

# WINTER WAITE

## CARD MEANINGS - MAJORS

The original Waite Smith deck is so popular and has been talked about so exhaustively in print and online media that we felt it would be more appropriate to focus on the changes found in the Winter Waite For this printable PDF, with brief interpretations for those completely new to the original.



**0. The Fool** – Naïve but optimistic, the Fool with a branch of ivy in hand, ventures out into the snow, paying no heed to the potential for ice on the cliff edge. It's good to see the best in things, but it would do you well to tread carefully.



**1. The Magician** – The snow whips up around the magician as he casts a spell. He represents the mastery of the elements; earth, water, fire and air. A showman!



**2. The High Priestess** – She represents secrets and what is hidden. She is sometimes interpreted as the Shekhinah, the English transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning "dwelling" or "settling" and denotes the dwelling or settling of the divine presence of God.



**3. The Empress** – She represents birth and fertility. The mother figure. Rabbits bounce around in the snow, a familiar symbol for birth.



**4. Emperor** – Saint Nicolas depicted in his more modern day form Santa Claus. The man of the hour at Christmas time. Children from near and far have much reverence for this figure. The emperor represents an authority figure, usually the parent's father. In this case he represents Father Christmas.



**5. Hierophant** – Saint Nicolas in his traditional garb. We sometimes forget that the sleigh riding Santa Claus was originally based on this saint. Among other things, Saint Nick was a patron saint of Children, and was known for his secret gift giving. The Hierophant in this case represents all things traditional at Christmas.



**6. The lovers** – Now that winter has fallen, the lovers don appropriate clothing. The lovers card represents a choice or partnership.



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**7. Chariot** - Time to play in the snow. As of 2018, our version of the Chariot depicts children playing on a sled enjoying the snowfall. From a visual viewpoint we felt it made more sense to introduce either Santa in his sleigh or children sledding, to keep with the theme. Since Santa/Saint Nick had already been used a few times, we chose these elven kids for the card.



**8. Strength** - The lady, in her beautiful poinsettia patterned dress tames nature. Like most animals, reindeers are skittish around potential predators. This card represents taming the deer with compassion.



**9. The Hermit** - The hermit ventures out into the snowstorm. He represents the knowledge within and his cloak gives him some privacy. He carries a staff to aid him in his walk.



**10. The Wheel of Fortune** - In the Winter Waite version of this card, we have replaced the 4 beasts (Ezekiel, Revelation) with something more whimsical. The Wheel is a peppermint candy, with a cute little mouse on top. This card's good luck is represented by wrapped candy in the upper left corner, mince pies on the top right, gingerbread house on the bottom left and a candy cane on the bottom right. The card indicates one's fortunes about change. Perhaps a Christmas bonus!



**11. Justice** – Saint Nicolas makes another appearance, stepping out of his Hierophant position, and into the role of a judge. His task is to decide which child has been naughty or nice. In one hand he holds a swirl lollipop, and in the other; a few lumps of coal.



**12. The Hanged Man** - Suspension of action. Inactivity. This card is sometimes seen as self sacrifice for the moral good, or the welfare of others.



**13. Death** – An ending of things, possibly a literal death but generally an end to something. In this case it could indicate an end to the year.



**14. Temperance.** - The lady walks beside a winter lake in her lovely burgundy gown. Owing to the frosty weather, her foot is no longer in the water. Like the lovers with their appropriate clothing, winter demands changes to how we interact with the environment. It is a good time of year to practice Temperance, especially for those who enjoy alcoholic beverages. Temperance should also be shown when navigating the perilous pitfalls of family get-togethers!



## CARD MEANINGS - MAJORS



**15. The Devil** - In ancient lore, Krampus is known to visit the bad little kids, and has been depicted kidnapping them, sometimes putting them in chains, beating their backsides, and giving them lumps of coal instead of toys. The opposite of Saint Nick. We see the two children crying as they look upon their boring gifts. Krampus carries shackles in one hand and a whip made of birch wood in the other.



**16. The Tower** – A broken tower; burning, cold and dampened by the wintry weather. Whatever plans or dreams you once had have most likely come to an end.



**17. The Star** – The winter weather has forced our once naked figure to wear her winter coat. She represents hope and aspirations. Above her head is the nativity star. Blessed by the universe and a card of inspiration.



**18. The Moon** – The wolf and the dog have taken shelter in our Winter Wonderland, nowhere to be seen. The river has been frosted over with ice. Deer can be seen walking about the snowy landscape below the Moon. A card of hidden secrets and, at times, lunacy.



**19. The Sun** – The Baby New Year (the look is inspired by Baby New Year from the Rankin/Bass children's movie Rudolph's Shiny New Year) is our child in the Sun card. The myth most associated with him is that he is a baby at the beginning of his year, but Baby New Year quickly ages until he is elderly like Father Time who he is often associated with.



**20. Judgement** – Traditional Judgement card inspired by the Book of Revelation in the Bible. Our version takes place in winter. Judgement is often scary to many people, but Judgement, if mixed with correction and guidance, can be a welcome thing.



**21. The World** – The World represents completion. You made it. Happy Holidays. All the presents have been opened. The dishes are in the sink, the in-laws have gone home and the kids are fast asleep. Put your feet up and relax!



## CARD MEANINGS - CUPS



**Ace of Cups** - The mulled wine is overflowing. The ace of cups in the Winter Waite is much the same as the traditional card, except the addition of a few more-doves which represent peace and the wine overflowing from the cup. In the holiday context this represents the season of good cheer and peace on earth. Love of all kinds, agape, strong feelings, the overflow of the heart. Also. Liberality, compassion, the beginning of a romantic relationship or friendship. Good omen for matters of the heart.



**2 of Cups** – The wine from the Ace of cups is received. Strong friendship, bond, sharing. In matters of love; compatible relationships, perhaps even a marriage is foretold. In this card mistletoe hangs overhead. This seasonal plant's link to romance and the tradition of kissing under the mistletoe started in ancient Greece during the festival of Saturnalia the Roman pagan winter solstice festival. It shares with Christmas the traditions of gift giving, generosity to the poor, feasting, making ivy garlands and decorating trees. Ivy is associated with Bacchus hence the wine featured in some of the cups in the suit. The mistletoe relates to romance, fertility and, in Ancient Rome, peace.



**3 of Cups** - This is the card of celebrations, parties, get-togethers and social encounters that involve a group. In a holiday reading this could represent an office party, Christmas party and celebrating the holiday with family and loved ones. Be careful with the eggnog!



**4 of Cups** - Someone who feels bored, unmotivated or left out. When this card comes up in a holiday reading it could indicate that you or the client is feeling a bit discouraged or isolated during the festive season. This is especially so for people who suffer from loneliness during the holidays. They may feel a bit out of the loop or excluded from Christmas celebrations. The cup offered to the person suggests hope, if only the person could see that maybe a friendship or help is being offered. Encourage the client to look for the cup.



**5 of Cups** - Feeling of regret, failure and disappointment. A negative way to approach the holidays. Also seasonal depression. Hang in there! While they're singing "Auld Lang Syne" just remember that in a week, they'll all be back to being their usual grumpy selves!



**6 of Cups** - Feelings of nostalgia and past holidays. A young kid gives a poinsettia filled cup to his grandma. This card represents feeling like a child again, perhaps reliving the season through your own children. Returning home for the holidays. Family members call over during this time of year.



## CARD MEANINGS - CUPS



**7 of Cups** - Visions of sugar plums dancing in your head. Wishes, hopes and dreams that make Christmas magical. Such choices this time of year! Every kid has a list of desires but figuring out which ones will bring the most happiness is the task! The seven cups represent temporary pleasures. Can also mean guilty pleasures, lust and vain imaginings.



**8 of Cups** - Turning away from bad habits of the previous year, looking forward to a New Year with all its resolutions and new beginnings.



**9 of Cups** - The wish card. All I want for Christmas is .....? In our card a monk is surrounded by cups of mulled wine. In his hand he holds a plate filled with mince pies. A card which indicates dreams coming true. A moment of happy bliss.



**10 of Cups** - A feeling of shared joy with family and friends. In the card Christmas carollers sing happily and represents blessings and good times.



**Page of Cups** - Dressed in a holly patterned tunic, this young man brings a new outlook and inspiration into your life. He reminds us to enjoy those precious moments in life when all is well with the world.



**Knight of Cups** - A seasonal affair. Finding love during the holidays. He personifies the "courtship" period in a relationship.



**Queen of Cups** - A compassionate woman who brings with her; nurturing, love and sensitivity. This is the person who just magically seems to know your hearts desire and how to make your Christmas dream come true.



**King of Cups** - A man who is in control of showing his feelings but feels very deeply indeed. He is the one who will try his hardest to make sure the present he gets a person will be the best one of them all. Sometimes he misses but his heart is in the right place.



## CARD MEANINGS - WANDS



**Ace of Wands** - The hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Time to gather up the energy for the holiday shopping and errands. I always assign a certain restlessness to this card, an indication that it's time to get up and go.



**2 of Wands** – In the holiday context this card indicates planning. The countdown to Christmas has begun. It's time to book the vacation if you're travelling during the holiday. It's time to plan the meals, gifts and parties. As the figure looks upon the special gift he plans on giving a loved one, behind him a dove sits on the ground watching him.



**3 of Wands** – The two is about the planning of the holiday. The three is about the footwork, making it all happen. Now is the time to go out there and contend with crowds, go shopping and get everything you need to make the seasonal festivities special. Geese are seen walking behind him.



**4 of Wands** - Attending family celebrations. The holidays are the perfect time to visit and celebrate with family that you don't see as much during the year. In the foreground pheasants can be seen walking about in the snow.



**5 of Wands** - Elves enjoying some light hearted play. The card depicts the conflict that naturally occurs during the busy part of the season. This could be a little strife caused at a sale or tit for tats with relatives during the holidays. The Christmas season causes some people a great deal of stress for many reasons; the days are shorter, the crowds are larger and people may, in some cases, be less patient while out.



**6 of Wands** - Achievement, success and recognition by family and friends. In the holiday context this could mean you pulled off the perfect holiday with your great planning and holiday spirit. The horse is draped in an ivy patterned blanket.



**7 of Wands** - Santa's helper protects the gifts! Competition and struggle. Again in the context of Christmas this reminds me of the parents fighting and competing with each other for the desired toy of the year like in the movie Jingle All the Way.



## CARD MEANINGS - WANDS



**8 of Wands** - Fast movement. I think of this card as either travelling or legwork. In any case you're moving forward fast.



**9 of Wands** - A shepherd watches his sheep by night. This card represents Problems and setbacks that need to be overcome. During the holiday many problems can come up that threaten to end the joy of the season; mixed up orders, gift returns, the special present can't be found anywhere and glitter all over the place. This card indicates the need to keep both your chin up and your holiday spirit intact. It will soon be over and the New Year promises new beginnings and resolutions. You will survive. Lol



**10 of Wands** - Feeling worn out and overburdened. Holiday burnout. Some of this could be avoided if you ask people for help.



**Page of Wands** - An active young person who could possibly help you with errands during the holiday.



**Knight of Wands** - Travelling and going on vacation. Movement by land. Like the other male figures in the court cards, he appears to be wearing an outfit patterned with the symbol of Ouroboros, an ancient symbol first traced to Egypt (which probably explains the pyramids found in the original Wands court cards)



**Queen of Wands** - This woman is a great planner and loves to be the host at social gatherings. She's very active and actually enjoys running errands, meeting people and going to events. She likes to be involved and on the move. She holds a sunflower and her black cat sits lovingly by her side.



**King of Wands** - This is a man who is in charge. An authority figure that may represent your boss, father or significant other. I think of him as Emperor lite. On the left is his Christmas tree, decorated with apples. A salamander, often associated with fire, can be seen close to his throne in the foreground.



## CARD MEANINGS - PENTACLES



**Ace of Pentacles** - This card represents money, a gift or financial opportunities. A perfect card for this time of year!



**2 of Pentacles** - I look at this card as balancing the books. The amount of money coming in opposed to the amount of money going out. Keep it real folks. During the holiday season the temptation is to spend a lot of money, especially to make our children and loved ones happy. People get into all kinds of credit debt. This card represents a healthy balance of what's being earned and spent.



**3 of Pentacles** - The card of labour or it could be something like decorating the Christmas tree. It is a public display after all. The mummers' dance around happily as the craftsman busies himself with work



**4 of Pentacles** - Saving. Economy, Thrift. Making a little go along way. Smart spending. Our character here was designed to look like Ebenezer Scrooge clinging tightly to his money.



**5 of Pentacles** - Poverty. Neediness. This card reminds us that some people don't have a Christmas celebration and the next card shows what to do to help others who are less fortunate than ourselves.



**6 of Pentacles**- Generosity. Giving. Receiving gifts. This card epitomizes what the holiday season is about. It's a season that speaks to our heart, our feeling of goodwill and generosity and to our sense of humanity. The six reminds us that if we're doing well, we should share our wealth with those that have less.



**7 of Pentacles**- Hard work. A holiday break. A robin sits perched on the snowy leaves.



**8 of Pentacles**- Our card depicts an elf hard at work for Father Christmas. Dedication, focus and mastery. Making decorations for the tree or holiday adornments.



## CARD MEANINGS - PENTACLES



**9 of Pentacles** - An independent person enjoying their wealth. This card could represent a boss or a merchant. Perhaps even someone you know who's alone during the season and is too proud to let people know about it. This reminds me of the person who has everything, or so people think, except a friend.



**10 of Pentacles** - This card speaks to me of visiting parents and extended family over the holidays with the traditional exchange of gifts, feasting and good cheer. Home for the holidays. In the background mummers' dance around an outdoor tree.



**Page of Pentacles** - I would say in this context, the card may represent the querents child. A young person who is a student or undergoing a course of study.



**Knight of Pentacles** - This is the worker bee. He's patient and determined. He might seem a bit slow to move but he's reliable. On his helmet and on the horses head, can be seen oak leaves. Oak trees symbolize endurance and strength and in mythology, was an important tree to figures like Zeus and Thor.



**Queen of Pentacles** - Mother. This is the queen who will bake the cookies and take care of the family. She is a homemaker. In the foreground we can see wild turkey, a popular bird at this time of year.



**King of Pentacles** - This is the patient knight all grown up. A fatherly figure, he's managed to build a business and become quite successful due to his dedication to a task and determination. He provides for his family and takes care of those he loves and employs. The pattern on his clothing is made up of grapes, which represent abundance.



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## CARD MEANINGS - SWORDS



**Ace of Swords** - This card represents the importance of having a clear mind and good judgement for success. Rationality. Icicles cling to the blade, perhaps the beginning of a icy reception. Don't shut people out during the holidays. It could also be a sign that finding one's success may prove to be a challenging journey.



**2 of Swords** - Having to make a difficult choice and feeling unable to do it. This could mean saying no to the temptation of overextending yourself with that tempting credit offer during the holidays or whether or not to invite that problematic relative over for Christmas dinner. A hard choice needs to be made.



**3 of Swords** - Sorrow and separation. Maybe the family's broken or a divorce is on the horizon. Don't let your heart become too cold as it can be hard to come back from. If it is possible, reach out to someone.



**4 of Swords** - Illness or rest. Holidays can be very stressful and maybe for now you need to take it easy. Ivy surrounds the resting figure and a robin watches over him.



**5 of Swords** - Feeling defeated. Tension with family and friends. Someone has taken advantage of you. Maybe you feel put upon during the holidays by family demands or you have given way more than you have received. Seagulls both fly over head and walk close to the man in the foreground.



**6 of Swords** - Moving toward calmer waters. This usually happens after you buy all the gifts and everything you need for the perfect Christmas day. The hustle and bustle settled down and now you can relax a bit. The ferryman breaks through the icy water to bring the boat across the lake. Is he following the star in the distance, using it as a guide? regardless, he takes his passengers safely across.



**7 of Swords** - Theft. Someone is stealing from you or taking something that doesn't belong to them. Credit card fraud. You may also be feeling ripped off.



**8 of Swords** - Feeling trapped in a bad situation. Isolation. The feeling of not knowing what to do with a particular problem.



## CARD MEANINGS - SWORDS



**9 of Swords** - Worry and anxiety; common at this time of year for many. Something is keeping you up at night. It's ok to ask for help. The card of nightmares and sometimes imaginary fears...in other words, you may be working yourself up into a fright without really needing to.



**10 of Swords** - Ruin of all kinds. Given the subject matter it could be financial or a relationship breaks down. While this is a devastating card, remind the client that with every ending there is a chance for a new beginning. The sun rises in the background to remind us that even though things are dark, it will not be that way forever.



**Page of Swords** - A curious youngster. It can also represent a spy or an envious person. Perhaps the type of youngster that might take a peek at the gifts before they are supposed to be opened! A curious mind with a thirst for knowledge.



**Knight of Swords** - A family member or friend who stirs things up. Also acting very quickly, oftentimes without thinking. Can sometimes be a troublemaker.



**Queen of Swords** - An idealistic intellectual figure, good with words and possibly interested in causes and political affairs, similar to the King of Swords. She may be a lonely single woman. One who may feel heartbroken and left out of things.



**King of Swords** - This figure may be an intellectual, teacher, lawyer, judge or policeman. Also a man who uses his head over his heart. This card could warn of an encounter with the law or authorities over the holiday season. He's more interested in your ideas than anything else. The kind of person who would bring politics up at a family celebration, heaven forbid!



**3 of Pentacles** - A bonus card with the deck (as of 2018). The children decorate a snowman together with pentacle shaped stones. This could indicate Team building, team work and creative projects.