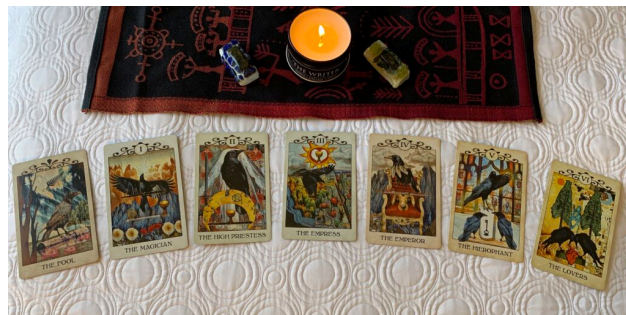


Over the course of working with tarot for several years, I have evolved a method for becoming familiar with new cards. Whether the deck has been used by another person or is brand new and being unwrapped for the first time, I follow a simple ritual to begin our relationship.

First, I wash my hands and settle into a quiet place, usually with a cloth and a candle to set the space apart. I then read any accompanying introductory material in order to know the creator(s) and their intention better.

The most important step is to deal the cards out in such a way that I'm mixing up the suits and major arcana, while also touching each card with my hands and my mind's eye. I turn the deck face up, and slowly deal from left to right into five to seven piles of cards, noticing the art, imagery and energy of each one.



The final card is placed on the middle pile. I then stack the piles on top of one another, starting from the outside and alternating from left to right. The full deck is now in my hands and ready to be shuffled for readings.

By the end of this process, each card has been seen as the individual that it is.