



Interpretation helps: Numbers can indicate days, weeks, months or even years. Letters can represent clues to a person's name or place. A circle could indicate the end of a cycle, such as a completed project. A cluster of dots might indicate a group of people. If there is one formation sitting a distance from the rest of the drippings it could represent isolation or going off on a distant trip. There are no right or wrong ways to interpret the candle wax... have some fun with it!

The way a candle unfolds or deconstructs as it melts can be very significant. A pile of wax drippings is always an invitation to ceromancy (divination by wax). Examine the hardened wax with an open mind, seeing if any shapes or message emerge. There is a whole collection of folklore about what the various shapes mean...or you can just use your intuition and imagination.

A successful candle:

A clean burn which leaves no trace other than a circle and a bit of charred wick, then the spell worked very well indeed.

Flat smooth wax puddles means the spell worked well.

Collapses outward or unfold like a flower your wish will be granted. It represents possibilities and paths opening for you.

A candle that is too lopsided in one direction or [another.You](#) are dealing with a situation that is way out of balance.

If the flame is buried by the [wax.The](#) wish will not be granted.

Tips:

A candle that is not properly contained or leveled will often develop a hole in the side, causing melted wax to drip out quickly and shortening the life of the candle (aka a very quick burn)



Wax Drips

No wax drips on the candle

This is a sign of a well-conceived and properly executed spell. Your spell will go exactly as you have written and expressed it.

Wax drips down one side:

Something is out of balance. Expect an incomplete result.

On the left (in relation to the magick worker) represent an emotional or psychic imbalance

On the right you're your thoughts and beliefs are getting in the way of the spell.

A free-standing candle puddles around the wick, leaving tall wax sides

The candle is burning incompletely. This is most common with large pillars and container candles, but it can also happen with votives and other candle shapes. The melted wax is centered closely around the wick, leaving tall walls of wax on the sides.

It is not a good sign and means that your will is too weak to cast an effective spell at this time.

Or that the spell's energies have been blocked from reaching their intended target.

A free-standing candle runs and melts a lot while burning:

Observe the flow of wax for signs. It is not necessarily a bad sign—it can mean that there is passionate, accelerated energy behind your spell.

For example:

if you are burning a bride-and-groom type candle for love, and the man's wax runs all over the woman's, then the man desires the woman more than she desires him.

If you are burning an abundance or prosperity candle and the wax melts and runs down onto the monetary offering, the spell is working well and the candle is blessing the money.

Some people try to intentionally influence the way melting wax runs with the intention of increasing the likelihood that things will go favorably for them. This is common in black magic candle work. Most practitioners allow nature to take its course and watch running wax for signs, without interfering in its movements.

A free-standing candle burns down to a puddle of wax:

Examine the shape of the wax for a sign. You may see something of significance there, for the shape may suggest an outcome regarding present or future matters.

Wax puddles come in all kinds of shapes; most candle-workers treat them like tea-leaves when they interpret them.

There is much lore in the Mexican tradition regarding the wax remains – they leave messages such as: long serpent-like strings indicating evil intent being neutralized and probably a repeat spell is required.

Heart shaped wax puddles of positive when working love spells.

A Coffin shaped puddle indicates success when burning a candle against a nemesis.

Flat wavy papery remains usually with two claw-like projections are read as scorpions which mean malicious gossip and back biting that is being neutralized. Repeat the spell until wax burns clean.

Twisted pillars of wax, bizarre shapes or monsters is read as turbulence and further healing is required.

Wax remains in the shape of sex organs usually means some sort of infidelity or a venereal disease.

A hooded figure means the “Santa Muerte” Holy Death has been invoked and requires a further ritual to neutralize this.

Shapes of animals, cats, goats, domestic animals and fowls can mean that an animal sacrifice took place to strengthen a spell against you. A further ritual is called for to neutralize the spell (the source, usually Santería or Palo Mayombe). Many make or buy tallow candles for uncrossing and unhexing spells. On a positive note, it could be an animal spirit that is close to you.



Candle reading is the practice of noticing signs and omens in the candle’s behavior and how it deconstructs in relation to the working or spell. The mountain witch is always conscious of behavior, natural and unnatural, while also utilizing common sense at the forefront of any

situation. If the candle is burning slow or the candle flickers profusely, we first wonder what the humidity or weather is and if a window is open. I suggest you practice putting the same sense first.

Many people, sadly even those who do work for others, have asked me to “read the wax”. This is far from all that should be done and isn’t needed every time. The flame’s behavior, how the candle deconstructs, and how it extinguishes must be noted frequently first and foremost. This will show more than the cooled wax will, which is often just plain wax that’s left behind as spirits usually prefer to speak through the flame and soot and smoke.

Things to take into account when reading the flame: is there a draft? If it is humid the candle will take longer to burn (at which point you shouldn’t count the hours to determine how long the work may take). Take into account how loaded the candle is and the quality of the candle (especially the wax). Many people have posted on social media showing their candles with the entire top on fire. They think this is good. Sadly, they are bullshitting themselves. If I can see more herb than wax on that candle, it’s over loaded.

Also take into account how close the surrounding herbs are to the base of the candle or how “loaded” the actual candle is. This will not only raise the chance of the herbs catching fire but could also have a hand in the wax formations at the base, which is why I don’t load my candles like this. If the candle is glass encased, see if you can tell how it was fixed. Too much oil and herbs may affect the flame, especially if they were loaded right beneath the wick which will in turn affect the way the flame deconstructs the wax.

A general way to read the candle’s wax formations is simple: anything in the front or bottom represents the physical world, the back or top is the spiritual. The left is the past, the right is the future. You can also see origin of influence here also: the front shows external influence while the back would show internal influence. The closer the sign is to the center of these two parts, shows how close it is to meeting in the middle for action of some kind to take place.

For example, a mountain forms on the upper right side of the candle. This would mean there will be spiritual forces against the work. If a mountain forms on the bottom left, this could mean that past occurrences could be hindering the work; maybe you need a raise, but you’ve been late to work three times this week. These are then paired with other signs throughout the burn to put together a complete “yarn” or report as other folks call it. You get the idea.

Timing a candle is done in folk magic to get an idea of how long the work will take. If the candle burns for a total of ten hours, then it may manifest in 10 hours, days, weeks, months etc. or it

may show on the 10th of the month or during the 10th month of the year, happen at an address with a 10 in it etc.

So here are possible signs and what they mean pertaining to the flame, the wax, and the work at hand.

Before doing any kind of candle work, make sure to divine first to make sure that your chance for success is high. Otherwise, you may be wasting your time and the things you'll see in the candle may be pointless. I don't always divine, but once you've been doing this for a while, you'll be able to see what the chances are just from experience. NEVER mess with the way the candle burns, if the wic drowns or the candle burns fast on one side, don't intervene unless it is to prevent a fire hazard. Keep your eye on the candle but don't obsess over it by checking it every five minutes, trust the spirits and be patient, don't doubt a thing.



Reading the Flame

A "Clean burn" – This is when the candle burns clean; meaning no soot is left behind, no black smoke during the burn, and no "tears" or other "odd" wax formations while the candle burns. A

clean burn is when the candle burns straight down from top to bottom with little to no wax left.

This shows that everything will go well with the working.

Soot or Black smoke – soot occurs more with glass encased candles than free standing ones, but black smoke can happen with any candle. It was especially more common back in the day with tallow candles. But times change, magic doesn't. If the soot does not reach the bottom of the glass and is only at the top, this entails that the negative influences or obstacles have been removed. If the soot does reach down to the bottom, it means the working was blocked and there are forces working against you. This doesn't mean someone is actively working against you; more often than not, it's yourself.

If you did a work to have your lover return and you're still sleeping with other men, well... if you can't see the problem then put the candles and roots down. If the soot is only at the bottom of the glass, this shows that there are negative forces being sent your way, there is a rough road ahead, or someone may be working against you. Divination will further narrow this down for you. Black smoke shows possible forces opposing your work or an obstacle that the candle is trying to burn through. If it doesn't last long and only happens once, the force or obstacle was removed.

However, if it occurs throughout the burn or lasts for long periods, someone may be blocking the work or there are forces present that the candle work can't get rid of. Finish it, do some uncrossing and protection work; then try again. While free standing candles don't really have a place for black soot to form, it happens most with pillar candles, but anything is possible when Spirit wants it to be! However, black soot can be a sign that your crossed, the timing isn't right, the situation is "helpless", etc. always divine first, even if it's just with prayer and a Bible!

White or Gray soot – this is totally different from black soot. This sign can indicate that the spirits have heard your petition and have removed the negative or opposing forces from its path. This is a great sign in uncrossing work. If the soot barely makes it to the middle, the cleanse was successful. If it goes the full length of the candle, you may need to run the candle. "Running" a candle means to burn another one tricked just like the first one, but always let the first one finish first! If there's only white soot at the bottom, this tells of external help with the work, either physically or spiritually, whether it's a preacher or your boss's cooperation, depending on the case.

If the soot turns another color during the burn, then one aspect is overriding the other.

Whichever color is on top is the one that was undone. If the black is on top, the spirits have

cleared the negative forces; If the white is on top, then the spirits of the target may have blocked your attempt (more divination!). If the soot (white) is only on one side, then the work isn't correct; either it's the wrong method, the candle wasn't fixed properly, etc. This usually happens when you try to half-ass the work without proper preparation or divination.

Fast burn – this occurs when the spirits are fast at work and there's no opposition. An "8 hour" candle could burn completely in 40 minutes when the road is clear!

Slow burn – this fortells there are many opposing forces present. More divination or another method may be needed. However, also check the humidity levels. If you're still uncertain, do it again when the levels are low.

If the candle breaks or cracks – this goes for candles in glass and out because I've had freestanding candles split open. If the glass or wax only cracks, but doesn't break then the opposing force was broken. If the glass or wax does break into pieces, it means you're up against something stronger. This could be the spirits that are protecting your target, someone who is working against you, or that some other force is interfering. If it doesn't break or crack, then all is well. Also take into account: what you're burning it on, any possible drafts, and how loaded it is.

Flower – if the candles seems to unfold at the end like a flower, with circular ridges of wax around the center, the wish will be granted and the results will show.

Drowning flame – this seems to happen when the flame burns more wax than it can handle; the wax starts to pool around the flame until it drowns it and the flame goes out. This shows that the work is not balanced right with the goal or that the work will not be successful.

If the candle smokes a lot at the beginning but ends with a clean burn, then there will be difficulties at first, but with repeated work, you will have success.

If the flame splits into two or more, this shows others getting involved into the work. Watch the rest of the signs to interpret of this is good or bad.

If the candle doesn't light at first, then this working will not work for the job to be done.

Cracking or popping sounds coming from the flame fortell that the spirits are speaking or the target is talking about you. If the candle cracks and smokes, it is the target. If it cracks and flickers, it is the spirits conversing over the work. To determine the type of conversing, good or bad, continue to interpret other signs. It can also mean a force is pushing the working back; usually the target's defenses. Cracking flames also fortell that a storm is coming.

Flickering flame shows spirits are present. If it is a devotional burn, you're in contact with the spirit or deity. If it is a working on a target, this is a good sign as long as there's no smoke. Flame won't go out when blown – if you attempt to blow the candle out, but it won't extinguish this suggests that the spirits do not want you to do so. This is the same if you blow it out, but the flame comes back. Something important may be in the works, so don't interrupt. If need be, ask permission and try again.

High, Calm flame with no soot – this tells that you're in the presence of larger spirits, usually benevolent, based on the type of work. The same is said for large flames that are aggressive and make long strokes. Most of the time, the darker spirits do this to the flame.



High flame – means there's a lot of power behind the work and little resistance.
Low flame – means there's a strong opposing force. May require a cleansing, uncrossing etc., and a run of the work. For example, say I'm doing a work for me and my partner to get closer together, but the flame remains extremely low: this tells me there are either other physical factors at play (the other person would be the main factor and suspect of opposition), or it may mean someone has crossed your love life.

Flame goes out before the work is done. This happens for two reasons: the work has made results before the work was finished, or the spirits cannot help you and the outcome for the situation is already determined. I have this happen a lot when clients work against the working after I've explained not to hundreds of times.

For example: they want their lover to return, but they're still seeing other guys. That relationship is already determined to fail again and again. Or if the working is to make someone dream of you, this may happen while the work is being done. (I love daytime naps.) This can also occur when the reason for the work is "fixed". Meaning it's supposed to occur and no amount of magic will change the outcome.

Bulb or flower on wick – This shows opposition or that a third party's actions go against the work. This is why as Rootworkers we need the whole story of the client. Some people are shy about saying certain things, but trust me when I say that we've heard worse.

Curling Wic – This can be caused by a multitude of things: humidity, moisture on the wic, quality of cotton or fiber used for the string, etc. If it is only a partial curl I don't pay any mind to it, but if it makes a complete curl or circle then this is an omen that you've hit the bullseye.

Reading the wax

Left over wax – Let's be honest. Almost every candle will leave wax behind. This doesn't always mean the job won't work. If it's a normal pool of wax left, interpret anything "odd" about it. Rule of thumb: if there's any part of the candle left, such as the pillar base, then the working may need to be done again.

Swirls – this a the textured pattern left in the wax, as if someone stirred the wax while it was cooling. This tells that the work will reveal strong emotions or traumas and that healing is needed before further progression can occur. This may be the emotional state of someone else who may have an impact on the work.

The meaning differs depending on the work: in money work, this may mean past obligations that you need to deal with first and foremost. In love work, this may mean past pains or trauma, etc. Tongues of wax represent actions and events. If the petals seem to swirl in a clockwise direction then the events will be beneficial. Counterclockwise shows opposition. If they go to the left and right, overlapping each other, this may mean that past and future events may not happen for this work in the best way. This may also mean people are working at crossing purposes; not necessarily to sabotage you, but maybe their judgement and actions aren't the best to rely on.

The bigger the tongue, the more influence it will have in the work.

Trail of tears – these are trails formed by droplets of wax as they run down the side of the candle. These mean that someone will cry or be pained in regards to the work before the work is complete. A little bit of tears forming, to me, is nothing to worry about. The worst thing that could happen would be a “winding sheet.” This was a candle formation that showed the old folks the time of a person’s death and it is by no means looked forward to. It occurs when tears overlap each other so many times to form what looks like a dorsal fin on the side of the candle, that can often wind around it like a spiral staircase.

Fallouts – this is when the candle burns lopsided or only one side of the candle burns down, leaving half the candle untouched by the flame. This indicates that the work isn’t fully anchored in the physical or there’s little possibility of it manifesting. Physical actions will need to be taken to further create a potential environment for the working to manifest. (Working to win at gambling when you don’t know how to gamble is a prime example). Prepare for its manifestation.

Flows of wax show a dramatic rushing of energy and change. Flows on the right, dramatic change of future events, mostly for the success of the work. To the left, changes in relations to past events. Top: change and movement in the spiritual world (great indicator if the work is to affect dreams). Bottom: major physical change. This could be property, health, money etc. Clockwise flows bring something to the client, while counter-clockwise is taking something away. Counter-clockwise would be a good sign in break up work or cleansings, while a clockwise flow is great for prosperity or love workings.

Mountains or towers are spikes of wax left over. These show obstacles that need to be overcome.

Hooks are mountains that look down towards the plate. While mountains represent obstacles that need to be overcome, hooks represent deep issues pertaining to the work. These could be old wounds or other things lodged into the client’s psyche. In love work, this means past abuse getting in the way of the goal of the job. In money work, this shows deep debt or financial wounds such as bankruptcy. In baneful work on a target, this is good. It gives a place for the work to lodge onto.

Cliffs are formations of wax gathered on the outer rim of the candle that stick outward like a cliff. This means there is a factor that hasn’t been brought to your attention or you forgot about. For example, say you’re working to get more hours at work. The factor you forgot about was the

new department change of no overtime until the holiday season, or that you've been late to work and your work progress is shit.

Back flows form when wax pools but instead of leaving a petal, it leaves indentations, like empty pools. This shows a backing out or reversal. If the work is to aid in a business, and it forms on the lower right, it may mean someone will back out or make a reverse financially. You get the point by now.

After the candle extinguishes naturally, reading the smoke signals the work gives off can also give signs of the progression or blocking of the work.

If the smoke blows towards you, the prayer will most likely be answered.

If it blows away from you, you need more perseverance and strength to get the job done.

To the left, it means you're too emotional and are likely to subconsciously sabotage the work and it won't be answered.

To the right, it means use your head and not your emotions to pursue the situation.

If the smoke rises and falls, results will be seen but won't last. If the smoke rises, the chances for lasting results are good; If the smoke simply falls down-ward, the working wasn't successful. If the smoke rises straight up and doesn't twirl, you may need to rethink the work or the plan. If it does twirl, the work is in the God's hands. Divination will give further input on the situation down the road.

All of the above signs are by far only some of the signs and omens watched for in candle work. You'll need to pair them all together in order to create a cohesive report of the work. Take notes on the signs, count the hours of the burn, what number hour the signs occurred in, etc. from start to finish.