

“That suit is best that best suits me.”

John Clarke



The deck to choose:

When beginning the process it is best to look at a number of decks to see which cards resonate or speak to you. The old adage that your first deck must be given to you by someone else is no longer the rule. This rationale was based on the premise that the key to unlocking the tarot should be provided only to those genuinely interested in the art and craft of the discipline. With literally dozens of decks from which to choose, when picking yours it is important to remember that just as each card has a particular energy and message, each deck is unique unto itself.

This book uses the Rider-Waite images, considered to be *standard* or *universal*, and is an excellent deck for use at all levels of development. First published in London in 1910, A.E. Waite and artist Pamela Colman Smith collaborated to produce a deck that was radically different from all previous decks. Prior to this deck the Minor Arcana looked very much like regular playing cards, carrying numbers and symbols in various formations. Ms. Colman Smith changed all that by representing each Minor Arcana card with a particular scene carrying a very specific message, as opposed to relying upon a series of complex formulas for interpretation.

While there have been many decks produced since 1910, most rely very heavily on the basic imagery of the Waite deck. Another reason for its popularity is the malleability of the scenes and figures. A bit crude and cartoonish at first glance, after working with the cards for a while it will become clear why this works. By its very imprecision, the Rider-Waite imagery provides a neutral base for the reader to build from, allowing the cards to morph and evolve in each reading.

Some decks have superb artistry, with beautifully refined and defined features and characters, and although wonderful to look at, the very clarity of the images may restrict the way the card is perceived. By their cartoonish nature, the scenes and people represented in the Waite deck allow for the energy and force behind the cards to come through, as opposed to being fixed in precise images.

When you have finally chosen the deck best suited for you, use it in a way that assists in the development of your intuition and imagination, bringing to consciousness insights and meanings from your own wellspring of untapped knowledge.