

Arcanum: 16

Zodiac Affinity: Mars (also a substitute for Capricorn in certain decks)

Element: Fire

As a "Yes" or "No" Card: No



### Overview

The Tower is the 16<sup>th</sup> card in the Major Arcana (in some decks it takes the place of the devil all together). Widely regarded as one of the most negative cards to draw; it is illustrated with a chaotic scene; fire, lightening, and people falling from a building; a truly horrifying spectacle.

The Tower shows a tall tower perched on the top of a rocky mountain; lightening strikes set the building alight, and two people leap from the windows, head first and arms outstretched. It is a scene of chaos and destruction.

The Tower itself is a solid structure, but because it has been built on shaky foundations, it only takes one bolt of lightning to bring it down. It represents ambitions and goals made on false promises.

The lightning also represents a sudden surge of energy and insight that leads to a breakthrough or revelation. It enters via the top of the building and knocks off the crown, symbolizing energy flowing down from the universe through the crown chakra. The people are desperate to escape from the burning building, not knowing what awaits them as they fall. Around them are 22 flames, representing the 12 signs of the zodiac and the 10 points of the Tree of Life, suggesting that even in times of disaster, there is always divine intervention.

### Keywords

*Chaos - Unexpected Events - Revelations - Destruction - Danger - Suffering -  
Cataclysm - Being Overthrown - Sudden Negative Change*

“An unexpected event that changes everything, that destroys all that no longer serves you and allows a breakthrough, a creating of a new and more appropriate reality.” –*Tarot of Pagan Cats, Lo Scarabeo.*



### Key Phrases

- I. Breakdown of the old to herald the new
- II. Acceptance that no defense is totally secure
- III. Learn to adapt and adjust quickly
- IV. Suddenly seeing the truth of a matter
- V. Dramatic upheaval
- VI. Having a change in fortune
- VII. Unexpected Challenges
- VIII. Chaos all around you

### General

The Tower represents a sudden, almost frightening change, disruption, and conflict. There may be a divorce, death of a loved one, financial failure, health problems, natural disaster, job loss or any event that shakes you to your core, affecting you spiritually, mentally, and physically; there is no escaping it. Change is here to tear things up, create chaos and destroy everything in its path (but trust in the universe, that it's to your Highest Good).

Just when you think you're safe and comfortable, a Tower moment hits and throws you for a loop. A lightning bolt of clarity and insight cuts through the lies and illusions you have been telling yourself, and now the truth comes to light. Your world may come crashing down before you, in ways you could never have imagined as you realize that you have been building your life on unstable foundations – false assumptions, mistruths, illusions, blatant lies, and so on. Everything you thought to be true has turned on its head. You are now questioning what is real and now what is not; what you can rely upon and what you cannot trust. This can be very confusing and disorienting, especially when your core belief systems are challenged. But over time, you will come to see that your original beliefs were built on a false understanding, and now your new belief systems are more representative of reality.

The best way forward is to let this structure self-destruct so you can rebuild and re-focus. And let's be real – with a card like the Tower, you have no choice but to surrender to the

destruction and chaos, no matter how unwanted or painful change is on this deep level is hard, but you need to trust that life is happening FOR you, not TO you and this is all for a reason. This destruction will allow new growth to emerge and your soul can evolve. After a Tower experience, you will grow stronger, wiser and more resilient as you develop a new perspective on life you did not even know existed. These moments are necessary for your spiritual growth and enlightenment, and truth and honesty will bring about a positive change, even if you experience pain and anxiety throughout the process.

Thankfully, the Tower doesn't always associate with pain and turmoil. If you are highly aware to your surroundings and in tune with your inner guidance system; than this Tarot card can indicate a spiritual awakening or revelation. You may be able to see cracks forming and take action before the whole structure begins to tumble down. You may create a massive transformation before you reach the point where change is your only option. In its most positive form, the Tower card is your opportunity to break free from the old ways of thinking that have been holding you back.



### Relationships

When it comes to work and education; things are going to get shaky and difficult. If you're working with somebody in a group project, try not to let them get under your skin. If you're in a contract or otherwise temporary job, it'll be worth looking for a backup plan. Just in case your current one doesn't go according to plan. If you're in school or college, you might have some recent experience with a big test; maybe you're waiting results, it is the end of the world if you get a bad mark.

In regards to finances – this just isn't the right time to splash your money about. Be conservative and save. Be sure that you're not buying that big thing on impulse. Do you *really* need it?

The Tower in romance is not a good sign. Make sure you know how your partner feels. The Tower usually means something unexpected and disastrous will happen, so be aware. You might now want to think about it, but is there a chance your partner has been cheating on you, lying, or intends to leave? If you have proof and are uncomfortable with it, try to discuss it. Remember that you want the truth, not to live with a lie/liar.

In relationships such as friendships, again, not a good sign... pay attention to your friends. Do you still want to be in your current group of friends? Does one of them know a dangerous secret about you... it might come out soon.

When the Tower shows up in relation to health, it means you should really pay attention to the signs your body is telling you. You yourself know if you aren't treating it right, and you know how to get healthier through diet and exercise. Laziness is the biggest disease and you can combat it with willpower. It can also mean that something unexpected might happen, so if you're naturally clumsy, watch out and try not to hurt yourself or break a bone. Mentally, don't try to cover how you're feeling with alcohol or drugs, they only mask their feelings.

In areas of religion and spirituality, The Tower may mean that you have come to a breakthrough. This can be positive or negative. Some new fact may bring an existing belief system crashing to the ground. It might also mean that a belief system you don't subscribe to might become more appealing, as you find out an aspect of it is actually riddled with truth.



### **Past**

In the past position, it can mean that you may have had a traumatic event happen in your past. It could be distant or recent, but it is still affecting you now. Sometimes we experience things that we can't live with and our senses are overloaded trying to comprehend it; a sudden death, a cheating spouse or even something as big as a natural disaster. You have to remember that it happened in the past and you are still around today, living with it in your head. You've grown since; try to understand how much you've changed here.

### **Present**

The Tower in the present position shows us that conflict is just around the corner, or maybe even currently ongoing. Try to deal with it as best you can. Arguments might happen a bit easier, and there might be something on your mind.

### **Future**

In the future connotation it represents coming challenges that are going to be extremely disrupting to your regular life. Just as it was happening now, when it comes, try to deal with

it in the present. Worrying never helps. Can you see the signs of something falling apart already? It may well be that the inevitable is going to happen, but having some foreknowledge will help you a lot.

### In Reverse

#### *Personal Transformation - Fear of Change - Averting Disaster*

In reverse, The Tower can lose some of its negative meanings, but you aren't completely safe from the bad influence the card resonates with. There is still a danger, but it could be delayed. Are you expecting some bad news, but it hasn't happened yet? Do not give up your worry, because it will happen soon. You can take a sigh of relief, you may have some breathing room and time to prepare. There will always be bad things in life, you cannot always avoid them, but at least now you have some time to prepare.

The Tower suggests that you are undergoing a significant and personal transformation and upheaval. This differs from the experience of the upright Tower where the change is often because of external circumstances and may even feel forced upon you. Instead, with the reversed Tower card, you are instigating the change and calling into question your fundamental belief systems, values, purpose and meaning. You may go through a spiritual awakening as you discover a new spiritual path. You may change your beliefs and opinions about important topics, realizing that you can no longer support older models. Or, in more dramatic cases, you may go through an existential crisis where you seriously question your life's purpose. While this can be an unsettling time, trust in the process and knowing it is for the best. You are creating change and transformation so you can step into a new and more evolved version of yourself.



At times, the reversed Tower can be a sign that you are resisting change and delaying the necessary destruction and upheaval. You may be in denial that change is occurring. Or you may be clinging to an old belief system even though you know they are no longer relevant or healthy for you. As much as you don't want to, you need to go through this difficult time to learn a valuable lesson and make progress in your life. And know that if you continue to

resist this change, it will only force its way into your life even more. The growth and transformation that the tower card brings are inevitable. No amount of hiding or denying will make it go away, and it will only get louder with potentially greater upheaval.

Finally, the reversal of the Tower can reduce the impact of the change about to enter your life, particularly if you are tuned in to your intuition. You may be forewarned or have an intuitive sense that something big is about to happen, and you can plan ahead to avoid (or minimize) the destruction that lies ahead.