

Royal Pain in The Deck Reading Tips

By Jenna Matlin

Tips for Reading Court Cards as People

1. **If the question is about the querent**, typically the first court card out is the querent or an aspect of the querent in regard to the question.
2. **If the reading is about someone else**, I will often read the first court card as the person the querent wants to know about, not the querent, unless it is clear that the querent is the first card by type or personality.
3. **If a question is about both the querent and others**, then the first card is usually talking about the querent, subsequent cards after that are also people. But, this is not a hard rule, I go by innate personality characteristics to decide who is whom. Sometimes I will ask the querent, "Who does this remind you of?" and give them a description so they are telling me what court card is them vs. another.
4. **Sometimes court cards show up to indicate people yet unknown**, and since querents like to immediately identify a court card as someone they might know unless you sense this is so, communicate to them that this may not yet be someone in their lives.
5. **If a querent asks about a love relationship but only one court card appears**, it is often an indicator that the relationship is distant, or the tarot wants to make the reading concentrate on the querent's personal journey rather than the relationship dynamic. Refer back to the chapter "Layering Tarot Techniques", where we look at "what is missing."
6. **Personalities first, then action states**: This means that I tend to read court cards first as people involved in the situation, then as actions if all the people are identified.

Tips for Reading Court Cards as Action

So, what do we do if the question is looking for advice or action but the court cards show up? If the court cards are not people, then what do they represent? Here are some of my guidelines for court cards when they indicate action.

- Pages: Messages or new beginnings in things that that suit conveys,

- Knights: Searching for moving toward or away from what the suit conveys
- Queens: Being cared for, or caring for others in a way that the suits convey
- Kings: Arrival, completion, or achievement in the way that the suits convey

Court card reversals means things that are not communicated, not begun, not moving, not cared for, and not achieved.

Tips for Reading Court Cards as the Psychological States of the Querent

My favorite way of reading court cards are as internal, psychological aspects of the querent. I love reading in this way as it helps the querent explore themselves and their own personal growth. This is what I think tarot really does best. Plus, I usually get interesting questions about this topic and not the usual 'laundry list' of day-to-day life worries.

1. **More than one court card** can indicate the person's evolution or growth (or backward devolution) in the reading.
2. **Court cards can indicate different facets of one person**, their process through a situation, or personal development then I often see more than one court card as expressing different schemas, or aspects, of themselves. The triggered self vs. the relaxed self, the inner child vs. the adult, the person at work vs the person at home, and the spiritual self vs the mundane self. Seeing court cards as personalities or even as traumas can be really helpful in unpacking an internal challenge or revealing a pattern or habit that the querent would like to change. For example, in love-based questions, it is not uncommon for me to see the querent have two Queens: The inner vulnerable Queen of Cups being guarded by a Queen of Swords. So, we talk about how we might be able to integrate these two aspects a little more fully.
3. **Court card reversals** as people often indicate where the negative traits of that court card are being expressed loudly. I get the sense of someone in a less healthy version of themselves.
4. **Knights Reversed can mean a triggered person.** Knights reversed in psychological readings indicate trauma being triggered in some way. Knight of Wands = Flee, Knight of Cups = Fawn, Knight of Swords = Fight, and Knight of Pentacles = Freeze.
5. **Adults who consistently show up as pages** often indicate inner child work or areas of childhood pain that is being provoked by a situation.

6. **People shift as court cards** meaning that we all have our “native” court card, the person we normally are but court cards can appear for us as advice such as, “You need to take on this type of personality or outlook”.