a theme. He is *erratic* in his behaviour. But it also stands for *new ideas*.

**Page** • Maintains a *naive* approach to the subject of a suit. He does not have a deep understanding of the subject, but is also not characterised by experiences in life and acts with a certain *lightness*.

First, think about the *cups* and the *three* separated. The *cups* broadly stand for emotions and relationships. The number cards were described as having a relationship with the theme. That's why it should be quite easy to interpret the *cups* together with the *three*, which stands for **synthesis**. For example, living together in **harmony** with understanding each other.

Now, what could be the opposite of this (*reversed*)? Maybe it is about a **misunderstanding** between two people in your adventure? Or is a relationship not going quite well?

By combining the meanings of the numbers and the suits it should be possible to get some inspiration for each *minor arcana*, even if the more detailed meaning of each card is not known.



*Reversed Three of Cups*

# Rules

## PREPARATION

1 • Separate the *minor arcana* from the *major arcana*.

2 • Shuffle both piles separately. Make sure that you also rotate them while shuffling. E.g., take half of the pile, turn it 180 degrees (keeping them face down), and then shuffle as usual to get upright, and reversed cards.

The *major arcana* are shuffled after **every** use. The *minor arcana* when the pile is empty or *The Fool* is drawn.



## YES / NO QUESTIONS (50/50)

To answer a normal *Yes or No question*, **three** *minor arcana* are revealed. In the following table, an **U** stands for an upright card, and a **R** for a reversed card.

If the three cards have a *mixed orientation*, a fourth card has to be drawn to determine the final answer.

Instead of a simple yes or no answer, *Tablora Rasa* tries to escalate or de-escalate the given answer with an *and/but* system.

**Yes, and** • The result is even better/worse than you thought.

**Yes, but** • The answer is yes, but there is a caveat.

**No, but** • The answer is no, but not as bad/good as you thought.

**No, and** • The answer is no, and it is even worse/better.

	Result	Fourth Card
UUU	<b>Yes</b>	-
UUR	<b>Yes</b> draw card	<b>U</b> • Yes, and <b>R</b> • Yes, but
URR	<b>No</b> draw card	<b>U</b> • No, but <b>R</b> • No, and
RRR	<b>No</b>	-

**Question** • Does the guard believe your story?

**Drawn Cards** • Seven of Wands (U), Page of Cups (R), Ace of Wands (U)  
*Mixed Orientation* - Draw a fourth card  
Two of Swords (U)

**Answer** • Yes, and the guard lets you enter the city without any further questions.

# Rules

## LIKELY & UNLIKELY YES/NO QUESTIONS (75/25 & 25/75)

*Likely* (75/25) and *unlikely* (25/75) yes or no questions can be answered similarly to the 50/50 yes or no questions. However, only **two** *minor arcana* are drawn.

If *Yes* is *likely*, it is enough if one of the two cards is upright to get a *Yes*. If *Yes* is

*unlikely*, then it is sufficient for one of the two cards to be reversed to get a *No*. If the two cards differ in orientation, then the *but/and* is handled in the same way as in the 50/50 question.

**Question** • Do the bandits attack the adventurers? (*Likely*)

**Drawn Cards** • Six of Cups (U), King of Wands (R)

*Mixed Orientation - Draw a third card*

Two of Wands (R)



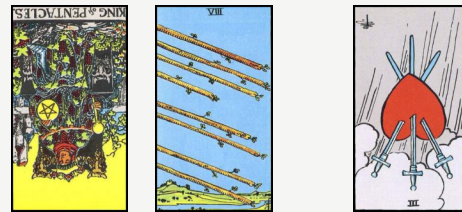
**Answer** • Yes, but the adventures are prepared and more skilled. They gain an advantage (*adventurers have initiative*).

**Question** • Are there any treasures left in this old tomb chamber? (*Unlikely*)

**Drawn Cards** • King of Pentacles (U), Eight of Wands (R)

*Mixed Orientation - Draw a third card*

Three of Swords (R)



**Answer** • No, and there isn't a single useful item left. There is no point in looking for anything here.

### LIKELY YES

	Result	Third Card
UU	<b>Yes</b>	-
UR	<b>Yes</b> draw card	<b>U</b> • Yes, and <b>R</b> • Yes, but
RR	<b>No</b>	-

### UNLIKELY YES

	Result	Third Card
UU	<b>Yes</b>	-
UR	<b>No</b> draw card	<b>U</b> • No, but <b>R</b> • No, and
RR	<b>No</b>	-

# Rules

## OPEN QUESTIONS

To answer an open question, draw **three** *minor arcana* and **one** *major arcana*. In contrast to the yes/no questions, take the *major arcana* into consideration to get the character of the answer (check the following table).

With the help of these four cards, the answer to the question can be interpreted based on the numbers, images, and meanings. **Just go wild and let your creativity spark!**

How and which of the cards are used for the interpretation is up to you. This means that the same cards can be interpreted very differently in a different scene or setting.

**Question** • What kind of liquid does the vial the adventurers found contain?

**Drawn Cards** • Four of Pentacles (U), King of Wands (R), Six of Swords (U), Hierophant (U)

**Interpretation** • The cards indicate that the vial contains something *positive* for the player. *The Hierophant* stands for *teaching, spirituality, and knowledge*. Together with the *Six of Swords*, which can stand e.g. for spiritual growth, it could be interpreted as meaning that the vial contains a spell that increases arcane knowledge or another attribute adapted to the system being played, for a short period.

### Result

UUUU      Extremely positive

UUUR      Positive

UURR      Neutral

URRR      Negative

RRRR      Extremely negative

In one of my *Ironsworn* sessions, my troop was traveling into the north and already encountered some bandits in a dramatic scene. After a *Journey Move*, I asked the oracle where the group arrived. I had nothing special in mind for the waypoint and was in need of some inspiration.

**Drawn Cards** • Aces of Wands (R), Six of Cups (R), Page of Pentacles (U), Justice (U)

**Interpretation** • The cards indicated a somehow *neutral answer* and the drawn *major arcana* immediately gave me the idea that there might be a chance here to bring justice to the bandits from before. The *Ace of Wands* is the *beginning of actions*. Maybe the start/beginning of raids?

That's why I envisioned a huge bandit camp off the road, which was found by my tracker, but there were too many to face at the moment and justice could not follow right now (*neutral character*).



# Rules

Keep in mind that it's all about imagination. Don't take the meanings of the individual cards too seriously. If you see a card and there is something immediately pictured in your mind, go for it!

Even if it was only triggered by one of the drawn cards. Maybe go with this idea and flavour it with the remaining ones.

**There are no rules for creativity!**



## RANDOM EVENTS

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With *Tablora Rasa* it is also possible to generate a multitude of events.

If the first two cards drawn on a question share the **same number**, e.g., two tens or two queens, a **random event** is triggered. This will give you around a 5% chance per draw to trigger a random event.

If a random event is triggered, the type of the event is determined in a similar way to answering a complex question.

After the triggering question, draw **three** new *minor arcana* and **one** new *major arcana*. Check the character of the event, like in an open question (*positive/neutral/negative event*).

To get the type of the event check the three *minor arcana*.

### **NPC**

*One or more upright court cards*  
*No reversed court card*

### **Encounter**

*No upright court card*  
*One or more reversed court card*

### **Location**

*Mixed orientation court cards*

### **Adventure Note**

*Only number cards*

# Rules

## Adventure Notes

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The cheat sheets contain a page including an *Adventure Table*. The table contains 21 rows, representing the 21 *major arcana*, and two columns. One for *NPCs*, and one for *Adventure Notes*.

During your adventure, you will face many different things. Anything notable could be added to the *Adventure Notes*.

If your PC facing something from his/her past, add it to the *Adventure Notes*. Did you come to an interesting place? Add it to your *Adventure Notes*.

As soon as an *Adventure Note* event is generated, the corresponding entry in the table gets checked to see what the main theme of the event is.

E.g., an *Adventure Note* event is generated and the *major arcana* points to a faraway location the PC discovered before. Maybe the PC finds something related to the location? A key to a locked door? Information about the huge bandit camp?

As always, there are **no limitations**. Go with your wildest fantasies!

## NPCs

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In case of an NPC event, check the row in the *Adventure Table* matching the drawn *major arcana*. If the row is empty, *generate a new NPC*. Otherwise, if there is already an entry, the triggered event will focus on this NPC.

Similar to determining the character of an open question, the drawn four cards can be used to get the reaction and characterisation of a new NPC.

## Locations

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Locations are created on the fly. Take the four drawn cards of the random event and envision what the adventurers found.

Interpret the character of the location like in an open question (*positive/neutral/negative*).

Is it *positive*? Maybe a safe place to rest.

Is it *negative*? Maybe a haunted place filled with *Zombies*.

## Encounters

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Feel free to create a list of encounters for the current adventure, where each encounter represents one of the *major arcana* cards. Or just create an encounter at random getting inspiration from the four drawn cards for the random event.

# Adventure Table

NPCs	Adventure Notes
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	

# QUICK RULES

U • Upright

R • Reversed

## YES / NO QUESTION

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	Result	Fourth Card
UUU	<b>Yes</b>	-
UUR	<b>Yes</b> draw card	U • Yes, and R • Yes, but
URR	<b>No</b> draw card	U • No, but R • No, and
RRR	<b>No</b>	

## LIKELY / UNLIKELY YES

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	Result	Third Card
UU	<b>Yes</b>	-
UR (Likely)	<b>Yes</b> draw card	U • Yes, and R • Yes, but
UR (Unlikely)	<b>No</b> draw card	U • No, but R • No, and
RR	<b>No</b>	

## CHARACTER OF ANSWER

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	Result
UUUU	Extremely positive
UUUR	Positive
UURR	Neutral
URRR	Negative
RRRR	Extremely negative

## OPEN QUESTION

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- 1 • Ask a *question*
- 2 • Draw 3 *minor arcana*
- 3 • Draw 1 *major arcana*
- 4 • Interpret the result.

## RANDOM EVENTS

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Random events occur, if the *first two drawn cards* share the **same number**.

- 1 • Draw 3 *minor arcana*
- 2 • Draw 1 *major arcana*
- 3 • Interpret the result

### NPC

*One or more upright* court cards

*No reversed* court card

To get the regarding NPC, check, if your Adventure Table contains an entry for the major arcana. If not, generate a new NPC. Use the drawn cards to generate the reaction and character of the NPC.

### Encounter

*No upright* court card

*One or more reversed* court card

### Location

*Mixed orientation* court cards

Use the drawn cards to generate the location and, if the location represents or incorporates something positive, neutral or negative for the PCs.

### Adventure Note

*Only number* cards

To get the theme for the random event, check, if your Adventure Table contains an entry for the major arcana. If not, take the next note or one at random. You are free to ignore the event, if the table is empty.