Making Tarot
A Guide to Tarot and Oracle Deck Creation

By Natalie Meraki
Creator of the Mood Tarot, Mood Oracle and Young Witch Tarot

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Thank you for reading my tarot and oracle deck creation guide! My name is Natalie Meraki, and I successfully created and funded 3 decks in 2019/2020. I admit that I don't know everything on the subject, and I will update this guide as I continue to learn, but I have done a ton of research on deck creation and crowdfunding through Kickstarter and would like to pass along my knowledge to those needing direction. I'll attempt to make this guide as comprehensive and understandable as possible.

I'm not working on this guide alone! You will see lots of extra tips added along the way from a great group of creators I am close with. With the knowledge of all these experts combined, this guide will serve as a helpful resource to you on your journey.

Approximate Timeline:

Creation: 6 months to possibly years
Kickstarter: 3-4 weeks
Production: 1 month
Shipping by sea: 1 month
Sales: FOREVAH!
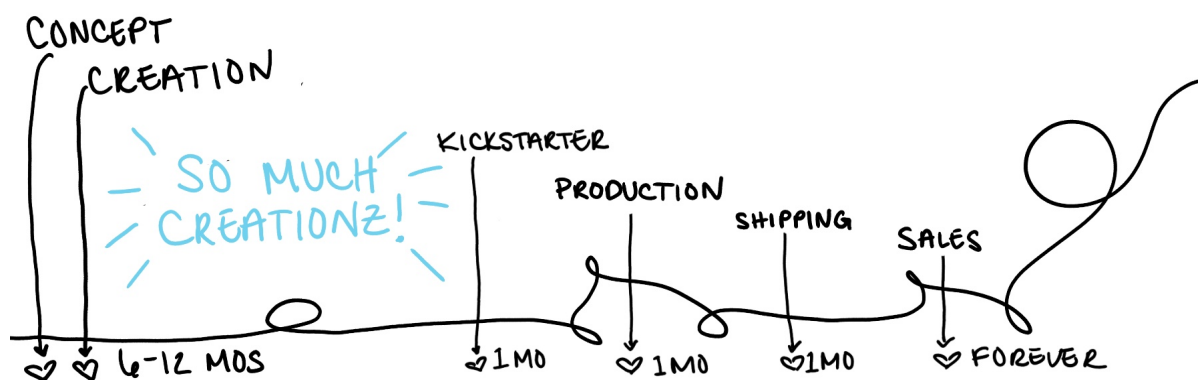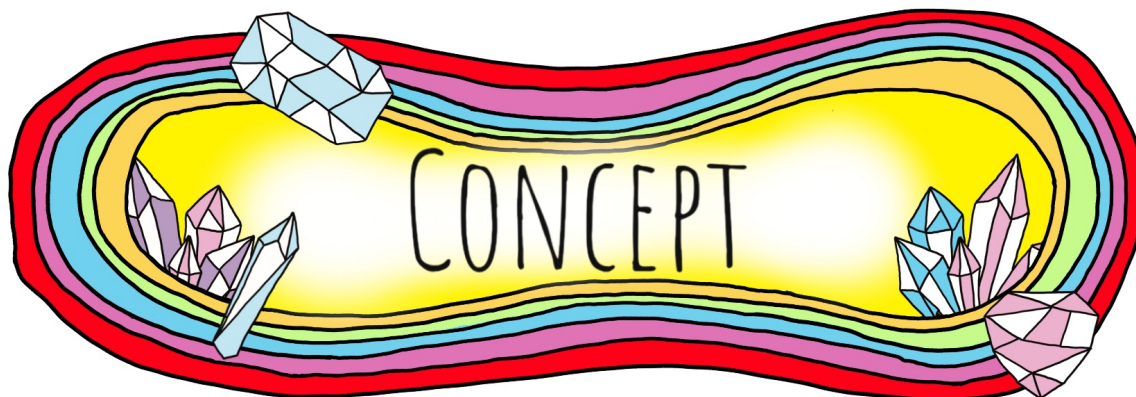
1. Concept

Of course it all starts with a concept. I wouldn't worry about whether a concept has been done before, or even over-done. You'd think cats are out of the question, but would I buy Cats in Onesies Tarot? I don't know...the main thing is that you choose what's authentic to you. **That's how you find your niche**. So if you already have a large YouTube following of people who love to watch your cats run around in onesies, then yeah, maybe that would make sense for you.

Hopefully most people that are creating a deck have been in the online tarot community and do have somewhat of an online following. If you aren't yet, get there. You need a Facebook group, and an Instagram in the least. More on that later, but just take a raw look at what your brand is. What's your vibe? Who's your audience? These things need to go in the beginning of your **business plan**. They will be the corner-stone for this entire process and you must stay true to them.
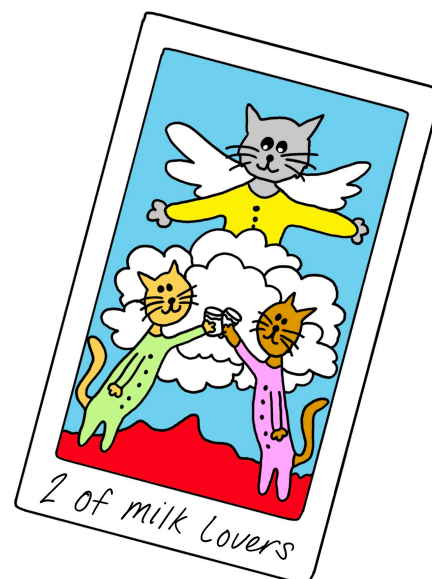

That's why starting your Kickstarter story right away is very important as well. You want to clearly identify right up front: What's your story? Why is your deck great? Why is your deck needed? (And later you'll have to think about: How can people get it? What else do you want to offer them? Do you have stretch goals? How will these items be made? How long will they take to produce? How long will they take to ship to me? How will I ship them to other people?) For now, just focus on what it is about the concept of this deck that is completely, **authentically you**. That's how niches are found and where the money is at.

Pick a name. One that feels right. Don't overthink it. Be sure to do a search and check that it's not copyrighted, and that the website and social media handles are available.

This guide is how to Kickstart a self-published tarot or oracle deck. I have never used any other crowdfunding platforms so I can't speak to them. Since my days as a children's book creator I have always known that you get street cred with traditional publishing, but the money is in self-publishing. I think a little bit of both would be nice, but this guide does not include information on traditional publishing. Here's an interesting publication by Benebell Wen on **Traditional vs. Indie publishing**.
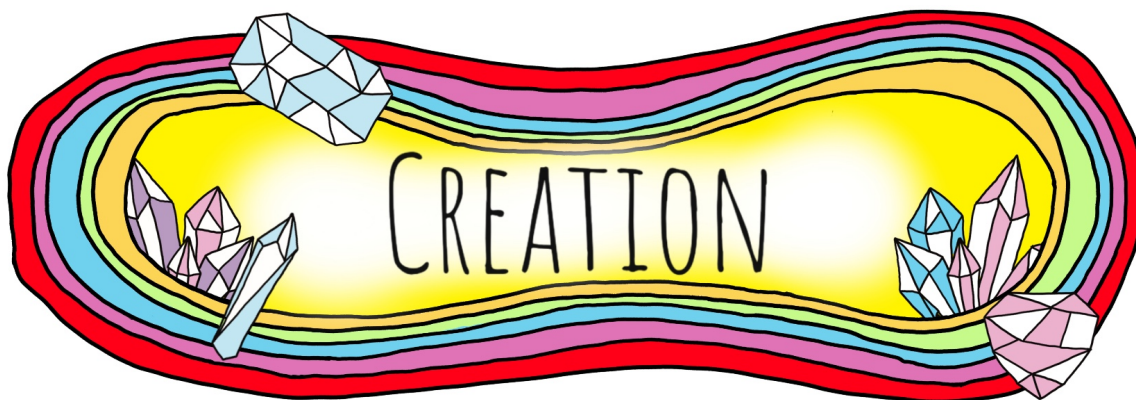
2. Creation

Advertise

Right out of the gate you want to create a **Facebook group** and **Instagram account**. Name it after your deck, or something close. People need to be able to search your deck by name. Your Instagram will come right up in a Google search. Start sharing your process with people immediately because that's how you create fans. In most cases, you can even share your process in larger online tarot groups to garner fans, just check the rules, but people love to see new deck art. You may even ask an admin if you feel unclear. People will ask how to be notified when the deck has launched, so make sure you have an email sign up list and a **Kickstarter profile** link for them to sign up for. You can collect 1,000 emails through **Mailchimp** for free.

For Facebook groups, You can and should invite your friends and family, but Facebook will also send you lots of new members through suggestions. Hook them with behind-the-scenes thoughts, photos, videos, progress, difficulties, anxieties, all of it! **Show your fan base your authentic self and they will buy your product as fast as they can.**

For Instagram, share your process the same but remember a few key things; you need square images, you need 30 hashtags of varying popularity (placed in the comments, not the text, please,) and you need to switch the hashtags up now and then, or I hear IG will shadowban you. **Hashtag generators** like **Tag-0-Matic** can be found in the app store to assist. In your bio, make sure you have a link to your Kickstarter profile, your website (that tells about your deck) and whatever other links you need people to have. You can post multiple links in the one space they give you for a link by using **linktree.com**.

> ⭐ Tip from Chev Gower
> Tragic 8-Ball Oracle
>
> Instead of using Linktree, you can make a landing page on your website with all your links, driving more traffic to your own website.
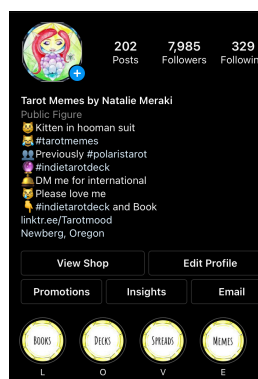
In your bio, include hashtags like #indietarotdeck, and **use emojis**. Check out my Instagram accounts, @tarotmood or @youngwitchdeck for examples. You can also set up the little highlights, which you can learn how to do on YouTube.

Only post once a day on your main account page, and as much as you want in stories. I've even found that once weekly posts on IG get way more action than daily. But do use IG. It is a selling machine.

Start collecting fans! Via social media, email lists, Kickstarter profiles, however you can do it. Get those contacts, but also make them care about what you're doing by involving them every step along the way.

Printer

Pick a printer and get **templates** to work with right away. You do not want to get half-way through your deck or book to realize you haven't been doing it right all along and have to start over. To pick a printer you can go on Alibaba.com and read the reviews, get quotes, shop around, or you can try printers from around the world. Here is a pretty good list of worldwide printers, but it definitely doesn't cover all of the Chinese printers. If you want to make as much money on your decks as possible you just have to go through a Chinese printer, as far as I know. I have a good one that I trust if you need a connection.

The printer will want to know:

- How many cards?
- What size*?
- Is there a book?
- How long?
- Color or b/w
- How do you want it bound*?
- What kind of box* do you want?
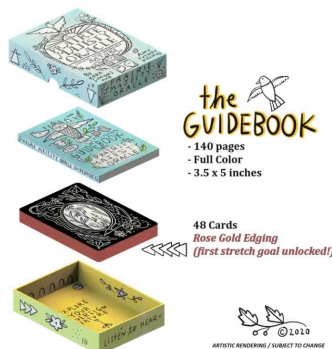- Do you want extras* like gold foil or gilded edges?
- Bordered or borderless

⚡ Tip from Jess Shuler: Suparlunaris Tarot

Make sure your printer is who they say they are. Check reference by contacting creators.

⚡ Tip from Kara Simons: Prairie Majesty Oracle

Ask your printer for a box of free samples of their work. You only have to pay shipping, which is around $30.

*I've listed SOME options but doubt I've covered them all. Check with your printer, some can make **whatever you dream up**.

the GUIDEBOOK
- 140 pages
- Full Color
- 3.5 x 5 inches

48 Cards
Rose Gold Edging (first stretch goal unlocked!)

ARTISTIC RENDERING / SUBJECT TO CHANGE

You need all this information for the quote and to form your vision. The printer will have lots of styles and options for you to choose from. This is one of the most fun parts, in my opinion.

All mass deck printers will have a **500 or 1,000 deck MOQ** (minimum order quantity) so be ready to make a large purchase. They usually require 30% of the production cost down and 70% before shipping. You don't have to pay a dime until you get your Kickstarter money, so just make sure to project your delivery time out far enough in your campaign info. Give customers a 2.5 - 3 month ETA from the time of your down payment.

I recommend ordering 1,000 decks at first. You get a discount for ordering higher quantities. I am sometimes tempted to order 2,000 decks, but I like to keep my **print runs small** in case I'd like to make changes between them to keep the deck limited edition. For example, I made 2 orders of 1,000 decks each for my Mood Tarot deck, but for my next 1,000 decks I'll be changing the box. Changing things up a little potentially brings back customers who will want the upgrade, and makes your runs **limited edition** which is good for collectors. (Order 1,000 if you can, but **set your funding goal for 500 decks** to keep your campaign goal low. Then if you over-fund and can buy 1,000, great!)

This is what 1,000 decks looks like 🙀

You may need a designer to help you submit the files in the correct form to the printer, put together the box design, and layout your book format. If you can do all that yourself that's fantastic, but if not I highly suggest [Kaylani Perisho](#) who has done all of my work and is very prompt, affordable, easy to work with and has quality results.

UV and foil artwork will need to be vectorized for submission to the printer.

Making the deck
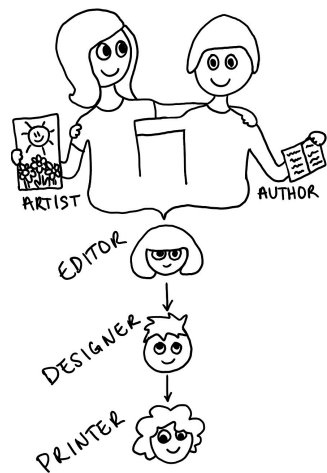
Decide the **artist and the author**. You can do both jobs yourself, you can hire one out, you can hire it all out.

I have gone the route of doing it all myself, and the route of having an author that I pay an ongoing royalty. Hiring an artist or author is the tricky part because, unless you have the money to hire one upfront, you have to **find someone who's willing to take on the risk of crowdfunding with you.** I don't think you can find people like that on Fiverr. This actually makes me think I should create a network of people who are willing to take the challenge on together, but for now there is no such thing. You kinda have to know somebody and get them excited about the idea with you. I will update this when I get together a list of talent willing to work on hope of a successful crowdfunding campaign, but until then, look amongst your friends. I bet you'll be surprised.

The other great thing about hiring an artist or author is that there's **one more person that's very invested in the success of your deck** and they will market it as their own. There's an entire extra sphere of potential sales, especially if you give the collaborator a percentage.

Some creators might like to hire their authors or artists for a flat fee, but I think this only works if you have the money upfront. With the Young Witch Tarot brand, I give both my authors royalties, and I also paid them a bonus from the Kickstarter funds.

What percentage should you pay in royalties? Depends entirely on your situation. If it is a tight-knit collaboration and you feel you are doing equal work, you may feel that a 50/50 partnership is right for you. If you are doing all of the Kickstarter set-up and marketing mostly on your own, it is your concept, you're doing all the business and shipping, and you just have more responsibility in general - then the royalty percentage should be adjusted accordingly. This agreement needs to come right up front and could feel awkward. Just try to be fair and a good listener. Whomever is doing the shipping should keep the entire shipping fee.

If you're the artist, you're generally going to either follow a classic deck style, such at the Tarot De Marseille, the Thoth deck, or most likely the Rider Waite Smith, very closely or more artistically. I choose to create all my decks basically identical to RWS because my decks are more focused on education and I feel no piece of symbolism should be left out. You really do lose a lot of important symbolism in the more artistic decks, don't you? I just love me some Pammy. But still, it would be boring if all decks only resembled these 3 systems, so I myself am looking forward to making a very artsy deck one day.

You can sit with each card and maybe have a few books lying around and your phone handy for searches and just take notes of all the important things you feel about that card. Do this with each before you even start sketching. Then go through your notes on each card and sketch what you feel. (My method, anyway. I'm sure there are many.) This is a good thing for the author to do as well.

You probably have a favorite medium. I've seen people paint their cards actual tarot size on paper with paints and pens. I like to do mine digitally on my iPad Pro in Procreate. All methods work. I would suggest to people that are IRL painting their cards to make them double the intended ultimate size. Then you can have them scanned in or take photographs to digitize them. You can even do a hybrid where you fix the cards up digitally after they're scanned in. Doesn't hurt to go bigger on digital art as well. Here is a good article on how to properly scan your IRL art. Printers sometimes even prefer up to 600 DPI (dots per inch.)

Sketch everything first so that all the art is congruent, and make sure it can be erased. I've made the mistake of switching my style on little things half-way through. Sketch first, then choose a **color palette**, then fill in. A color palette is very important for aesthetics. You can just go down a Google rabbit hole until you find something that strikes you. Certain colors compliment each other and a pre-made palette is put together by professionals. Please consider incorporating all sorts of **diversity in the people depicted**.

Early on, start making little sketches of the deck that you can share with your fans. All kinds of little doodles and even quotes that fit with your concept.

For printing your art, know that all printers use a **CMYK color profile**. It tends to be a little darker/less vibrant than original colors or RGB digital colors. My yellows are forever turning out greenish. There's really no way around it. Just do the best you can and give the final result to the universe. Haha. Sad face.
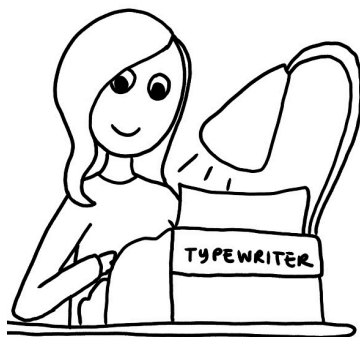
If you're the author, make sure you are in very clear communication and understanding with the artist. Make sure you're vibin'. (Same goes for the artist.)

If you're formatting the book yourself, set up your file with the dimensions and **layout** instructions your printer gives you and do a little test run with your printer first. Write out a few pages and submit them to check that they are set up correctly. If you're hiring a designer you can just write away and the designer will make everything beautiful, but do try to keep your descriptions around the same length.

In the beginning of your book you'll set up your pages with **"front matter"**. Great information on that here. You can also see how I set up my books here. There is "back matter" as well. You can look at other deck's guidebooks to see what parts of the layout you like and don't like, and of course take your own creative liberties.

It's important to write in a **strong voice** that is uniquely your own. Don't try to write how you think sounds technical or proper. Just let it flow and be yourself. Oh, but no matter how good you think you are with grammar and spelling, **you MUST hire a real editor!** I have a couple I recommend, including Nature Humphries.

Give it your style. Share excerpts along the way with your fans.

Identifiers

You may wish to add an **ISBN** and **UPC** code to the back of your deck. (Goes on the back of the deck, not the book.) These are "identifiers" that are nice in cases of using a fulfillment center and selling on Amazon. You don't have to have one, two of my decks don't, especially since they don't include books so they wouldn't get ISBNs, only UPCs. I would always have an ISBN for a deck with a book, but it still does not have to be printed on the deck if you don't want.

- Universal Product Code (UPC) is a 12-digit bar code used extensively for retail packaging in the United States.

- The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is a unique commercial book identifier barcode. Each ISBN code uniquely identifies a book. ISBN has 13 digits.

ISBNs must be purchased through bowker.com. They vary in prices. I bought a block of 10 for $300, but I've seen a single number go for $150. UPCs can be purchased as an addition to your ISBN through myidentifiers.com (where your identifiers are stored online.) for $30, or you can get them free, but I could never figure that out. Google "free UPCs" and there are lots of options.

A fulfillment center will require you to have a UPC on each deck, but if you don't have one they'll just print sticker UPCs for you and attach them to the bubble wrap around your deck. This costs around ten cents per sticker.

Listing on Amazon is easier with a UPC or ISBN, but if you don't have one you can apply for a GTIN exemption. Here are directions on how to do that.

I don't think most stores care if there's an UPC, but if you do add one, do not list the suggested retail because they hate that.

Pricing

As far as I understand, indie tarot decks run between $40 - $100. I see most of them priced between **$40 - $60**. Just take into account how fancy your deck is. Did you put down a lot of money for a jazzy box, gold foil, gilded edges, maybe you spent a ton on vectorizing fees? Add up the costs and see what you spent per deck, including shipping to you, but that's just good info to know. You don't necessarily need to base what you charge on your costs. For my Mood deck (tuck box, no book, no frills besides waterproof...) I charge $40, and for my Young Witch deck (storybook box, red foil, soft-touch paper, waterproof cards…) I charge $50. A friend of mine just listed her deck at $55 and it's just a tuck box, but she could charge that much for various reasons, so she did. You just have to feel it out. I am not above polling my group either. Always poll the group to feel out your audience. For the record, I have never seen a $100 deck that's not OOP, but maybe I'm uncultured. Haha.

Start creating add-ons for your campaign

Pick a couple of **Pantone colors** that best represent your **brand**. You'll choose these from your color palette and use them throughout your work on the deck. For instance, I always use Pantone 100C, a bright yellow for all my backgrounds. Canva has a great article about picking brand colors here, but you can just use whatever you feel makes you happy! Then just find a Pantone color extremely close to it. Your printer can help you, they have the swatches and a good eye, usually.

If you're ordering **stickers**, **pins**, **bags**, that kind of thing, you'll want to make sure you use the same Pantone colors across the board. I learned that the hard way with my Young Witch stickers. They just printed the yellow background in CMYK and it came out gold.

Layout and plan all your designs and check for congruity **before ordering**. I've seen people sell jewelry, readings, card stands, crystals, bags, all kinds of extra stuff in the reward tiers or in the add-on store after the campaign.

I order everything off alibaba.com. Just make sure you **check their reviews**! You can also order samples, but I have always just checked the reviews and been fine. That's probably not the best advice, but just sharing my experience. If you purchase through PayPal make sure to send the money under Goods and Services so you have a money back guarantee. Alibaba's payment method has a 100% satisfaction guarantee and the fees are slightly cheaper than PayPal.

ADD-ON'S :

$3 – Waterproof Sticker
Add some Gentle Tarot love to anything!
No extra shipping

$6 – Set of 4 Postcards
Shipping
$1 – US
$2 – International

$10 – Music CD & download
Shipping
$3 – US
$8 – International

$20 – Earrings!
Single pair
Shipping
$3 – US
$5 – International

$25 – Mystery Print
Printed/matted by the artist
Shipping
$4 – US   5"x7"
$8 – International

$25 – Session Cloth
Shipping
$3 – US
$5 – International

You will likely receive mold charges of around $40 for your first round of pins, but they then have the mold made for future orders. The more you order, the cheaper the item price. For

instance, if I order 50 stickers they cost .87 ea. If I order 200 they cost .25 ea. I have good vendors of stickers, pins or canvas bags for anyone interested.

These will be great to share pics of with your fans as they come in, and get people hyped for the campaign.

Order a proof

Before you can finish your crowdfunding campaign with pictures and videos you'll need a sample deck. (AKA a proof.) Sample decks can be VERY expensive through mass printers because they don't have the print-on-demand equipment that places like makeplayingcards.com has. MPC has it's limits though. They can only print a 50 page saddle-stitch bound book (stapled in the center.) and they can't do all the fancy box types. One way to get around this issue is to order the closest to what you want and present the fancier qualities you would ultimately like as stretch goals. Otherwise you're looking at $400-$900 for a proof deck through your mass printer.

3. Kickstarter

Getting started

It's good to start building your Kickstarter campaign very early in your work. You can line out your **purpose and mission** in the story section, set up your bank account information, and make a creator's profile with a link for people to follow. I would suggest getting as many potential customers as possible to sign up for your email list AND your Kickstarter profile. This way Kickstarter will alert them whenever you have a project go live, and they will also receive an email from you. The double whammy just seems to work best. So make your profile immediately.
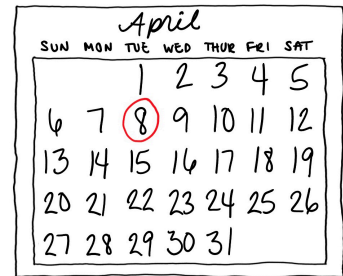
I use Kickstarter because:

• Little money needed to start. (Just the cost of prototypes.)
• Can try unique/wild ideas.
• If it flops nobody gets charged. (Risk free.)
• Kickstarter brings customers BIG TIME!

Plan a launch date

According to Kickstarter algorithms:

Best time to launch: **A Tuesday in March or April**
Worst time to launch: A weekend in December

Set a funding goal

Try to keep your goal **under $10K**. You may need to plan for 500 decks to stay under that, and then order 1,000 decks if you can due to over-funding.

Your goal should include:

500 Deck Funding Goal
Decks = $3,000
Sticker add-on = $150
Pin add-on = $200
Designer = $250
Editor = $150
Author bonus = $500
          $4,350
Kickstarter fees = $217
PayPal fees = $174
Taxes = $435
Safety net = $435
Shipping = BACKERKIT
          $5,437

- Cost of decks including shipping to you and (4%) transaction fees
- Cost of add-ons including shipping to you and transaction fees
- Cost of artists, authors or designers including transaction fees
- Kickstarter fees (5% of amount pledged including any shipping fees.)
- Taxes (It's recommended to just go with 10% here.)
- Safety net (10%)
- Shipping?

(Check out an example in my business plan.)

Shipping

🍩👉 **Swag on Swag Action**

🍩 The stickers are for your car, computer and journal, but the pins are for your purse, jacket, hat and mean uncle's face!

🙏 Namfukste.

PLZ NOTE: SHIPPING WILL BE CHARGED THROUGH BACKERKIT AT THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN. This is to avoid having to guess what my shipping fees are and adding them to my goal, as that is risky AF.

US shipping will be $5, and international $15.

Kickstarter will take 5% of any funds collected through them, including shipping funds. Also, it's kind of hard to know exactly how much you'll need to add for shipping to your goal, making it kind of a scary gamble. This is why I recommend a side program called **Backerkit**. I have a very basic understanding of Backerkit, but here it is: your backers don't pay shipping in Kickstarter. They are charged shipping later, along with the issuance of a survey where their shipping information will be collected. If you do this route make sure that you are very clear in your story and reward tier descriptions that you plan on charging them shipping in a separate transaction later on.

There is a lot more to Backerkit and I would start with reading all of their blogs. They are excellent and they offer extremely step-by-step advice on how to be chosen as a Project We Love on Kickstarter. I read all their blogs before my first campaign and was chosen as a PWL for 2 of my 3 campaigns. (The third was in December. Oof.) You will definitely need to do your research on Backerkit.

Besides what I mentioned above about shipping, you can also offer people add-ons in Backerkit. You list your add-ons, descriptions and shipping costs for the swag you made and even extra decks, and customers select what they'd like. Charges for the add-ons are requested of customers, along with shipping fees. Kickstarter now allows add-ons, but as of January 2021 I read that it's a beta feature and is really buggy, costing people hundreds of dollars. The Backerkit process is a little tricky, but everyone I know that uses it figures it out ok in the end and is ultimately happy with their decision to use Backerkit.

Backerkit takes 2% of your entire Kickstarter funding and 5% of your add-on store profit. There's also a $199 set up fee but you can usually get that waived. They offer customer service

for up to 500 customer inquiries. You can also have a pre-order store if you don't have a website. (But get a website.)

2% CAMPAIGN FUNDS
5% FUNDS RAISED IN BAKERKIT (INCLUDING SHIPPING)

or

5% TOTAL FUNDS INCLUDING SHIPPING NO ADD-ON STORE

Funding goal = $5,000
Cost of 1 deck tier = $50

# of backers needed = 100
Shipping fee = $10

Estimated shipping funds needed = $1,000

If you choose to charge shipping in Kickstarter, which I've done in 2 of my 3 campaigns and although it was a gamble I've done fine with it, the best way to go about it is to divide your funding goal by your single deck tier level charge and that's how many backers you'll multiply your shipping charge by. Add that amount to your funding goal. It'll be close. Remember, Kickstarter will take 5% of shipping too.

This brings me to **shipping charges**. What do you charge your customers for shipping? I make it easy on myself and charge $10 to anywhere in the world for a single deck.

I do that **internationally** by using a **Chinese fulfillment center**. When your decks are finished with production you should consider having about 20% of them sent to a Chinese fulfillment center. Contact me for a reference. (Do NOT use China Division AKA World of Fulfillment.) This makes it possible for your international backers and buyers to purchase your deck without paying huge shipping costs, and avoids customs fees. They can send any package with about a month delivery time for around $10 per deck, $13 for 2 decks, $16 for 3 decks, and so on; whereas it would cost $20 - $30 from the US for 1 deck. Shipping from China also avoids customs fees being charged to your customers. Set up an account with the fulfillment center when you're ready to fill in your shipping charge information in Kickstarter so that you can calculate the costs of specific reward tiers to specific countries.

I only allow cheap fulfillment center shipping prices for decks, not add-ons. If any add-ons are ordered the whole order will have to be sent from my home, significantly raising the shipping cost. You can calculate shipping costs from home by using **pirateship.com**. This is a fantastic, easy to use tool that will save you tons on shipping! I saved almost two thousand dollars last year! To check a price, you just fill the info in, but don't hit "buy label". It will give you a quote. Pirateship is an absolute shipping must! Do not skip it. You can even easily schedule home pick-ups for your packages.

Sending decks to the fulfillment center also saves you a lot on the shipping of them to you from the printer. There is a small monthly warehouse fee, but my center gives you the first 3 months free.

FROM THE WANDERING STAR TAROT CAMPAIGN
SHIPPING ESTIMATES
MORNING STAR and GOLD STAR reward tiers (deck only) ship for
⭐ $10-$12 WORLDWIDE ⭐
ALL OTHER REWARD TIERS SHIP FOR PRICES SEEN BELOW

Australia- $27	India- $26
Brazil- $26	Indonesia- $26
Canada- $21	Italy- $25
Chile- $26	Japan- $28
China- $28	Korea- $27
Columbia- $26	Mexico- $22
Costa Rica- $26	Netherlands- $25
Dominican Republic- $26	New Zealand- $26
Dubai- $26	Peru- $26
Egypt- $27	Poland- $26
England- $25	Russia- $26
France- $25	U.K.- $25
Germany- $25	United States- $10
Greece- $25	Wales- $25

For **domestic shipping**, I will go over packaging and shipping more in depth later.

Text

Fill out all the text in the story and tier sections. You CAN use **emojis**, but they have to be copy and pasted in. You can find emojis here. People love emojis! They help bring excitement to text. I used them everywhere in my Mood Oracle campaign.

Copy should be straight forward and deliver key-points quickly and simply. Tell the reader, these things:

• What your deck is about
• What the creators are about
• Why they should be excited about your deck
• How they can get it (Be sure to explain shipping charges.)
• Any stretch goals you may have
• Extra info you want to share about the deck and/or process
• Shipping info
• Thank you's and such

Make sure you have lots of pictures to **break up large blocks of text**. Use bullet lists or images where needed to make the copy more scannable. It's also a great idea to make an image banner that you use between sections. Like the rainbow image banners I've put between sections in this guide. See the **example campaigns** below to get a good grasp of what I'm speaking of here. I myself learn best by example, and this group of campaigns I'm going to link you to were all chosen as Project We Loves.

Always make sure to have your campaign text **edited** before you go live. You can share it with your editor in a doc before you place it, or after your campaign is approved you can share a preview of the campaign with people, but it's easiest to set up a **Google Drive** doc and have your editor(s) use the "make suggestions" feature, and then place the correct, edited text into your campaign.

Pictures

The more pictures, the better. Your campaign should read like a children's picture book. Your audience will not be engaged in an essay about your passion. Short. Sharp. Sweet.

Size recommendations: Kickstarter recommends that you use a project image that is 1024x576 pixels (16:9 ratio) in size. They accept most major image formats, but for best results upload one of their recommended file types: JPEG, PNG, GIF, or BMP. The maximum image size is 200 MB. They recommend that you not add text to your main image. I always add some right in the middle, but just so you know their recommendation.

For thinner images like **section banners**, just set the width the same, but the depth your desired length. You can also show a few images in a row, or images next to text, stuff like that, by creating a 1024 x (whatever length) file and laying out the different elements on it, then saving that as one image file to upload to your story. You cannot wrap text around an image, so if you need to have text **next to an image** you should make an image that includes the text and just upload it as an image.

Upon upload, you have the option to caption the photos and attach links to them. Photo captions are always good for SEO (search engine

Pledge rewards

All backers receive a freebie frame-worthy art print postcard as a Thank You!

$ 5 or more
4 Postcards

Share Gentle Tarot
love

$ 10 or more
Simple Support

– Pledge without a
physical reward

– You will receive a
3" waterproof
sticker as a Thank
You

optimization...getting seen on Google.)

Video

Videos are a must have, but don't get too anxious about the quality. Just do SOMETHING. I like to envision my videos and outline them in my Notes app. Then I record all the little bits, throw them all together in iMovie, add music and any needed voice over. Very simple. Videos generally contain a summary of your story: what your product is, why you made it, what it looks like, show the product. Etc. Videos should be **1.5 - 3 minutes long**. About 33% of people will watch the whole thing, but you must have a video, if not only to raise your chances of being chosen as a Project We Love. Make sure to film it in landscape mode.

I would also upload your video to your YouTube account as soon as you have it finished and share it around for attention. You can have a link to your Kickstarter launch notification sign-up in the YouTube post description.

Videos really are best created by you, but you can also hire the work out on Fiverr for about $350. I also highly recommend Jade Stone Productions.

Reward Tiers

Don't do too many reward tiers. I had 9 in my last campaign and it was just unnecessary and goes against all the best Kickstarter advice. It's generally recommended to have **3 to 6 tiers**.
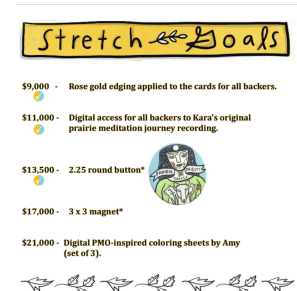
A lot of people like to have an **early-bird** reward tier. You can offer a discount for a decided number of pledges. For instance $10 off of a two deck purchase for the first 100 people who back at that tier.

Remember to mention it if you'll be charging shipping separate from their Kickstarter pledge through Backerkit.

Emojis are great for putting right before the items you list.

Stretch Goals

You can drive funding and add excitement by offering upgrades at certain funding levels. For instance, at $15K raised all decks will dawn gilded edges, or at $25K we will add an extra card to the deck.

Stretch Goals

$9,000 - Rose gold edging applied to the cards for all backers.

$11,000 - Digital access for all backers to Kara's original prairie meditation journey recording.

$13,500 - 2.25 round button*

$17,000 - 3 x 3 magnet*

$21,000 - Digital PMO-inspired coloring sheets by Amy (set of 3).

Launching

The first 24 hours are very important! If you don't make at least ½ your funding goal in the first 24 hours your campaign is likely toast. That's why it's good to offer and advertise early-bird reward tiers. You'll also want to send out **emails**. I like to send one the week before, the day before, the day of and the day after. Don't be discouraged that most people don't open their emails. Just send them anyway. The rule of sales says you'll get a hit or two.

I've mostly found luck in hyping my deck on social media all week, changing banners in groups, pages and personal timeline. Update your website. I've created a list of Facebook groups that I share my campaign [here](#).

You will have SO much posting to do on launch day so it's a good idea to **type out your ad copy ahead of time** and have it ready to cut/paste everywhere the moment you launch. Have different ad copy ready for your emails, your page, your timeline, your group, sales groups, other tarot groups...it doesn't all have to be completely different, but customize it a little to speak to your audience. Sales images too. Something that shows your deck/cards and had a "We're on Kickstarter" logo on it!

Updates

Keeping your backers up to date on all the latest news is very important. Knowing what's going on puts the backers at ease and maintains trust. Here's **Kickstarter's list of 50 ideas for sending great project updates**. Don't do an end of campaign update until after the campaign is over. A group of creator friends and I have noticed that people cancel their pledges like crazy after an end of campaign update. By the way, don't take cancellations to heart. People need to cancel for all sorts of reasons and they're extremely rarely personal. Most of the time folks cancel due to financial issues.

Example Campaigns

Natalie Meraki - [Tarot Mood](#)
Natalie Meraki - [Young Witch](#)
Kaylani Perisho - [Tower Takeover Tarot](#)
Catherine Pierce - [Wandering Star Tarot](#)
Jess Schuler - [Superlunaris Tarot](#)
Kara Simons - [Prairie Majesty Oracle](#)
Marion Costentin - [Reclaim Oracle](#)
Mariza-Aparicio-Tovar - [The Gentle Tarot](#)
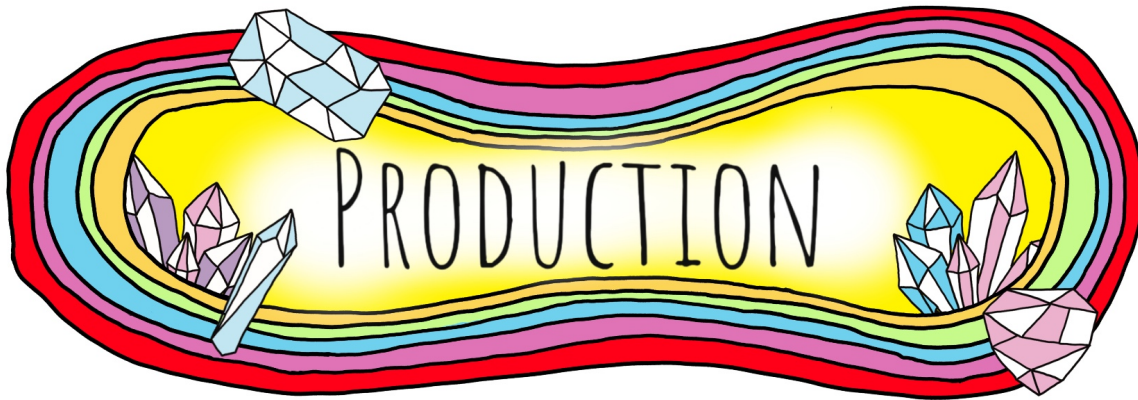
4. Production

After your campaign is over it will take Kickstarter **14 days to process the funds**. (3 days extra to reach your bank account.) Kickstarter will charge your backers on the last day of your campaign and you will have some payments that don't go through. Kickstarter emails these "dropped" backers every 48 hours for a week to try to recover their payment. After that they are lost for good, unless Backerkit can recover them for you. You can always try to sell to them via private message later though. Kickstarter and Backerkit DO charge their percentage fees on what your funding round closed at, so if you had $1K in dropped backers you will still pay Kickstarter 5% and Backerkit 2% on those dropped funds, which sucks.

When you receive your funds, if you haven't already paid your 30% deposit you'll want to do that now. Hopefully by now the printer already has your files, and they are approved and ready for print. Even if you don't order a proof deck through your printer, they will likely print a **digital sample** to make sure the decks are aligned correctly. These are usually slightly off in color. They may wait to print that digital sample until you pay your deposit. It takes about 4 days. After that they will start your mass printing!

I am always promised **25-30 day production** times but they're always late. This is why I say give the production process **2.5 - 3 months** instead of 2 (1 month for production, 1 month for shipping by sea.) Production is always late and shipping is always late.

Post campaign and pre production completion you should be advertising your deck for pre-orders. You can have a website and/or an Etsy. I like to use my godaddy.com website and my Etsy store. You can also have a pre-order store in Backerkit. Keep sharing your journey everywhere you can.
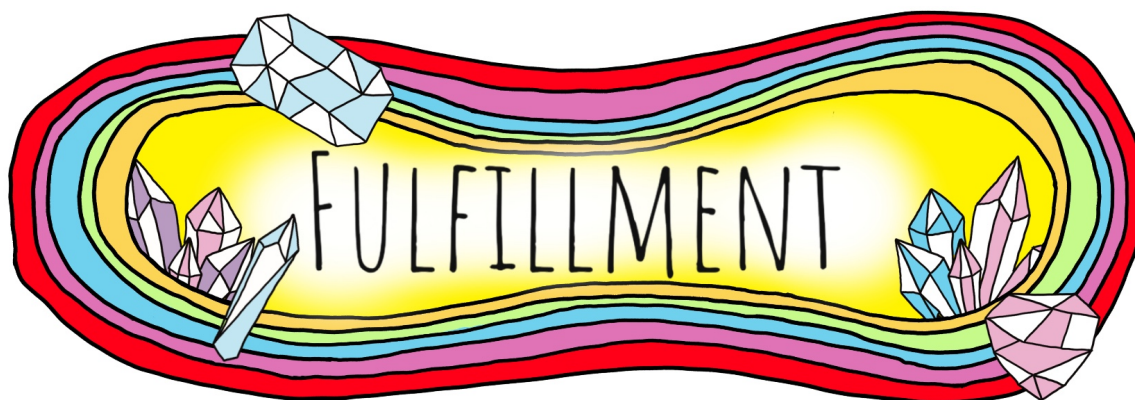
5. Fulfillment

The first decks you'll ship to customers will be from your **international fulfillment center** because those decks will arrive at the warehouse 1 month sooner. It's a quick trip for them from the printer to the warehouse. You probably won't have too many international backers, so the best way to handle these is to copy and paste their mailing info into a list and give them to your rep. They will help you get everything entered into the system and show you how to enter orders yourself in the future. Decks from the international fulfillment center usually take about **4 weeks** on average so they'll be arriving to customers around the same time as domestic backers. Make sure to ask your rep how they'll be packaging your deck. Your deck should come with a **bubble wrap sleeve** from the printer and then be placed in a **bubble mailer** from the fulfillment center.

> Tip from Kara Simons: Prairie Majesty Oracle
>
> ✗ Ask your printer to bubble wrap your decks before shipping them to you.
>
> ✗ If you have a foreign printer, ask them to add a "made in" sticker to the outside of the bubble wrap for customs checks.

Domestically, when the decks arrive from China you'll want to be ready to SHIP! This means ordering **shipping supplies** in advance. To calculate your order you'll first need to measure and weigh the contents of each reward tier's contents. I did not measure for my Young Witch decks with bags (Just did a guesstimate.) and I still have useless boxes sitting in my garage. It's also cheaper to pack in **bubble mailers** when you can, especially overseas. You want your products to fit in the mailers snuggly to avoid banging around during transit, but not be crunched. You can order on uline.com, or I even found some fun colored envelopes on Etsy for around the same price. It's always fun to get colorful mail.

You'll need a **label printer**. There are thermal and inkjet options. I hear thermal is cheaper in the long run, as you don't have to pay for ink, but they are a bigger investment up-front at about $100 - $300. Make sure if you buy a thermal label printer that it will do **4" X 6" stickers**.

You can export entire reward tiers of backer shipping info to upload into **Pirateship** via both Kickstarter and Backerkit shipping charge options. You don't have to enter each backer individually. International orders are also a breeze through Pirateship and print out in 1 sheet, unlike the many sheets needed to attach via the post office.

Even though you charge a $10 shipping fee, you'll find that shipping is generally around $5 per deck through Pirateship. The rest of the shipping fee is to cover payment processing fees, packing material, and to make up for any times you may have to pay a little more for shipping than you planned. A little safety cushion. People don't mind paying $10.

6. Sales

Congratulations! You've run a successful campaign and raised enough money to buy 1,000 decks of your very own creation! Now, **how do you sell them?** By just kind of doing the same thing you've been doing.

Your website and any online stores: You can have a website with a store AND an Etsy. You can list on Amazon. There's Indie Deck Hub. Anywhere you can list your deck for sale is great. You can use most of your campaign ad copy and photos for your listings. When your campaign is over, you can link your Kickstarter to your online store for people who discover you post-campaign but still want to buy.

Buy/sell groups: Join all tarot and metaphysical buy/sell groups. When you post an ad to one buy/sell group you are given the option to post in all the rest of them you're in at one time. This is mildly effective but takes little effort. Gotta get your work out there.

There are some buy/sell groups that aren't categorized as buy/sell in Facebook, but that you must post individually in, like Tarot for Sale, Tarot Marketplace and Witchcraft 101: Marketplace. Some regular tarot groups let you advertise on a certain day, like the Sell Your Goods Sunday thread in Tarot Readers Academy, and Friday and Saturdays in Witches of Etsy. Advertising posts are always allowed in Tarot Mood, but they have to be entertaining.

Here is my list of buy/sell groups, but do search for any I may have missed, there are hundreds. **Always check group rules**.

Promoters: promoters have worked out very well for me. Everyone should send a promo deck to Indie Deck Review in the very least. Then just search for large accounts that share your vibe and maybe that have posted tarot cards in the past and send them a message offering them a free deck in exchange for a few posts/and or lives. I have never been turned down on a promo offer. Make sure you **negotiate the terms** (type and quantity of posts they'll be doing in exchange for the deck) right up front.

IG & TikTok: These two platforms are **sales machines**! Post daily or weekly on IG and as much as you want on TikTok. You can post more on IG too, but put anything more than one post a day in your stories. The more the merrier on TikTok. These platforms are great at reaching new people interested in what you have by way of hashtags. Don't forget to utilize a hashtag generator. Of course, if you have large followings on the other social media platforms you should absolutely use them, but if you're starting from scratch I recommend these two first.

Your own Facebook group: Now, that you've built a group and new members are coming in every day, you should absolutely advertise in your own Facebook group. Just make sure you're still also posting other valuable content. You can follow the **4-1-1 rule**. 4 pieces of relevant content, 1 piece of reshared Content, 1 promotional post. That does not mean you need to publish those types of content in that particular order. It just means you are adhering to a content ratio when you plan ahead.

> ✷ Tip from Kaylani Perisho:
> Tower Takeover Tarot
>
> Natalie, mentioned Facebook groups, but don't forget about a Facebook page.
>
> I like pages because if I tag my page when talking about the deck in Facebook, people can easily click through to my website. I also generally trust a company more if they have a public Facebook page. I don't expect my page posts to reach a lot of people, it's more about having public information for potential customers.
>
> I also have run successful ads through my Facebook page.

Free live readings: Free live readings are great to do in your own Facebook group as well as outside groups. It's a chance to show off your deck in action and give a little something to the tarot community. Check with the group admins about **posting rules**.

Interviews: I did a ton of interviews at first and don't seek them out anymore, but never turn one down either. While I don't know how much they help with deck sales right away, they do give you **street cred** and a **professional look** when people go to Google search you or your deck, which I would think helps lock the sale in.

Emails: Use Mailchimp. You can create a landing page there to collect emails. You can collect emails on your website as well, but I would even import your website emails into Mailchimp. This is because they have better templates, more options, and they let you use emojis. As we've established. I love emojis.

Stores: Stores are tough because a lot of them don't want to pay indie deck prices, even at **wholesale** (**50% - 60% retail**.) Some will tell you they only order from distributors. (I'll figure out distributors this year and update the guide.) I would say I emailed 1,000 stores and received 30 orders. I recommend hiring someone on Fiverr to get you list of metaphysical store email addresses. You can buy 100 emails for $5. It would take you hours to get 100 emails. Some of the addresses don't work but it's still worth it. Make sure to BCC all the addresses in your sales emails so everyone doesn't see each other. Offer a **10 deck MOQ**, then if they seem like they're on the fence but it's a big gamble, offer them 5 decks to start off and test their compatibility with the shop. You can make invoices a lot of ways, but I use PayPal. List all the stores that carry your deck in a "stock list" on your website. I've heard some creators require wholesale contracts or licenses, but I don't know anything about that.

Amazon: Amazon gets your deck in front of millions of potential new customers! It is kind of hard to sign up if you don't have a barcode (UPC/ISBN,) but it's worth the trouble. There are image guidelines too. You can do $40 a month with no seller's fees, or $0 a month and $1 per order. If you sell more than 40 decks a month it makes sense to do the $40 a month professional level. Either way, they find a way to take about $10 of each sale, which is the downside.

7. Credits

Thank you:

Rebecca Jade
Bob Smithies
Chev Gower
Sarah Jade
Nature Humphries
Kaylani Perisho
Lucky Card
Catherine Pierce
Jess Lee
Kara Simons
Marion Costentin
Mariza-Aparicio-Tovar
Benebell Wen
Joel Friedlander

8. Mentorship

If you are interested in mentorship let me know! We can chat a little about where you are in the process and what kind of help you need, and come up with a fair and reasonable fee. My open schedule currently allows me to be very responsive (within an hour) so I can be on call for all your road-bumps along the way. Trust me, there will be road-bumps. I wish there was someone to hold my little baby hand through my first campaign, but I can be that person for you! Contact me at natalie@tarotmood.com.

I have also created a **deck creation class** scheduled for Saturday, March 27th at 10 AM PST! This class will cover the process much more in-depth, and includes a lengthy Q&A session. It also includes mentorship throughout your project. If you sign up for this class I will see you through your deck creation process to completion! I will be available to you for questions via message or call any time. You can sign up here:

https://nataliemeraki.com/shop/ols/products/howtomakeatarotdeck

Thank you for reading my tarot creator's guide! If you'd like to support my work please purchase my decks and swag at www.nataliemeraki.com

You can find me on social media at www.nataliemeraki.com/links