

# The use of cards

[parent\\_page\\_rulesversailles](#) Tarot cards are used extensively in Versailles to resolve combat, repartee and the outcomes of the use of various skills.

## Getting cards

### Start of the session

The deck of cards should be shuffled and dealt by the GM. The GM deals each player 5 cards at the start of the session.

### New Cards

New cards are only acquired through

- successfully using skills
  - at the end of a scene if unsuccessful in skill use.
- participating in a repartee (even if your character isn't present)
- after each attack when fencing.

## Expending Cards

Using a skill, arguing sides in a repartee or making attacks or defences while fencing all use cards. Often the cards used are discarded and not replaced. Cards may also be discarded at any time.

## Hands

A player should not have more than 5 cards in their hand at any time. If they are forced to take a sixth card, they must then immediately discard cards down to the limit of 5.

## Using Skills

### Turn Order

The GM plays a card from their hand to represent the difficulty of the task. Alternatively, the GM can go through the GM deck and choose a card that matches the difficulty and type of task they are after. This card may be placed face down if the player's character would not be aware of how difficult a particular task is. The player then places one or more cards from their hand face up. The cards must be of the same suit as the skill being used if it is a Minor Arcana card.

- Any Minor Arcana card that exceeds the character's skill level counts as being at that skill level (i.e. playing a 10 of Coins for a History skill check, will only count as level 5 card if the character's History skill is level 5).
- Multiple Minor Arcana cards are added together before being limited by skill level.
- Major Arcana cards may also be played to add to the skill (see [Tarot Descriptions](#)). Add the points from Major Arcana cards after the skill level limit is applied. It is possible to exceed a character's skill level with Major Arcana cards.

## Skill vs Skill

In the case of one character's skill versus another character's skill (whether the characters are NPCs or PCs) - the procedure is similar. Both characters play cards, and the difficulty of the task is equal to the card of the other character limited by skill level as normal.

1. Flip a coin to see who plays first.
2. That character plays one or more cards. As for other skill checks, these cards (if Minor Arcana) must match the suit of the skill being used.
3. The other character involved then plays one or more cards.
4. Characters then take turns to play cards to beat each other's score.
  - As skill still limits the card totals, there is no point in playing Minor Arcana cards after you have reached your skill limit. Major Arcana cards can still be played to exceed a skill limit.
5. Play continues until the characters have played all their hand, or they concede.

## Reputation, Beliefs and Favours

In general both Reputation and Favours can be used to influence the use of social skills in much the same way as in Repartee combat. They may be applicable for other kinds of skills resolutions as well (i.e. using a favour to cause a member in your gambling group to help you win). Occasionally - if the GM allows it, suitably strong Beliefs may also influence skill resolutions.

## Using Body

The three Body characteristics are used as skills if the character does not possess the appropriate skill, or if there isn't a skill applicable. If the character does have the skill, then the characteristic is added to the total of any cards played after applying the skill limit. ~ (i.e. A character without the climbing skill would use their Strength characteristic to climb a wall. If a character has the climbing skill, then their Strength would be added to the cards they play when attempting to climb) ~ ~ A skill of 4 in climbing and a strength of 3 and the character plays a Queen of Staves (clubs) and the Strength Major Arcana card for a total of — 4 (Queen=13 limited by skill down to 4) — + 3 (strength characteristic) — + 2 (Strength Major Arcana card's meaning is relevant) — = **9** This means that in general, physical skills will be easier to accomplish than any other kind of skill.

## Using Repartee

The four Repartee characteristics may be substituted for other kinds of skills if the GM deems it appropriate. ~ (i.e. If deciphering a code without the cryptography skill, a character could use their Wits characteristic)

## Skill Difficulties

- Trivial - **1 to 2**
  - Theatre: *finding an empty seat an hour before the performance*
  - Climbing: *stairs*
  - Pistol: *reloading*
    - **Failure** - Failing a trivial task lowers your skill level by 1 point.
- Minor - **3 to 4**
  - Theatre: *finding an empty seat before the performance*
  - Climbing: *hills*
  - Pistol: *firing at point blank*
    - **Failure** - Failing a minor task has a 50% chance of lowering your skill level by 1 point. Toss a coin.
- Hard - **5 to 7**
  - Theatre: *finding an empty seat during the performance*
  - Climbing: *brick walls*
  - Pistol: *hitting a target in the same room*
- Very Difficult - **8 to 10**
  - Theatre: *finding 4 consecutive empty seats during the performance*
  - Climbing: *castle walls*
  - Pistol: *hitting a target in the same ballroom*
    - **Success** - Succeeding in a very difficult task has a 50% chance of raising your skill level by 1 point. Toss a coin.
- Legendary - **11 or more** — requires either high Body characteristics or use of Major Arcana cards
  - Theatre: *finding an empty row during a performance*
  - Climbing: *castle walls without any equipment*
  - Pistol: *hitting a target on horseback at night while galloping*
    - **Success** - Succeeding in a legendary task raises your skill level by 1 point.

## Skill Resolution

If the value of all the cards and counters played equals or exceeds the difficulty of the task (as determined by the GM - or another player if comparing skills), the skill succeeds. Cards that were played for the skill check are discarded. The player that succeeds in using their skill may refresh their cards by drawing up to their hand limit of 5. Players that fail do not receive replacement cards until there is a new scene (i.e. The GM determines sufficient time has passed that the skill could be retried).

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