

08 Tarot Trump Alphabet Names

In this article we will discuss the Tarot cards and their relation to world civilization. A standard Tarot deck has 78 cards, consisting of 22 Majors, 16 Court Cards, and 40 Minors. Right now we are going to focus on the 22 Trump Cards, also known as Majors.

One of the key aspects of the Trumps is that they include the whole original alphabet system. The modern adaptations of this alphabet are used all over the world. Even the Chinese who still write in characters use the alphabet in a system called “Pinyin” (phonetic spelling) for looking up the characters in a dictionary or spelling out their pronunciations for foreigners. Also in scientific papers English and Greek alphabet letters are widely used to encode chemical formulas and mathematical expressions. All came from the “Tarot Trump Alphabet.” The letters have changed a bit, but with imagination you can see the relation to the signs we use today.

It may be that we have here a legacy tradition from late Egyptian and Greco-Roman times that preserves an already secret tradition showing the link to Egyptian civilization. It may have been a sort of Qabbalah “Sesame Street” for people wanting to know what was “really” going on in that great crisis period of world civilization as Egypt lost its leadership in the ancient world.

Knowledge and wisdom were being passed on to Phoenicians, Jews, and later to Greeks so that all would not be lost in the turbulent times.

So today we are going to introduce the ancient Hebrew/Phoenician letters that go with the 22 Tarot Trumps. These Semitic peoples had business or cultural exchange with ancient Egypt. Some studied deeply. When they created the letters, they designed them as simple pictographs and ideographs related to their daily life so they would be easy to remember.

Some symbols are parts of the body, others are tools, domesticated animals, and basic household items. The idea was to have a simple mnemonic system so people could remember the letters. This is just an initial introduction.

Hebrew Name	Meaning	Trump	Egyptian God
𐤀 <u>ALePh</u>	Bull	Sun	Ra
𐤁, 𐤂 <u>BeYT</u>	Temple, House	World	Geb
𐤃 <u>GiMeL</u>	Camel	Chariot	Horus
𐤄, 𐤅 <u>DaLeT</u>	Door to Life, Love Mound	Priestess	Isis
𐤆 <u>HeY</u>	Flail	Emperor	Shewe
𐤇 <u>WaW</u>	Shepherd's Staff	High Priest	Thoth
𐤈 <u>ZaYN</u>	Harvesting Scythe	Death	Anubis
𐤉 <u>HeT</u>	Rope	Hanged Man	Baby Horus
𐤊 <u>TeYT</u>	Clay	Fortune Wheel	Khnem, Shay
𐤋 <u>YoD</u>	Hand	Strength	Sekhmet
𐤌 <u>KaPh</u>	Palm of Hand, Grip, Cave	Hermit	Bennew
𐤍 <u>LaMeD</u>	"Teaching" (Phallus)	Justice	Maat
𐤎 <u>MaYM</u>	Water	Moon	Serget
𐤏 <u>NuN</u>	Tiny (water)*	Star	Newet
𐤐 <u>\$aMeH</u>	Support	Empress	Mut Hathor
𐤑 <u>OaYN</u>	Eye	Magician	Osiris
𐤒 <u>PeH</u>	Mouth	Temperance	Nephtys
𐤓 <u>TzaD</u>	Shoot	Tower	Tem
𐤔 <u>QoPh</u>	Monkey	Fool	Baba Qeftenu
𐤕 <u>RAeSh</u>	Beginning, Head	Judgment	MesKhent
𐤖 <u>ShiN</u>	Teeth	Devil	Ammit, Set
𐤗 <u>TaW[M]</u>	Twin, Finish, Cancel	Lover	Ani

* [Semitic tribes often traveled in deserts. Water was essential for survival and had to be carried. Water is heavy. So having portable water on hand and using it effectively was a critical camping skill. This led to appreciation for other small liquids. Bathing was difficult, so fine essential oils were developed for health, cosmetic, and ritual uses.]

The pronunciations I give for the letters are just approximate, because the letters only represent consonants. No vowels were written, because you could tell from the consonants the general meanings of words. The vowels governed grammatical forms, and later began to be added as little dots and other markings. But in ancient times there were already many dialects of Hebrew and Phoenician depending on where people lived and influences from other languages. So we think of the earliest alphabet letters as forming the "root meanings" of words. Anyone who knew a Semitic language and the alphabet could figure out the general meaning of messages. In this manner the Semitic alphabet had some similarities with Egyptian, although the Egyptians still

depended on a wide variety of hieroglyphs and not that many words were cognate with Semitic. Egyptian is called a Hamitic language and has many connections with African languages, but the way they only wrote consonants was followed by the Semitic peoples.

In this article we present the letters in their traditional sequence. Why they have that sequence is an interesting topic for research. It does not seem random, and we may hazard some guesses about that later. However, it is different from any sequence of modern Tarot cards, in spite of there often being both numbers and letters on the cards. We have shown that this was all guesswork by people lacking knowledge of the original alphabet form, and despite the obvious fact that the old alphabet had 22 rather than 27 letters. So there is a lot of misinformation and disinformation on Tarot cards, and I have grown wary of using other decks. If you believe the Tarot arose in 15th century Europe or thereabouts, then why try to connect Tarot back to the old alphabet?

In the next article we will expand Hebrew “body part” letters to include all 22 letters, thus giving us a map of the human body. We will also include a traditional set of Tarot images in “alphabetical order” and line drawing images of the corresponding Egyptian Trumps for comparison.

I will also show how different the graphics for Egyptian letters are from Hebrew/Phoenician letters.

08 Study Questions

- * What is a very important role the Tarot Trumps played in the development of world civilization?
- * Why did the Egyptians allow Semitic peoples and later Greeks access to their secret wisdom?
- * Why did Semitic peoples go to Egypt?
- * What sorts of items did the letters symbolize and why?
- * Why are the pronunciations only approximate?

* The sequence of letters in the alphabet has remained very stable over time, though the Tarot Trumps do not follow that sequence at all. Do you have any thoughts as to why that might be? Could there be a reason for the order?