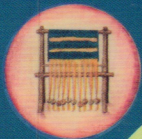


CELTIC MESSAGES



JOULES TAYLOR





CELTIC MESSAGES

52 Sacred Symbols for Everyday Living





CELTIC MESSAGES

52 Sacred Symbols for Everyday Living



JOULES TAYLOR



CICO BOOKS
LONDON NEW YORK



Published in 2007 by CICO Books,
an imprint of Ryland Peters & Small

519 Broadway, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10012

20–21 Jockey's Fields
London WC1R 4BW

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Text © Joules Taylor 2007
Design and illustration © CICO Books 2007

The author's moral rights have been asserted. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

A CIP catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress and the British Library.

US ISBN-13: 978 1 906094 11 9
US ISBN-10: 1 906094 11 X
UPC: 6 94055 00997 4

UK ISBN-13: 978 1 906094 10 2
UK ISBN-10: 1 906094 10 1

Printed in China

Editor: Richard Emerson
Designer: David Fordham
Illustrator: Emma Garner



CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION	7
THE SUITS	10
HOW TO LAY THE CARDS	11
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS	29
THE DAYS OF THE WEEK	31
THE MOON'S PHASES	32
THE FESTIVALS	33
THE CARDS	35
THE HELPERS	37
THE PLACES	44
THE TOOLS	51
THE TOTEMS	58

INTRODUCTION

MANY WORDS have been used to describe our impressions of the tall, fair-haired people who lived in northern Europe during the Iron Age. Most of these terms are positive: dynamic, colorful, vibrant, proud, powerful... their legacy is all of these and more.

The Celts lived at a time when survival depended on knowing the land and the cycle of the seasons, the times to reap and sow, the best time for breeding animals or hunting game in the Wildwood, or the months when the salmon returned from the open sea to make their way upriver.

Attuned as they were to the ebb and flow of nature for their survival, I believe, too, that the Celts rejoiced in life, enjoying all its riches and pleasures. They often used divination when important decisions were to be taken, and the Druids, the intellectual elite, were famed for their skill in interpreting omens.

The Celts had a deep love and respect for the land. It was seen as the Great Mother, nurturing and sustaining all her children: human, animal, and plant alike. Every element of Celtic life was imbued with a sense of the sacred, and every feature of the landscape had its own *genius loci*, the "spirit of the place," usually envisioned as a god or, more commonly, as a goddess.

From the healing springs to the sacred groves, these beautiful nature deities guarded and guided the people who came to them for help, for enlightenment



and for hope. Each god and goddess had his or her own symbol, attributes, and totem animal, given special reverence by the local inhabitants.

The Celts learned constantly from their environment. The animals around them showed them ways of reacting to life, whether solving problems or profiting from opportunities. Would it be better to make a swift escape, like the stag, or stand their ground and fight, like the boar; work hard, like the beaver, or spend time in cheerful play like the otter; move with silent, deadly grace like a heron, or pounce like the wildcat? Each creature had something to recommend it, a lesson to impart.

The changing seasons taught the Celts to accept the natural cycles of life and gave hope of rebirth, just as the sun grew strong again to give warmth to the world after the dark days of Yule.

The cycles of the moon, the fair silver face that gazed gently down at night, and the wheeling of the stars around the fixed northern star, bestowed a familiar grace to the hours of darkness, and a comforting routine to the turning of the year despite the changes within their own community.

The tools the Celts used shaped their nature as well as their world: they could be as proficient with sword, shield, and chariot as they were with loom, harp, and gaming-board. Warrior fought warrior in trials of skill and strength to keep themselves alert and ready to face threats from outside. They also fought neighbouring communities in displays of one-upmanship. Most importantly, they fought those who tried to take their lands—as many an invading army was to discover to their cost.

Much of Europe absorbed Roman culture into its own, but in many parts of Britain—and the more



remote lands of northern Europe—Celtic civilization remained strong. We can learn about the richness of Celtic life from their tales, songs, and later writings, and from their exquisite jewelry and other artefacts. They wove wool and linen into brightly colored patterns for their distinctive clothing and they lightened their fair or red hair with lime to make it yellow. They relished feasting, singing, and carousing as a celebration of their lives.

Their lawgivers and seers, the Druids, were in demand throughout the Celtic world, and their bards or poets were held in high regard. The Celts were not only artists, they were practical people, too. They were farmers and hunters, miners and metalworkers, seafarers and horse riders. Men and women were, in the main, considered equal, whether Druid, warrior, bard, or laborer: if a person could do the work, their gender was no barrier.

And, like all people throughout the ages, they laughed and loved and lived, taking pleasure in the simple things, accepting and enduring what hardship came their way with the support of their family and the community, and celebrating the good times with feasting and songs. The harmony and meaning they found in everything that surrounded them can teach us a profound lesson today, about how to listen with our hearts rather than our minds, to feel as well as to think.

In this pack of Celtic Message Cards, you will glimpse something of the lives that these ancient people lived, and through the messages you read in them, discover a deeper insight into your inner self and rediscover a connection to the natural cycles of the world that, for many of us, have been forgotten due to the constant pressures of modern life.





THE SUITS



THE Celtic Message Cards are divided into four main aspects of Celtic culture: The Places, The Helpers, The Tools, and The Totems. Each card contains an image of the animal, character, location, or item it represents along with special Keywords, to be used as affirmations.



• **THE PLACE CARDS** symbolize where you are or where you ought to be. This can be a spiritual or emotional location as much as a physical one.

• **THE HELPER CARDS** symbolize people and their qualities. This may be a person who can help you, or the sort of help you need to offer another, depending on your reason for seeking guidance from the Cards.



• **THE TOOL CARDS** symbolize forces outside yourself, the actions you must take or the tools—physical, mental, or spiritual—you must use in order to accomplish your aims.

• **THE TOTEM CARDS** represent animals that were sacred to the Celts. They symbolize the quality each animal was revered for, which you can draw on to resolve your problems, achieve your goals, and aid your journey through life.



HOW TO LAY THE CARDS



THERE are no negative cards in this pack. Celtic life had its dark times, certainly, as well as its days of light and laughter, but the Celts knew that without sadness there would be no balance, and no way to truly appreciate the happier times that always follow.

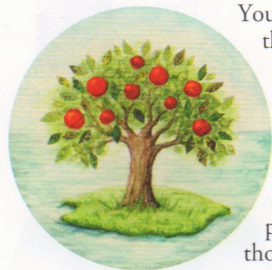
The Celtic world flowed with the natural cycle of the seasons and the circling of the stars above. But this did not mean that they had to resign themselves to whatever fate may hold. Change is also natural, and necessary for progress. And so you can use the Celtic Message cards as your personal guides to aid your own inner vision, and to reveal ways to achieve your goals using the wisdom and vibrancy of the Celtic way of life.

The Celtic Messages pack is highly versatile. It can be used for almost any purpose—divination, guidance, meditation, providing affirmations for the day, or answering any questions you may have. It's not necessary to perform a ritual before you use the pack, unless you really wish to.

View the cards as friends who will offer advice when asked. If you wish to carry them about with you, then a small pouch—preferably made of a natural material, such as wool, cotton, or leather, since that's what the Celts used—will help to keep them spotless. If you can make it yourself, so much the better. It's wise, of course, to cleanse your hands before handling the cards.

For the Celts, the day started at twilight and ended at twilight the following day, so evening is a good time to draw these cards or lay them in a spread.



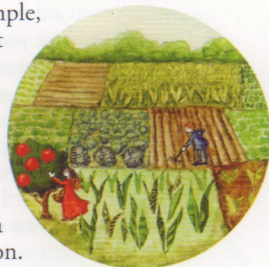


You could choose a card before bedtime and repeat the affirmations a few times while falling asleep to help to fix them in your mind, so making it easier to use them during the daylight hours.

Shuffle the cards really well before each use. Hold them all face-down for a moment, focussing on what you want to ask, or what you hope will occur, before selecting cards from the pack. After your reading, always shuffle the pack thoroughly again before you put them away.

ONE-CARD READINGS

For a simple, speedy response (what the day ahead holds, for example), select a single card. It doesn't matter whether you choose the top card or take one at random from the pack; either method is equally valid. A single card can indicate, for example, an opportunity to be grabbed or a warning about a personal problem you must deal with. Carry the card around with you if you wish, or memorize the Keywords and repeat them to yourself throughout the day as affirmations.



MULTIPLE-CARD SPREADS

A "spread" is a method of laying several cards in a specific pattern to answer a more complex question. When laying a spread it's best to take the cards one by one from the top of the pack. A spread is more complex than simply drawing a card from the pack. This requires a little more preparation, as the question you want to ask must be considered carefully and the type of spread specially chosen, and it takes more time to lay and interpret.

Hold the cards in your hand, concentrating on what you want to know. If you have a particular question to ask—for example, 'What will be the outcome if I... [*then say your chosen action*]'? Phrase it carefully in

your mind. If you want to know the solution to a problem, or if you need help coming to a decision, hold that thought mentally. If you want a general overview of what is to happen in the next week or month, focus on the period of time that you are concerned with. Once you've decided on the question, it's time to lay the cards.

The simplest spread is **THE TRIQUETA** (see page 14). This requires only four cards and so is ideal for simple personal queries. From there the spreads increase in complexity, to allow for more complicated queries where a number of factors or outside influences will have a bearing on the outcome. Try them all. You'll probably find one or two favorites that work well for you personally and that you use most of the time. Lay the cards face up in the order noted in the illustrations.

Spreads that focus on personal matters are laid out anticlockwise to reflect the turning of the earth in the northern hemisphere where the Celts lived. Spreads that focus on broader queries, involving the external world, are laid clockwise, to reflect the apparent movement of the sun across the sky.



CARD 1 always represents the person for whom the reading is being conducted, their current state of mind or their feelings. This will most probably be you. If you are conducting this reading for someone else, however, then substitute their name at **CARD 1**. Once you're really familiar with the cards, if you have a very specific query and know which card represents you at the moment, it's possible to choose the first card from the pack before shuffling. However, you need to be honest with yourself: if the card you choose symbolizes how you'd like to be rather than how you are, the rest of the reading will not make sense or will be incorrect.

THE TRIQUETA

TRIQUETA readings are best for short-term prospects, for the coming day, for example, and certainly no longer than a week. The spread responds to simple queries, such as: "What will make me happy today?" or "Will today be a good day?"

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 The current situation, where you are physically or mentally.

CARD 3 What you can do to improve things.

CARD 4 The result.



3



1



4



2

THE MISTLETOE

This is a simple spread to help you decide between two choices. If you need a yes or no answer, decide which out of **CARD 3** and **CARD 4** means "yes" and which means "no".

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 Any outside influences.

CARD 3 The result of your favored choice.

CARD 4 The result of your less-favored choice.



3



4



2



1

If both alternatives are equally appealing, decide in advance which is represented by the Card 3 and Card 4—and don't change your mind afterwards!

THE SHIELD KNOT

THE SHIELD KNOT spread can be used to ask about another person how they are, whether or not they're happy, or how they feel about you.

CARD 1 Represents the other person. In this spread it's best to choose the card from the Helper suit yourself: **BRIDE** or **DAGHDHA** for a mother or father, **MABON** for a child, **BLODEUWEDD** or **TALIESIN** for a lover or close friend, for example.

CARD 2 Their state of health.

CARD 3 Their emotional state.

CARD 4 How they feel about you.

CARD 5 Their immediate future.



3



4



1



2



5

THE CAULDRON

THE CAULDRON may be used for queries about money or family matters. The seven cards can represent the seven days of the coming week, and indicate the state of matters on each day, or the spread as a whole can illuminate the state of your finances or domestic life.

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 The state of your finances or family life.

CARD 3 Outside influences on Card 2.

CARD 4 Any surprises—pleasant or unpleasant—that are on the way.

CARD 5 How to improve matters.

CARD 6 Outside influences on Card 5.

CARD 7 The result.



7



6



5



4



3



2



1

THE TRISKELE

THE TRISKELE relates to your most private and personal desires and wishes and so is best used to ask about your future. Use the spread if you wish to know what other people think of you—perhaps someone you desire as a partner or lover—or to seek guidance on how you might best make your dreams come true.

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 Your heart's desire.

CARD 3 First step to realising your dreams.



7



4



1



2



5



3



6

CARD 4 What might hinder you.

CARD 5 What might help you.

CARD 6 Your future prospects.

CARD 7 The result.

THE SHIELD

THE SHIELD is a protective spread, best used when you feel uneasy, threatened, or under attack. The Shield spread helps you establish who is causing you to feel this way, and what steps you can take to protect yourself or stop the intimidation.

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 4 How you can fight back.



5



6



7

CARD 2 Who or what is making you feel afraid.

CARD 5 Who or what is protecting you.

CARD 3 Why they are behaving this way.

CARD 6 Who or what is supporting you.

CARD 7 The result.



1



4



3



2

THE SOLAR WHEEL

THE SOLAR WHEEL is a perfect spread to use to reveal what the coming year has in store for you. The eight outer points correspond to the eight festivals of the year (see **THE FESTIVALS**, page 33). It is excellent for use at any of the festivals, but particularly Samhain, the Celtic New Year.



Count the months from the laid card onwards as follows: **CARD 2** to **CARD 3** represents the time from **SAMHAIN** to **YULE**. **CARD 3** to **CARD 4** represents the months between **YULE** and **IMBOLG**, and so on. This will give you an idea of what to expect from each roughly two-month period, so that you can be prepared to take advantage of any opportunities offered.

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 SAMHAIN (November 1).

CARD 3 YULE (Winter Solstice, usually December 22).

CARD 4 IMBOLG (February 1).

CARD 5 OSTARA (the Spring Equinox, usually March 20).

CARD 6 BELTAIN (Mayday).

CARD 7 MIDSUMMER (Summer Solstice, usually June 21).

CARD 8 LUGHNASADH (August 1).

CARD 9 AUTUMN EQUINOX (September 23).





8



7



11



10



9



6



5



4



1



2



3

THE TREE OF LIFE



To the Druids, the oak was **THE TREE OF LIFE**. Strong, sturdy, and long-lived, with its roots deep in the sacred earth and its branches touching the heavens, it symbolized every aspect of life. The spread can be used for general queries, either for yourself or others, and covering as long a period of time as you specify.

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARDS 2 and 3 What is under you, supporting you.

CARD 4 The immediate future.

CARD 5 External influences affecting the situation.

CARD 6 Possible hindrances affecting the situation.

CARD 7 Who or what can help.

CARD 8 How best to behave in this situation.

CARD 9 What might improve the situation.

CARD 10 The way forward.

CARD 11 The end result.



THREADING THE MAZE

This spread can be used for most purposes: to gain insight into what will happen over the next week/month/year, to assist in solving problems, for advice in personal, work, or interpersonal matters. It requires a little skill to interpret, however, so it's advisable to familiarize yourself with the easier spreads first.



Lay out 13 cards in a spiral pattern. The innermost card is **CARD 1** and represents you, your thoughts and feelings at the present time. Each card from **CARD 2** to **CARD 12** represents a step to be taken or a problem to be overcome on your way to the outcome, which is **CARD 13**, the outermost card.

CARD 7 is particularly significant: it marks the turning point of any enquiry. At this point, if you aren't happy with the way the situation is resolving, you need to take decisive steps to change its course. This card indicates what action you need to take to improve matters. The cards following it in the spread reveal what else is involved in reaching a favorable outcome.

CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 The root of the situation; what is causing the problem.

CARD 3 Who or what is making the situation worse.

CARD 4 External influences.

CARD 5 External influences.

CARD 6 Your immediate response.

CARD 7 The turning point.

CARD 8 What may help you.

CARD 9 What could hinder you.

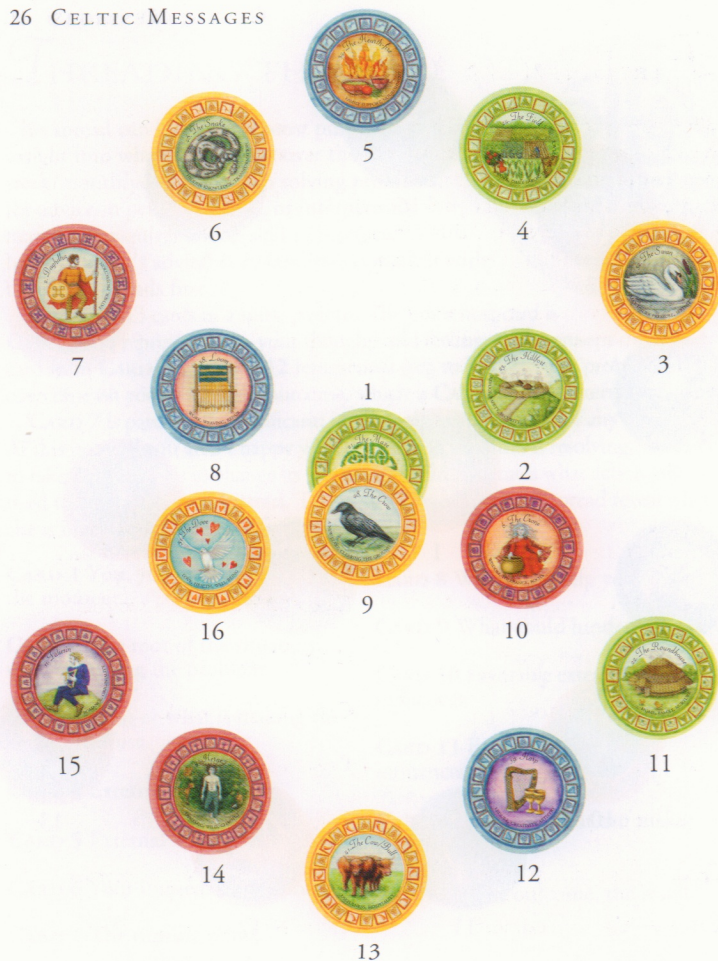
CARD 10 Favorable external influences.

CARD 11 Favorable external influences.

CARD 12 Who or what can make the situation better.

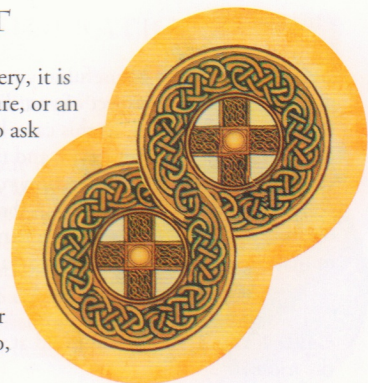
CARD 13 The outcome, the result.





THE ENDLESS KNOT

While this spread can be used for any query, it is ideal for giving you a peek into your future, or an overview of your life. It's not necessary to ask a question, simply hold the pack in both hands, close your eyes, and think for a minute about yourself, who you think you are, how you see yourself. The upper circle symbolizes your inner self—your emotional and mental life—while the lower circle represents your outer self—your physical life, the things you do, and the people with whom you interact.



CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 How you see yourself.

CARD 3 Your feelings.

CARD 4 Your wishes.

CARD 5 Your dreams.

CARD 6 Your fears.

CARD 7 Your ideal partner.

CARD 8 Your secret desire.

CARD 9 The main obstacle to achieving your dreams and desires.

CARD 10 How others see you.

CARD 11 Your home.

CARD 12 Your work.

CARD 13 Your family.

CARD 14 Your friends.

CARD 15 Your lover or partner.

CARD 16 Your future.

Continued

The spread can also be useful to you if you're dissatisfied with any aspect of your life and feel you want to make changes. In this case, hold the cards in both hands, close your eyes, and think of who you'd like to be, and the direction you'd like your life to take. Lay the cards in the same way, but this time they represent the changes you need to make in order to realize your dreams.



CARD 1 You, your state of mind at the moment.

CARD 2 How you see yourself.

CARD 3 How you need to think of yourself in order to give you confidence.

CARD 4 Emotions you need to control.

CARD 5 Emotions you need to cultivate.

CARD 6 Fears you need to overcome.

CARD 7 The partner who will help you achieve your goals.

CARD 8 Your secret desire.

CARD 9 The main obstacle to you achieving your dreams and desires.

CARD 10 How others see you.

CARD 11 How you should act.

CARD 12 Your attitude at work.

CARD 13 People who can help you achieve your goals.

CARD 14 Useful acquaintances and friends who will help you advance.

CARD 15 An influential person who will boost your career.

CARD 16 Your future.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

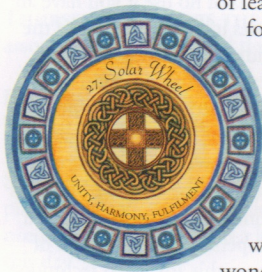


Three of the cards are particularly significant and positive—**THE LAND**, **SNAKE**, and **SOLAR WHEEL**. These take precedence over any other cards in a spread. Should two or more appear together, the most positive meaning applies: transformation—change and powerful forces working on your behalf. Be ready to grasp opportunities, accept assistance from well-wishers, and enjoy your good fortune.



THE LAND CARD symbolizes wholeness and a reverence for living things. By itself it represents rootedness, a desire to ground yourself, to feel content within your body. Accompanied by **SOLAR WHEEL**, it indicates a sense of universal harmony, the need and ability to find personal fulfillment, and a profound happiness within yourself—a deep and abiding joy that no one else can ever take away.

SOLAR WHEEL symbolizes unity and attainment—the personal achievement of learning to understand and appreciate yourself, and forgive yourself for minor flaws. It teaches that all things change, and change is not to be feared. Accompanied by **SNAKE**, it indicates the possibility of metamorphosis, a deep and almost startling change of philosophy or lifestyle, the shedding of old habits and ways of thinking like a dead skin and adopting something new, exciting, and intense. Seeing the world from a completely different perspective is a wonderfully enlightening experience.



SNAKE symbolizes the transformation of self and is a powerful force for change. Accompanied by **THE LAND**, it indicates an opportunity for physical change—perhaps learning a new art or skill that boosts your self-confidence and ability to look after yourself, or to do something you’ve always wanted but were afraid to try.

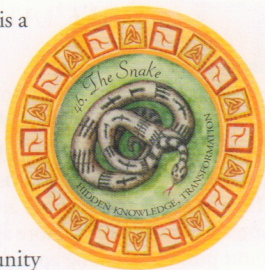
If **THE LAND**, **SOLAR WHEEL**, and **SNAKE CARDS** appear together, you have a rare opportunity to transform your world, both inside and out, beyond recognition. You yourself may have the ability to become a powerful force for change, a potential leader, spiritual guide, or warrior for justice!

TIMING

Divination is all about time, whether looking into the future or the past, or more deeply into the present. It may be possible to optimize your readings by timing them in harmony with tradition and natural forces.

The days of the week, for example, are associated with particular Celtic helpers or symbols, each one said to govern a specific area of life. There is a long tradition of waiting until the best day of the week before dealing with issues sacred to that symbol. Clearly this is of no use if you have an urgent problem, but sometimes it pays to wait until the right day when you can address your enquiry to the Celtic symbol most relevant to your question.

The same idea can be applied to longer time-periods. Any type of spread or a single card reading may benefit from this extra level of insight. It may take a little practice to become comfortable with this method as it lacks the spontaneity of an impromptu reading, but it is well worth persevering. The days of the week offer an introduction to this advanced technique.



THE DAYS OF THE WEEK



The Celtic helpers and symbols associated with the seven days of the week deal with every aspect of human life.

SUNDAY—the **SUN’S DAY**, is ideal for rest and relaxation, recharging your batteries. **MABON** is the appropriate helper for this day. Cards drawn may indicate what you need to do to ensure you’re ready for the coming week.

MONDAY—the **MOON’S DAY**, can help you resolve emotional matters between lovers, and in the wider context of your relationships with friends and colleagues. If matters aren’t going smoothly, the card may suggest how they may be improved. (However, see also **MOON PHASES**, on page 32.)

BLODEUWEDD and **TALIESIN** are the Celtic helpers most closely associated with the Moon: drawing either indicates a lucky day for romance.

TUESDAY—**CUCHULAIN’S DAY** may help you resolve disagreements or conflicts with friends or colleagues—or perhaps bring you luck.

WEDNESDAY—**DAGHDHA’S DAY** is concerned with academic or legal matters.

THURSDAY—**TARANIS THE THUNDERER’S DAY** is associated with work and dealing with superiors.

FRIDAY—for **BRIDE**, or **THE GREAT MOTHER**, is best for home and family matters.

SATURDAY—**THE CRONE’S DAY** is good for planning ahead, particularly long-term financial needs. **THE CAULDRON** is a lucky card to draw on this day.



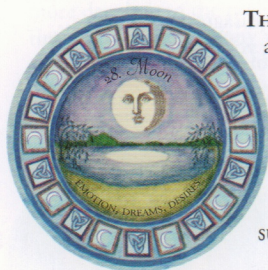
THE MOON'S PHASES



To seek more specific guidance in emotional matters, it may help to wait for the appropriate phase of the moon before choosing your Cards.

THE NEW MOON is a time of beginnings. This is a good time to start a new relationship, or to make resolutions about your life: let your Card advise you as to what you need right now. Be sure to keep any secrets you're told, and don't divulge your own until you are certain the people around you can be trusted.

THE CRESCENT MOON is a time for cutting away the old and useless to make space for the new and exciting. If someone is holding you back, now would be an appropriate time to break free. But the break should be clean and decisive, without causing unnecessary suffering on either side. Use your chosen Card and its Keywords as affirmations to sustain your determination.



THE HALF MOON is the ideal time for making decisions affecting your love life or emotions. Using the guidance given by your chosen Card, you should be able to see both sides of the question and come to a well-balanced, well-informed choice.

THE FULL MOON is an excellent time for emotional fulfillment and romance. Let your Card suggest ways of celebrating love and romance!

THE WANING MOON is the best time to build up your emotional defenses in preparation for any impending upsets. Your chosen Card can indicate the best way to behave to accomplish this—or it may reveal the person or situation that will cause you problems in the immediate future. In this case, forewarned is forearmed, allowing you to prepare yourself for any onslaught.

THE FESTIVALS



The Celts celebrated eight festivals throughout the year: four main fire festivals, two equinoxes, and two solstices. Each has its own unique value and significance. Together they chart the turning of the seasons. To add a touch of Celtic spirit to the seasons, celebrate these festivals with a meal and good friends, and use the Cards—especially **THE SOLAR WHEEL** spread—to guide you over the coming months!

IMBOLG (February 1) is the feast of the White Lady—the snow-covered earth—symbolizing the Mother Goddess sleeping to recoup her energies. Cards chosen at this festival will give a flavor of the start of the year to come, and can also warn of potential enemies.



OSTARA (usually March 20) celebrates the Spring Equinox, when day and night are of equal length. This is a celebration of life returning to the world—green growth after bleak winter. It is a time for new beginnings: birth, new projects, new career, new (or newly redecorated) home. Cards drawn at this festival can suggest the direction your plans should take over the coming year.

BELTAIN (May 1) is the celebration of spring itself. It's a feast for lovers, marked by flowers, birdsong and romance. Take advantage of the festival to ask for guidance about your love life, if need be, or for ideas on how to spice it up a little!

MIDSUMMER (usually June 21) is Summer Solstice and marks the longest day of the year. From this point on, nights grow longer. The festival is a celebration

of the hard work already done and offers a brief holiday before the work of harvesting begins. Cards chosen now reveal areas of your personal life that need attention—health, for example, or relationships with family or friends.

LUGHNASADH (August 1) is the start of the harvest months. Take advantage of this festival to seek advice from the Cards about how to improve your physical fitness and health.

AUTUMN EQUINOX (usually September 23) is when day and night are of equal length once again and so is a time to find balance between work, recreation and spiritual pursuits. The festival represents completion; reaping the rewards of your labours. It's an ideal time to take stock of your life and all that you have accomplished. The Cards may help you to determine if you need to make an adjustment in your lifestyle to achieve harmony and contentment.

SAMHAIN (November 1), pronounced Sah-wen, was the start of the Celtic new year. This is a time when the barriers between the mortal world and the Otherworld grow thin, and messages and sometimes beings pass from one to the other. It's a good time for divinatory spreads, seeking guidance about the future for yourself and others.

YULE (usually December 22) marks Winter Solstice—the shortest day of the year: from now on days grow longer as the year moves slowly towards warmer days. The rising of the sun on Yule morning was a cause for jubilation, a reassurance that life would return, despite the cold and dark of winter. The festival was celebrated with a feast, gift-giving, song and dance in the company of family and friends. Yule is an appropriate time to plan ahead. Cards chosen on this day may help you decide the direction your life should take and the aspects on which you wish to focus for the coming year.



THE CARDS

THE HELPERS



THE HELPER CARDS symbolize the people in your life who, for good or ill, affect you day to day. The cards usually represent individuals—family members, friends, lovers, co-workers, even strangers—but they may also represent parts of your inner self, aspects you need to bring to the surface in order to deal with life's problems or to help those looking to you for advice. As you familiarize yourself with the cards and learn how to read them, you'll gain an instinctive understanding as to which aspect is needed.

1 THE TRISKELE—BRIDE, THE GREAT MOTHER

KEYWORDS: MOTHER, SECURITY.

The triple spiral of **THE TRISKELE** symbolizes the three-fold nature of life, the interconnectedness of the body that feels, the mind that knows, and the spirit that unifies with love. It is embodied in **BRIDE**, a civilized and civilizing goddess, representing light, inspiration, energy, and craftsmanship, and promoting art and culture. All-embracing, nurturing, and fiercely protective, Bride is associated with the regenerative forces of sun, fire, and fertility—the essence of the Mother.

IN THE SPREAD: A powerful protective force is guarding you, a strong mother-figure to look to for support. Her unconditional love will give you assurance to overcome your problems, and go forth with confidence, knowing her strength is behind you every step of the way.

If you are a mother, one of your children may need your support in a situation beyond their control. They may be afraid to admit it: you can help best by being open, non-judgmental, and understanding.



2 DAGHDHA

KEYWORDS: FATHER, PROTECTION.

The “good god” and chief deity, **DAGHDHA** represents wisdom and fertility and wields tremendous power. He owned a mighty staff, which bestowed both life and death, and a magic cauldron forever filled with food, providing sustenance for all. He was also a buffoon who told jokes against himself.

IN THE SPREAD: **DAGHDHA** symbolizes a father or father figure, a protector, an older person to rely on and trust. Look to him for help and advice.

The appearance of this card also recommends you learn to see the lighter side of life, and don’t take yourself too seriously. Humor is a precious thing, and can often resolve an uncomfortable situation more easily than an argument.



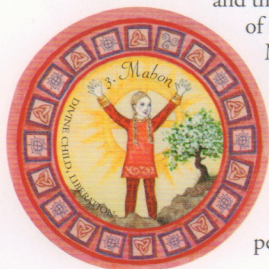
3 MABON, THE DIVINE CHILD

KEYWORDS: A CHILD, LIBERATION, NEW PERSPECTIVE.

MABON is the Celtic god of music, harmony and unity. Stolen at three days old and held captive in a dungeon, he was freed by the heroes **KAI** and **GWRHYR**. He represents captivity and liberation, and acts as mediator between humanity and the gods. His is the four-spoked solar wheel of the cycles of life, the changing year, and the seasons’ treasures.

Mabon flings his arms wide, embracing the world and all it holds. His excitement and happiness are infectious.

IN THE SPREAD: No matter what your current circumstances, **MABON** always brings joy and liberation—from old habits, stress, or an unpleasant situation. He represents new ideas and perspectives, and maybe a new birth.



4 THE MORRIGAN

KEYWORDS: DANGER, ENEMIES, RENEWAL.

The Celtic goddess of war, death, sex, and fertility, **THE MORRIGAN** was a shape-shifter, changing her appearance to confuse and terrify her enemies. The Morrigan is both beautiful and terrible, inspiring awe and fear. She has no qualms about seducing her enemies

before killing them. She is deadly and dangerous to know—yet

she also clears the ground ready for the growth of new understanding.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE MORRIGAN** warns of enemies working against you, blackening your name, or stealing your assets. Consider why this is happening: have you offended someone? Is someone trying to alienate you or cause you trouble—or have you been doing this to someone else? If so, the Morrigan warns of approaching vengeance!



5 THE DRUID

KEYWORDS: DISCIPLINE, RULES, CONTROL.

Priests, lawgivers, soothsayers, and poets, **DRUIDS** held sway over all men and women, and were free to travel wherever they chose. It took many years to train as a Druid, and they were universally respected and feared—even by royalty, since they often conferred kingship. Nor were they afraid to wield their power, condemning those who broke rules or opposed them to an agonising death.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE DRUID** stresses the need for swift and impartial judgment and strong self-control. You need to consider all points of view in order to come to a decision, and the effects will be long-lasting, so you must be sure of your facts. Others are looking to you for guidance; it’s important you don’t disappoint them.



6 THE CRONE

KEYWORDS: WISDOM, TOLERANCE, ROOTS.

The goddess of inspiration, knowledge and dark prophecy, **THE CRONE**'s real name was **CERRIDWEN**—keeper of the Cauldron of the Otherworld. The poet **TALIESIN** was her son (see page 42). She represents a kindly older woman, her wisdom gathered from her experience of Life. She welcomes all who seek her strength and innate understanding.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE CRONE** suggests you need assistance with personal matters, advice on the best life path to choose to become the person you wish to be. She may be a real person who you admire, or a hidden part of yourself, speaking in dreams and omens. Listen to her—she knows the depths of your heart and her advice is true.

7 TARANIS

KEYWORDS: POWER, AUTHORITY, THE SYSTEM.

TARANIS is the Thunderer, the god of storms, a powerful, ruthless figure, who jealously guards his authority. In his own sphere, his word is law. To oppose him brings trouble. He also represents the cycles of the seasons and the ever-circling stars, and so is closely associated with the forces of change.

IN THE SPREAD: **TARANIS** advises you to be inconspicuous and diligent in your work. Deal with authority figures politely, answer questions truthfully, and never make claims or promises you can't keep.

However, Taranis can also solve problems for you. A flattering appeal to his authority can persuade a chief or superior to use his power and status on your behalf to sweep away difficulties. Be warned however—he will expect a favor in return.



8 SULIS

KEYWORDS: ANALYSIS, RATIONALITY, LOGIC.

SULIS is the goddess of hot-water springs, bubbling up from underground. In the Celtic world, such springs were famed for their therapeutic properties and many still are today. Hence Sulis is associated with healing, prophecy and the Underworld. She is also regarded as a calming, civilizing influence, representing science and progress.

IN THE SPREAD: **SULIS** warns that a rational mind-set is now necessary. Rein back your emotions, think well before you speak, consider the consequences of your actions. Deal with others in a calm and sensible manner, no matter what their attitude. Employ a little self-analysis in considering your future life path—and be sure to get any health concerns professionally checked.

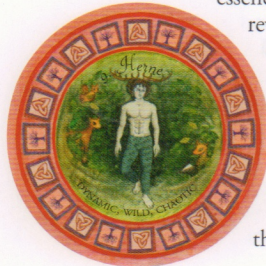


9 HERNE

KEYWORDS: DYNAMIC, WILD, CHAOTIC.

God of hunting, fertility and wildlife, **HERNE** kept the natural world strong and balanced by selecting the fittest creatures to survive and culling the weak. Also known as **CERNUNNOS**, Supreme Lord of the Forest, Herne was the very essence of the Wildwood, the pure, elemental spirit that revels in the joy of living. Unexpected and sudden change is his defining feature—a whirlwind that can carry you away into life-changing adventure.

IN THE SPREAD: Dramatic change is, literally, on the cards. **HERNE** is the dark stranger who appears from nowhere, captures your heart and makes you feel like the monarch of the world—or leaves you heartbroken and cast aside. Will you take a leap into the unfamiliar? Do you want to take a risk?



10 BLODEUWEDD

KEYWORDS: SECRETS, SOLITUDE, LOVE.

The beautiful creation of a magician, **BLODEUWEDD** (which means “face of a flower”) was fashioned from the blossom of meadowsweet, oak and broom to wed the son of a goddess. Alas, Blodeuwedd loved another and so was transformed into an owl as punishment so that she may never “*show her face to light of day*”. She symbolizes self-will and the determination to decide your own fate.

IN THE SPREAD: **BLODEUWEDD** represents an intimate friend, lover or soul mate who will guard your secrets as closely as their own. She teaches you to listen to your heart. She may also warn you not to betray the secrets of others, no matter what the temptation.



11 TALIESIN

KEYWORDS: TRUST, ROMANCE, ORIGINALITY.

TALIESIN, the greatest and most skilled of all Celtic bards, represents romance and chivalry. Through a magical sequence of events Taliesin was born of **CERRIDWEN** (see page 40), who would have killed him but for his beauty, which softened her heart.

IN THE SPREAD: **TALIESIN** symbolizes a trustworthy friend, lover, or soul mate, a strong but gentle person on whom you can safely rely and who will always respect your wishes. He teaches compassion and consideration for others. Treasure him, but never think you own him or you will drive him away. The card may also indicate a need to explore your own creativity.



12 BOUDICA

KEYWORDS: COURAGE, ENDURANCE, SACRIFICE.

Warrior queen and Druid priestess, **BOUDICA** was strikingly tall, with long tawny hair, the ferocity of a wolf and the cunning of a fox. Staunch, brave and selfless, Boudica seemed to glow with an inner fire.

Unyielding in defeat, she took deadly poison rather than submit to capture. She represents the friend who stands by your side in any conflict. With her support you can overcome all obstacles.

IN THE SPREAD: **BOUDICA** symbolizes the need for stamina and endurance—there are serious problems coming your way. Despite the struggle, you will find the strength to survive. Take advantage of any help your friends offer—and give help unstintingly too, where it is needed.



13 CUCHULAIN

KEYWORDS: BOLDNESS, DOMINATION.

A legendary Celtic warrior, **CUCHULAIN** rashly flung himself into battle to defend what he believed was right. He was transformed by battle frenzy, becoming superhumanly powerful and terrifyingly ugly, feared by friend and foe alike. A valuable ally in battle, he was quick to anger, becoming a liability in time of peace.

IN THE SPREAD: **CUCHULAIN** represents the old-fashioned hero who takes over without being asked, who tells you to stand back while he fights your battles for you—but then expects you to submit to his will. If this isn't what you want, be firm and tell him—but don't be surprised when he feels rejected. The card may also be a warning to you not to interfere in others' lives without their invitation!





THE PLACES



THE CELTS saw themselves as belonging to the land, rather than the land belonging to them, hence they regarded a sense of place as supremely important. A Place Card in the pack may represent a real physical place, or symbolize a special "place" within you. This could be an inner spiritual sanctuary, for example, a place in your mind that you can retreat to when the outer world becomes too grim or stressful.

A Place Card reveals your current situation. The most appropriate meaning should be evident from the card. If you have more than one Place Card, you must decide which one represents where you are now, and which one indicates where you want to be. Sometimes the cards will show you must make a choice as to where you would rather be. The rest of the cards in the spread can help you make the right decision.

14 THE LAND

KEYWORDS: AWARENESS, RESPECT, HARMONY.

To the Celts, **THE LAND** itself was sacred, the embodiment of the Mother Goddess, who sustained and supported them. Life flowed through her hills and rivers and her bounty fed the creatures living in and on her body. She was loved and deeply respected: no Celt would dream of harming her.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE LAND** Card takes precedence over all other cards except **SNAKE** and **THE SOLAR WHEEL**. The message is simple—respect the Earth that gives us life and which we must all share. Do your part to minimize the harm you inflict on the Earth, and explore ways to heal the damage already caused, and encourage others to do the same. Live in health and harmony with the earth.



15 THE SACRED GROVE

KEYWORDS: SANCTUARY, SOLITUDE, SPIRITUALITY.

Trees were sacred to the Celts, and groves in particular were places of worship, especially for the Druids. Standing within the grove, a sense of deep spirituality can be experienced by those who have the will.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE SACRED GROVE** symbolizes a need for sanctuary, whether from work or from mental stress. It recommends a time apart from others, where you can be quiet and still, to rest and recover from the toils of daily life. It is time to look inward, to explore the depths of your own mystery, feelings, your perception of yourself and the world around you. Search for a quiet place within yourself that can be your refuge.



16 THE WILDWOOD

KEYWORDS: DISORIENTATION, TEMPTATION, EXCITEMENT.

THE WILDWOOD once covered most of Northern Europe. It was a fabulously lush and mysterious place, full of life and rich in secrets. Unless you were sure of your path, it was an easy place to lose your way...

IN THE SPREAD: The temptation to give in to your instincts and impulses is very strong right now. You crave excitement, the unusual and exhilarating; you yearn to be taken out of yourself for a while. Indulge your primitive side—but make sure you have a safe route home. Be wary of strangers, and familiarize yourself with the dangers of the path you wish to follow. It may detract from the spontaneity, but even the most courageous hunter never enters the forest without being forearmed!



17 THE SEA

KEYWORDS: TRAVEL, EXPLORATION.

The Celts were expert seafarers, traveling great distances to trade—or to fight. **THE SEA** was a great mystery, a bountiful provider and a barrier to enemies.

IN THE SPREAD: Travel is on the cards, a voyage of exploration and discovery. Whether physical, mental or emotional, it will change and broaden your perspective and your mind. Enjoy the journey and take full advantage of all the opportunities it offers. If you learn nothing from your voyage you will be the poorer for it. This is a rare rehearsal for the next stage of your life—don't waste it.

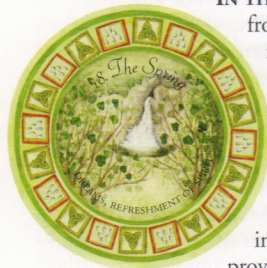


18 THE SPRING

KEYWORDS: DREAMS, REFRESHMENT OF SPIRIT.

For the Celts, **SPRINGS** were magical places—water welling up from the Underworld had healing properties and could grant wisdom.

IN THE SPREAD: Answers to your problems will well up from your subconscious, in hunches, dreams or sudden flashes of inspiration. Encourage them by making sure you get sufficient sleep—and drink pure spring water instead of your usual beverage. **THE SPRING** has a talismanic effect, attuning you to the deeper reaches of your inner self. Keep a record of your insights; it will be useful as you learn how to put these new ideas and concepts into action. Don't discount any impressions or thoughts, no matter how odd—they provide real insights into your mind.



19 THE FORD

KEYWORDS: CROSSING BOUNDARIES, OVERCOMING OBSTACLES, RECONCILING OPPOSITES.

Rivers made natural boundaries and often marked the edges of tribal territories. To cross a **FORD** meant stepping from one realm to another, overcoming obstacles.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE FORD** indicates that you are facing a major obstacle but have the ability to overcome it. The only way is to confront it, understand it, and work through it: you must not go around.

This card also symbolizes the reconciling of opposites. You are ideally placed to act as arbitrator. By staying calm and emotionally detached, and considering all sides, you will settle disputes with ease.



20 THE HILL

KEYWORDS: PERSPECTIVE, SEEING THE WHOLE.

Druid knowledge and foresight resolved most differences without the need for combat, but on those rare occasions when wisdom did not prevail, the Druids would step into the background and view the course of the battle from a nearby **HILL**. At the end of the battle they would treat the wounded.

IN THE SPREAD: It's essential that you find a position where you can gain an overview of the current situation. Set yourself apart from everyone and everything to consider where you are in life and where you want to be, then make your plans for the future accordingly. Others may object, so you must decide whether to pay attention to them or put your own desires first.



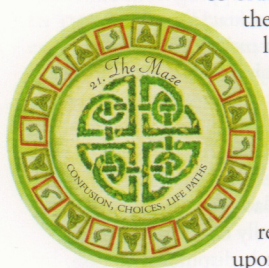
21 THE MAZE

KEYWORDS: CONFUSION, CHOICES, LIFE PATHS.

THE MAZE was both a ritual challenge and a game for the young. The ability to “thread the maze” depended on a combination of memory and co-ordination. To the spiritually minded, it also represented the interconnectedness of all things, the multitude of life paths, and a vision of the Infinite.

IN THE SPREAD: Several choices lie before you, and you’re having difficulty deciding which path to take. You may have to explore more than one before you come to a final decision—but don’t take too long.

THE MAZE presents you with the opportunity to reflect upon your beliefs and convictions, and decide upon your place in Life.



22 THE ROUNDHOUSE

KEYWORDS: HOME, FAMILY, NURTURE.

The cozy, comfortable—if sometimes crowded—**ROUNDHOUSE** sheltered the whole family. With the hearth-fire at its center and beds around the walls, there was little privacy, but a great sense of togetherness.

IN THE SPREAD: Home is where your heart is right now, and to feel content you need to spend time there. If you live with family, this is a good time to re-establish bonds and set old grievances aside. If you live alone, invite family—or intimate friends—to visit and share a little of your life. A sense of “rootedness” will make the trials of daily life easier to bear, and it’s valuable to have the support of those you can rely on.

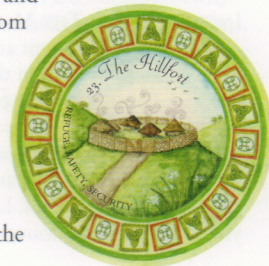


23 THE HILLFORT

KEYWORDS: REFUGE, SAFETY, SECURITY.

HILLFORTS were large, defensive structures containing homes and stores, and protected by high earthen banks and deep ditches. Often built on hilltops, they kept the inhabitants safe and secure and prevented all but the most determined enemies from breaching their walls.

IN THE SPREAD: There’s safety in numbers. There are times when even home isn’t secure enough, and on those occasions you need to find somewhere safe and defensible. Now is the right time to gather with like-minded people to defend what is important to you, on a personal, local, or even global level. Remember—sometimes attack is the best form of defense.



24 THE FIELD

KEYWORDS: WORK, DAILY LABOR, THE WORKPLACE.

Celtic families had their own plot of land and animals—chickens, pigs, sheep—to sustain them. Everyone worked, even the younger children who would be out pelting the crows with stones to keep them away from the newly sown seeds.

IN THE SPREAD: Your life right now is centered on your workplace. Depending on your circumstances, your day-to-day survival depends on your own self-sufficiency and ability to get the job done efficiently, or co-operation with co-workers, all pulling together to accomplish set goals. Resign yourself to the task, remembering that there will come a time for rest and relaxation at the end.



25 THE MAYPOLE

KEYWORDS: CELEBRATION, PLEASURE.

THE MAYPOLE is an ancient fertility symbol, and processing or dancing around it an ancient fertility ritual. A physical representation of spring and regeneration, the Maypole conveys the hope of new life.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE MAYPOLE** symbolizes exhilaration, excitement and the potential for new life, whether physical, in the form of a baby, or a change of attitude or life path. Explore and express your individuality, and use your natural talents to best effect. Seek out places where you can meet new people, and be prepared to listen as well as talk. Live life to the full. Learn to take pleasure in yourself and those around you.



26 THE DOLMEN

KEYWORDS: MYSTERIES, THE OTHERWORLD, DISCOVERY.

A DOLMEN is a table stone—a flattish rock supported by several uprights with a space underneath—that served as a burial chamber before the earth covering it was washed away. They predate Celtic times, but were objects of great mystery and awe to the Celts.

They symbolize the entrance to **ANNWN**, the Otherworld, the blessed land of eternal youth where the dead wait ready for their rebirth.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE DOLMEN** indicates that you are seeking a deeper meaning to life, debating whether to start exploring the mystical, spiritual side of your nature. Remember, the unknown is only a source of anxiety when you seek to avoid it. Face up to the challenge; it can be a source of empowerment.



THE TOOLS



TOOL CARDS represent any actions you need to take or items that you must use to achieve a desired outcome. With the exception of Card 27, the Solar Wheel, their meaning is always immediate and short-term, to be acted upon at once and, like physical tools, set aside when they are no longer useful.

The Tool cards also act as warnings, indicating the areas of your life that need attention.

27 SOLAR WHEEL

KEYWORDS: UNITY, HARMONY, FULFILLMENT.

THE SOLAR WHEEL represents the sun as source of life, light, and the cycles of the seasons of the year. To the Celtic people, the sun regulated the pulse of life, its rising at dawn, setting at dusk, and its passage across the sky. The sun dictated when to reap and sow, when to prepare for winter's cold, and when to rejoice at the coming of summer's warmth.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE SOLAR WHEEL** takes precedence over all other cards apart from **SNAKE** and **THE LAND**, and has a profound—and generally beneficial—effect on any situation. It unites friends, families, lovers, and co-workers and helps you attain your objectives. Carry its positive energy with you as you strive toward your goals.



28 MOON

KEYWORDS: EMOTION, DREAMS, DESIRES.

The mysterious **MOON** only ever shows one face, and that is in shadow much of the time. She influences the tides and affairs of the heart, and her realm is that of dreams.



IN THE SPREAD: Your emotional life is uppermost at the moment, in phase with **THE MOON**. If it's Full Moon, anticipate contentment and romance. The Half-moon helps you see both sides of a question. A Crescent Moon may leave you emotionally vulnerable. The New Moon instructs you to hide your emotions and appear cool and contained.

This card lends you eloquence, and the ability to appeal to the emotions of others to make your point. You're at your most persuasive now!

29 EAR OF CORN

KEYWORDS: HARVEST, ACCOMPLISHMENT.

CORN symbolizes the riches of the earth, or sunlight in edible form. Golden waves of ripened corn augur a good harvest and plentiful food for the coming days.

IN THE SPREAD: It's time to reap the rewards of your dedication. A little extra effort now and you'll be able to rest and enjoy the fruits of your labor. **THE EAR OF CORN** represents wishes fulfilled.

It also symbolizes the end of one cycle and the start of the next. Take satisfaction in your accomplishments, enjoy them, but don't forget to plant the seeds for next year's harvest. Consider where you'd like to be in a year's time, and start making plans.



30 APPLE

KEYWORDS: MAGIC, HEALTH, MYSTICAL KNOWLEDGE.

THE APPLE has long been regarded as a magical fruit, the food of gods, gifting the eater with immortality. To the Celts, the afterlife was the "apple isle"—Avalon—where the sun always shone and no one knew age, pain, or death.

IN THE SPREAD: Your good health, both physical and mental, enables you to counsel others, to help them solve their problems. Use your skills and knowledge to improve your local environment, whether for work, recreation, or at home.

This card often reveals a deep yearning for a more spiritual or mystical element to your life. Take time to explore other philosophies—try something new.



31 MISTLETOE

KEYWORDS: FERTILITY, PROTECTION, HEALING.

MISTLETOE was the Celts' most sacred plant, especially when growing in an oak or apple tree. It symbolized fertility, and was also used medicinally to counteract poisons and respiratory diseases.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE MISTLETOE** card suggests you pay attention to your health—physical, mental, and spiritual. Have a medical check-up if there might be cause for concern, and take time to consider your lifestyle and make the changes necessary to maintain your wellbeing.

The card recommends that you contemplate your future, particularly your plans to pass on your wisdom and belongings to your heirs and descendants. How can the lessons you have learned help others?

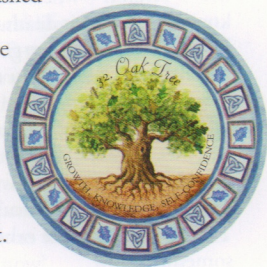


32 OAK TREE

KEYWORDS: GROWTH, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, SELF-KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONFIDENCE.

The massive, sturdy **OAK** was the Tree of Life, sacred to the Druids. Its roots went deep into the Underworld, while its branches brushed the vault of the sky.

IN THE SPREAD: The **OAK** reassures you that you are on the right path. Your self-confidence is high: it's a good time to seek promotion or advancement in your chosen career. Friends and family should be supportive now, and discussion about your future fruitful. It's a good time to put plans for change of occupation or residence into action. Take time to explore your opportunities for personal development.



33 DAGGER

KEYWORDS: DEFENSE, SECURITY.

Most adult Celts carried a small **DAGGER** with them. Usually it was used for cutting up food, but it could be used for defense if the situation warranted.

IN THE SPREAD: The **DAGGER** warns of potential danger from a nearby source. The threat may come from a person, a situation, an event or from something you are working on—the other cards may help to determine which. You must take steps to defend yourself. Ensure your actions are open and above reproach, treat others courteously, and try to defuse unpleasant situations before they reach a critical point. Make sure you have a place or person to retreat to should events go badly.



34 THE HEARTH-FIRE

KEYWORDS: FAMILY SUPPORT, NOURISHMENT.

The **HEARTH-FIRE** is the heart of the home, the symbol of the Mother Goddess and her protection. It provides warmth, light, and a means of cooking food to nourish the family.

IN THE SPREAD: Look to your family for help, advice, and comfort. Your personal security is uppermost, and home is the safest place for you, among the ones you know best. Work for reconciliation and forgiveness if relations are strained. Stay with what you know, and don't be tempted to take risks.

If you are lacking in spiritual nourishment, feeling depressed, downhearted, or lonely, seek the company of friends. Their support will soothe and comfort you, reaffirming your sense of worth.



35 CAULDRON

KEYWORDS: ABUNDANCE, PROSPERITY, HIDDEN RICHES.

The **CAULDRON** symbolizes the womb, plenty, and regeneration. From the Cauldron of **CERRIDWEN**, brewing divine inspiration and wisdom, to **DAGHDHA's** Cauldron, which was never empty, to the humble iron pot over the family's **HEARTH-FIRE**, this large cooking vessel was an ever-present and vital part of Celtic life.

IN THE SPREAD: The **CAULDRON** indicates that you are full of ideas that have been bubbling away for long enough—now is the time to let them come pouring out. There's a good chance they'll prove financially beneficial, but you'd be wise to get professional advice before parting with cash.

Be prepared to share.



36 TORC

KEYWORDS: WEALTH, MONEY MATTERS, STATUS.

THE TORC was a distinctive, uniquely Celtic piece of jewelry made of gold, silver or iron that adorned the necks of those of high status.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE TORC** indicates that matters of finance and status are to the fore. You may have an unwelcome expense or an unexpected windfall, or need to negotiate a rise or loan. Handle the situation wisely and seek advice from those whom you trust.

You may have an opportunity to advance your standing in the eyes of others. If so, don't boast or you may store up ill feeling for the future.

Treat others graciously, regardless of their past behavior.



37 BROOCH

KEYWORDS: JOINING, BUILDING BRIDGES, BRINGING TOGETHER.

Celtic **BROOCHES** were beautiful pieces of jewelry, with intricate designs. Pinned at the shoulder, they fastened the cloaks that everyone wore.

IN THE SPREAD: You have the opportunity and skill to heal breaches of friendship and trust, and bring together those who have been separated. Make the effort to get in touch. Arrange to meet, to talk and share memories. This is a good time to talk with your partner or lover about your joint future, and to forge new friendships and make new business acquaintances. Be seen, be heard, and make connections.



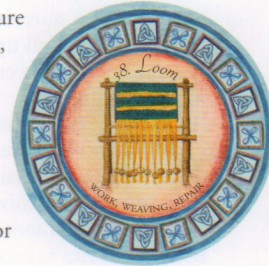
38 LOOM

KEYWORDS: WORK, WEAVING, REPAIR.

Every roundhouse had its **LOOM**, to weave the brightly colored cloth used to make the family's warm and highly decorative tunics, breeches and cloaks.

IN THE SPREAD: You will be very busy soon. Pressure will be on you to finish a work or academic project, and plan the next stage of your assignment. Don't be tempted to stint. Once it's finished you can take the time to relax, but now you have the energy and opportunity to shine.

THE LOOM also symbolizes weaving the fabric of your life. If you want to introduce new colors or patterns—to make changes to your personality or lifestyle—now is a good time to start.



39 HARP

KEYWORDS: LEISURE, CREATIVITY, ARTISTRY.

THE HARP is an ancient instrument, requiring skill to play well. The bards who played them were highly regarded, and their music always accompanied feasts and celebrations.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE HARP** symbolizes the value of relaxation and recreation. You need to take time to enjoy the company of others or alternatively, to further explore your own creativity. Now would be a good time to combine leisure with learning, taking the opportunity to develop your talents or study new skills that will stand you in good stead for the future.





THE TOTEMS



MANY ANIMALS were sacred to the Celts, revered for their innate qualities or association with a deity. The Totem Cards symbolize qualities that you must bring to bear to respond effectively to your current situation. Call up those qualities and skills from within, or borrow them from the creature, and use these attributes them to help you resolve a problem.

Do not allow the animal qualities expressed in these cards dominate your judgement, however—let them lend you strength and inspiration, helping you to better trust your instincts.

40 BOAR

KEYWORDS: FEROCITY, ASSERTIVENESS.

The wild **BOAR** is a powerful and aggressive creature, defending its territory with ferocity. Recognized by its vicious tusks and stiff mane of bristles, the boar is a formidable animal, and one that is to be respected at all times.

IN THE SPREAD: The presence of **THE BOAR** indicates that assertiveness is now called for. Don't let anyone try to tell you what to do, or belittle your views. Outright aggression may not be appropriate, and usually causes more trouble than it's worth, but you should stand your ground and defend your "territory"—your ideas and beliefs, your friends or family, your job or interests—without encroaching on other people's. Expect respect, and don't give in if it's not forthcoming.



41 COW/BULL

KEYWORDS: USEFULNESS, HOSPITALITY.

Every part of the **COW** was useful to the Celts—milk for drinking and making butter, cream and cheese—and both cow and bull provided meat for food, bones for marrow, hide for leather, and horns for drinking vessels. Highly prized by the Celts, the larger the herd, the higher the owner's status.

IN THE SPREAD: This card indicates a need for generosity and open-handedness. It's a good time for networking, meeting people, and forging new associations. Make the most of any social events, business lunches, or meetings. Be gracious in your dealings with others, be friendly without flirting, and help friends and co-workers without being servile. Making yourself indispensable at work will promote your career prospects.



42 STAG

KEYWORDS: SWIFTNESS, ELUSIVENESS, ESCAPE.

Elegant, swift, **THE STAG** is **HERNE**'s totem creature—the god even wears stag's antlers on his head as a symbol of his closeness to the natural world.

IN THE SPREAD: Now is not the time to stand and fight.

THE STAG recommends flight, prompt action, rapid escape from a situation. Delaying will only add to your problems. Make a swift, dignified exit if possible, putting as much distance as you can between yourself and whatever threatens you.

Your own safety is of paramount importance now. If Herne, too, is in the spread, it is temptation you must flee from.



43 HORSE

KEYWORDS: NOBILITY, FIDELITY.

Intelligent, loyal, and powerful, **THE HORSE** was treated with great honor by the Celts. It bore warriors and nobles on its back, and pulled chariots in battle. It also represented the goddess of the land, who sustained those who lived upon it.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE HORSE** urges you to stay faithful to your friends, work and ideals. Don't be led astray, keep to the path you've chosen, and your hard work and determination will pay well. You are strong, swift, and competent. Lend your abilities to others if they ask, but don't let them take advantage of you.

THE HORSE is a good omen if you're engaged in a competitive pursuit.



44 HOUND

KEYWORDS: CO-OPERATION, WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A GOAL.

HOUNDS were a feature of normal Celtic life. Used primarily for hunting, their affectionate and protective nature made them useful for guarding livestock and humans, and to keep as pets.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE HOUND** card's primary meaning is that of co-operation and teamwork in order to achieve joint objectives. It takes a dedicated effort to make such collaboration successful, but the results will be amazing. Let everyone have their fair say, and remember to relax together to rest and gather your energies. Friendly, informal discussions may be more effective than a formal meeting.



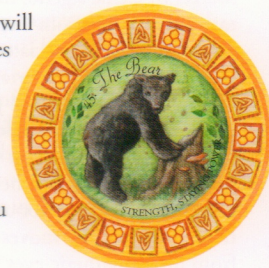
45 BEAR

KEYWORDS: STRENGTH, ENDURANCE, STAYING POWER.

THE BEAR's extraordinary size and strength made it a symbol of power in Celtic times. Often associated with a goddess, it was also seen as a symbol of kingship.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE BEAR** tells you that not only will you need stamina to deal with current circumstances but that you have the necessary staying power to succeed. Things may be hard going for a while, but the result will be worth it. However, the Bear also warns you to get enough sleep to ensure you are able to keep going!

This very physical card may also indicate that you need to revise your diet to include more fresh fruit and less processed food.

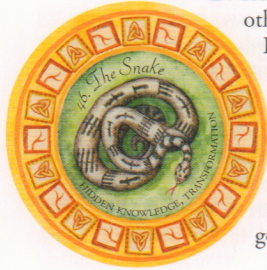


46 SNAKE

KEYWORDS: HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE, TRANSFORMATION.

The mysterious **SNAKE** represents occult power, change, and rebirth. Supple and sinuous, it was thought to possess the wisdom of the Underworld.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE SNAKE** takes precedence over all other cards except **THE SOLAR WHEEL** and **THE LAND**. It symbolizes transformation and indicates that your life is in the process of changing—whether you realize it or not. This change is fundamental, satisfying, and profoundly significant. It might be having a child, or moving abroad, perhaps dedicating your life to others, whatever... once the change is made there's no going back, so make sure that you're prepared.



47 SALMON

KEYWORDS: WISDOM, INDIVIDUALITY, GOING AGAINST THE FLOW.

Sleek, swift and powerful, **THE SALMON** fights its way upstream to return to its source. In Celtic legend, the Salmon gained wisdom by eating the acorns from **THE OAK**, the tree of life, that fell into its pool. It is associated with **TALIESIN**, the poet.

IN THE SPREAD: Your views, ideas and standards differ from those around you. You move to a different beat. It takes effort and courage to swim against the flow, but you will need to if you are to be true to yourself. At the same time, be wise. Don't boast or brag about your aims. Remember, the salmon usually moves below the surface, hidden from unsympathetic eyes.



48 CROW

KEYWORDS: A NEW START, CLEARING THE GROUND.

CROWS are **THE MORRIGAN**'s birds, intelligent, alert and indifferent to suffering. They clear the ground of the debris of death and destruction, leaving it fallow and fertilized for new growth.

IN THE SPREAD: It's time for a new start. Take time to examine your life, clear the ground, and get rid of what's not needed—preferably by recycling or giving away any possession that you no longer require. Like **THE CROW**, waste nothing, but be ruthless if that is what is required. Discard any old habits or ideas—even people, if you must—that are holding you back. Decide to be more discriminating in future, and a little more careful with how you spend your time.



49 OWL

KEYWORDS: STEALTH, SOLITUDE, SECRECY.

BLODEUWEDD, the flower maiden, was turned into an **OWL** as a cruel punishment. The owl haunts the night, unseen, a skilled, silent and stealthy hunter, the keeper of secrets.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE OWL** indicates the need for stealth. Don't try to stand out. Keep your head down, be careful what you say, and under no circumstances trust or confide in others unless you know they are reliable and loyal to you. Work silently towards your goals, sharing with no one until the time is right. Stay alert, keep your ears and eyes open for opportunity and grasp it when it appears.



50 HAWK

KEYWORDS: FLEXIBILITY, MENTAL AGILITY.

Renowned for its speed and superb eyesight, **THE HAWK** symbolizes far-sightedness and an ability to fly high.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE HAWK** recommends you step back for a moment and gain an overview of the situation. Actions you take and decisions you make now will have significant repercussions in the future, so make sure they are right and fitting. If changes need to be made to plans and projects currently in operation, make them now to save time and effort in the future—it's important to remain flexible. Your future—perhaps your career—is about to take off: to fly high. Check there are no obstacles in your way.



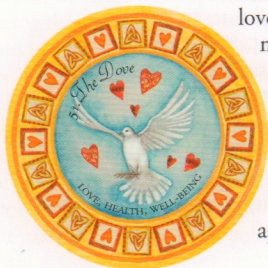
51 DOVE

KEYWORDS: LOVE, HEALTH, WELL-BEING.

White **DOVES**, with their soft plumage and gentle voices, have long come to symbolize love and well-being.

IN THE SPREAD: Love is in the cards! If you're already in love, make time to be with your loved one for some mutually pleasurable activities. Buy them a gift, something small and very personal. Take the time to do things together. Let your loved one know how much they mean to you. By doing so you may store up affection and companionship for the future, and avoid loneliness and depression.

If you aren't already in a relationship, try approaching a person you have long found attractive.



52 SWAN

KEYWORDS: GRACE UNDER PRESSURE, SERENITY.

THE SWAN symbolizes the Soul, that part in each of us that remains pure, beautiful and radiant no matter what we look like or what happens on the outside. It fosters self-esteem and confidence in our abilities.

IN THE SPREAD: **THE SWAN** reminds you to look beyond the surface of any situation to what lies beneath in order to understand the truth of the matter. Don't be deceived by first impressions. This creature may be the embodiment of serene grace and beauty, yet never forget that beneath the water the Swan must work hard like any other water bird. It is grounded in reality—despite its heavenly appearance!



