

Preparing to Become a 
PROFESSIONAL PIXIE
an e-book for those who want to become astrologers



The Dark Pixie
ASTROLOGY

Preparing to Become a Professional Pixie

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The Importance of Practice

When you want to become an astrologer, you need to do practice readings. Duh, if you're going to become anything, you need to practice it first! Wouldn't want a surgeon cutting you open who has never participated in a surgery before, now would ya?

Practicing readings accomplishes a few things, and first and foremost, it helps you get comfortable doing it and confident in your abilities. You're rarely going to have that right out of the gates (unless you're a Leo! j/k). If you're not comfortable performing a reading, your client isn't going to be either. People tend to get very anxious about readings, so you need to be the calming force, and that can't happen if you're not comfortable. You need to be confident as well because that'll help them be confident in your reading. So they're both important!

Practice readings also help you figure out what your specialty is. There are a TON of different branches and sub-branches of astrology, different methodologies and approaches. You're not going to do them all - impossible! (for humans anyway, maybe robots will get there?) You can study astrology all of your life and still not come close to learning everything out there. So you're going to have to pinpoint your specialities. The readings that you offer will be with these specialities. Don't feel like you have to do a million different things. You're likely only going to have 1-3 specialties. You may do readings from time to time outside of your specialities, but they're not going to be the bulk of your work. So for example, my main specialty for a long time has been Western predictive astrology, and the reading I've done the most is the general 6 month outlook.

Another reason why doing practice readings is important is to help you figure out your process. You need to create your own system for doing

the reading, and you won't know that without doing a lot of practice readings. What will you do first, second, third, fourth, etc. as you perform the reading? What charts do you need to pull up? What data do you need to collect? How will you collect that data? How will you deliver the reading?

Figuring out how to deliver your readings are yet another reason practice readings are important. It used to be that readings were only done in person, over the phone, or written out and mailed to someone. Thanks to the internet, you can now also record audio or video and email that to the client and write it out in the body of the email or attach it as a PDF file, or do readings over Skype or chat using social media. It's really all about what you're most comfortable doing. I'm a writer at heart, so sending readings written via email was natural for me. If you're more comfortable on camera, you may opt for video recordings; if you're comfortable speaking but don't want to be seen, you may opt for audio recordings; if you're more comfortable live, you may choose a live option. It's all up to you! If you're not sure, you can figure that out as you go along with practice readings. And once you figure out which you prefer, you'll want to do some more practice readings to be certain and get more comfortable.

Once you know your process and the way you're going to deliver readings, this allows you to figure out how many readings you're going to be able to do. How many varies from person to person, but it seems about 3 readings per week is average. It will depend on how big the reading is, how much time you have in your daily life, do you have a full-time job, family to take care of, responsibilities that pull you away from your astrology work? If you can only manage 1 per week, that's fine. If you can manage more than 3 per week, that's fine too! It's all what you can fit into your schedule without burning yourself out. That's one of the last things you want to do when you're performing readings for people. You need to be sharp and fresh! So practice readings help with

this as well, and you can test yourself to see how many you can realistically do with your schedule and life.

As for how many practice readings you need to do, this also varies. I estimate 200-300 as the bare minimum. Many actually say 1,000. And in truth, it was around 1,000 for me! I practiced for about 4 years before I started charging for readings. Many want to push that ahead and jump in before they're ready, but this only sets you back more and makes for a bad experience for both you and the client. So don't do that! Do practice readings until you're comfortable doing them, confident in your abilities, know your specialties, know your process, and know how much you can take on. If you haven't checked off all of those boxes, you're definitely not ready yet!

If you don't know enough people to do enough practice readings (and you really do need to practice on strangers anyway), I'll give you the way I was able to do that many (and pretty much all strangers since almost no one I knew personally knew their time of birth). Online communities are your saving grace! I found an astrology message board that I would go on twice per month, and announce that I'd be doing readings that day, and if anyone wanted one, to reply with their birth data and question. I'd block out 4-6 hours to do nothing but mini readings, and usually knock out 10-20 in one shot. Added bonus, a lot of my first clients came from that board! (because if they like you and your style, they'll reach out wanting something more) The message board I used no longer exists (this was the turn of the century, after all - I'm getting old), but there are plenty of Facebook groups out there dedicated to astrology you can use, and the forums on astro.com, Astrology Weekly, and Lindaland are pretty active. Just make sure you behave in a very professional manner. You need to show yourself as a professional astrologer, and that's not going to fly if you're getting into fights with people or sharing drama.

Make note: How many practice readings have you done? Are you comfortable and confident doing readings? Do you know your specialty? Do you know your process? Do you know how many you can do in your schedule? Do you know how you want to deliver readings? All of these are important to figure out before you get started:

Preparing to Sell Readings

Once you're getting ready to start actually selling readings, you can start preparing by focusing on a few things. By now, you know what your specialties are, how to deliver the readings, and how many you can fit into your schedule, so the next step is figuring out which exact readings you're going to offer. You can't just say, hey I do readings pay me now! (LOL!)

Since you know your specialties, you can offer 2-4 readings that are focused on your specialties. Really, just 2-4! Reason being, people get overwhelmed by having too much choice (a literal thing called choice overload). Plus you don't want to scare away the Libras like me (I run if there are too many choices!). You'll want to have 1 reading that is your intro reading, the reading almost anyone who is first seeing you should get. After that, you can choose to offer a bigger option (if they want something more robust), a followup option (only for repeat clients), a laser-focused option (something very specific that will usually be less in price), or a mini option (a mini version of a regular reading only covering a small portion of the regular reading). It's all up to you!

Once you have all of this figured out, you then have to come up with pricing. This tends to be the thing us spiritual types struggle with the most! We get a little queasy thinking about taking people's money for this work, and tend to undercharge. I'll quote this for the Professional Pixie course:

"We spiritual types tend to want to undercharge like crazy. We feel badly for charging. It goes back to the days when the spiritual elder of communities was revered, and so people gave them everything they needed to survive to show their appreciation, so the spiritual elder didn't need money (or coins or whatever it was). Nowadays, the spiritual elder

isn't really a thing in our societies anymore, and we don't give people we revere bread and shoes and pottery - instead we give them money to get that stuff for themselves.

I'm not going to tell you to not feel queasy about it (I have Neptune in the 2nd house, I so get it). But think about someone you've had a consultation with that was a positive experience - did you want to be like, screw you, I'm not giving you a dime! No, you probably wanted to give them more if you could've. So why wouldn't someone feel that way with you? I've literally had people beg me to let them give me money (LOL no joke! I always decline if I haven't actually done anything though). There is no reason that you can't provide positive experiences for people that make them want to reward you."

I'll tell ya, undercharging can be a terrible thing for your work. And I'm not going to lie, I totally did it when I was starting! I didn't even realize it at first until my schedule was jam-packed with readings yet I was barely making any money. I sat down and crunched the numbers, and was horrified when I found I was only making \$3/hour. Yes, you read that right, \$3/hour!!! That's some third-world wages right there. Plus, I hadn't considered the fees I'd be paying (when you're accepting payments online, you pay fees for using the online services, like Paypal), and definitely hadn't considered the taxes I'd be paying (can't comment on outside of the U.S., but here you're double-taxed because you have to pay as both an employee and employer - remember that! And we don't even get any of the benefits they get in other countries . . .).

Because I started so low, it became very difficult to bring that up (and I actually was unable to until I took almost 2 years off from doing readings to focus on freelance astrology writing; that time off allowed me to come back and charge closer to what I should've been at the time). I don't want you to make the same mistake! Another quote from Professional Pixie:

"You need to value your skills, experience, and what you have to offer. That's to start. Then there's this thing that happens - if you're not charging enough, other people won't value you so much either. It's a crazy thing, but I found that the more someone paid for a reading, the better they treated me, the more they listened, and the more they acted on the information provided. I've talked to other astrologers who say the same thing. You'd think that if someone gets a "deal" that they'd be more appreciative, but it seems the opposite is true.

There are other negative side effects to not charging enough too - you can start to resent the work because you're killing yourself with work that isn't sustaining you, which can impact your ability to do the work well (or even want to do the work at all). And energetically, when you're giving too much and not getting enough in return, it creates an energetic imbalance. The energy flowing from you grows while the energy flowing to you diminishes. This contributes to lack in your life, and while it may start professionally/financially, it can spread and play out in many arenas of your life. So you see the bad?"

I hope you do see the bad! Undercharging is a big problem, so don't do it! And yes, people do treat you worse when they pay less. It's counterintuitive but 100% true.

I usually recommend you start at \$35-50/hour (if you've done enough practice readings and know your process, you should know how many hours each reading will take you). And make sure to include prep time! (the time you spend collecting info and notes you need) So if a reading takes you 2 hours to do, you should be charging \$70-100 to start. Live and in-person readings can start at the higher end (or even higher for in-person, this is always where you'll charge the most and can start at say, \$60-70/hour). I have only occasionally seen someone charging too much right out of the gates (if you're over \$200 to start and it's not

in-person, you probably need to re-assess; you're either shooting too high or it's taking you too long to do your readings, which means you need to do more practice readings to streamline your process). The vast majority charge too little, so that's what you likely have to work on!

And to note, you don't charge for your practice readings. Well, I mean you could, there's no one stopping you, but I don't recommend that, not even at a discounted rate. Actually, especially not at a discounted rate! You don't want people getting used to paying you less and make it harder for when you want to charge more. When you're not charging, people know you're still in the practice arena, and anticipate you'll charge (and usually anticipate a higher amount than you probably will).

Make note: List several readings you'd be interested in offering. If you have a hard time narrowing it down, make a pros and cons list for each. How many readings would you be able to do in one month of each? How many hours does each reading take you? What's the price range for each reading?

Plan Your Policies

Before you start performing readings professionally, you'll want to plan your readings policies. This tends to be overlooked (I know I totally did!), but it helps once you're actually selling readings to have your policies mapped out. Keeps both you and your clients on the same page!

Go through this list and figure out what you're going to do for each:

Refund Policy: Decide if you're going to offer refunds or not, if they're going to be full refunds or partial refunds, at what point someone can ask for a refund, what situations you'll offer a refund, and how the refund will be issued. I have a no-refund policy for readings; I think I've refunded a grand total of 4 readings over the years (situations where the person just pissed me off so much that I didn't want their money and never wanted to deal with them again!). Do be firm in your refund policy, otherwise there will be people who take advantage of you. I don't recommend allowing refunds once the reading has been completed.

Cancellation Policy: Decide how long after they've booked a reading or how long before the reading is scheduled they have to cancel the reading. This is usually only an issue when your schedule is booked out at least a month (when you do readings quickly, there won't be enough time for them to cancel beforehand!). Think about how much time you need beforehand to start the reading and gather information needed. You don't want to do all of the work, only to have them cancel at the last minute (totally had that happen!). 72 hours before is usually the shortest you should give. Outline what will happen to what they've paid (will you issue a full or partial refund and how will it be delivered, can they reschedule, can they opt for something else). And include what happens if YOU are the one who has to cancel/reschedule!

Followup questions: This is the one I've been asked the most about (by far!). Outline whether or not they can ask followup questions, how many they can ask, how long they have to ask, how they can ask them, what questions aren't allowed, and if there will be an additional cost.

Followup questions are more of an issue for live readings; with live readings, people will often think of something afterward since you're limited in what you can address during the reading, so if you're going to do live readings, make certain you have a followup question policy (though I do readings written via email and people will often have questions! Though it tends to be more for clarity)..

A few extra things are:

- **Payment methods** (cash, credit card, Paypal, check, email invoices, or other; cash and check should only be an option for in-person readings, though even then, I find that to be a big risk because you want them to pay in advance, otherwise you risk doing all of the work and not being paid - I totally didn't think of this initially and had 3 people get readings that they never paid for because I didn't say they needed to pay first! Learned my lesson after that)
- **Confidentiality** (people want to make sure that whatever they tell you or whatever comes up in the reading won't be disclosed to anyone - especially if you have strong Pluto/Scorpio/8th house energy! So make it clear that readings are confidential, unless of course there's something you need to report to authorities, like a major crime or if the client becomes harassing and you need to protect yourself)
- **What you WON't do** (there are going to be readings that you won't do, either for moral/ethical reasons or because you just don't have the knowledge/experience for the subject; I try not to touch medical or legal questions because you can get in trouble legally for offering that advice if you don't have a medical or legal degree, at least in the U.S.; I also don't do anything with Vedic astrology)

since I just don't have the experience for it, and am a little touch-and-go with horary so I don't do that either; and you can also think about readings that involve someone else who isn't aware, like relationship readings, or readings involving children as some parents may want you to assess their child)

And always make sure to include that you won't perform readings for anyone under 18 years old (more potential legal trouble if you're dealing with anyone under 18!), and a super important one - include that you have the right to refuse to do any reading at any time for any reason. This saves you in the event you come across a nightmare client - yes, they're out there, and they'll find you eventually! (just hopefully not like the ones on Lifetime)

Make note: What will your refund policy be? Your cancellation policy? Your followup questions policy? What payment methods will you accept? What readings won't you do?

The Before, During, and After of Providing Readings

Now let's go through the process of providing readings - the before when someone books a reading, the during of performing the reading, and the after once it's been delivered.

Starting when someone books a reading, you'll want all of the information that you need from them to perform the reading and do it right. Bare basics, you'll need their birth data! Depending on how you're selling the readings, you may be able to collect this information right away, otherwise you can email them after they've booked to collect their birth data, or have them email you with the birth data once they've booked (include all of this on your services page, if you're selling online). Think about the information you'll need to perform the reading, and ask them right away. If they provide a question or tell you something where you need more information, ask for it!

Be prepared - some people will be super tight-lipped and not want to tell you much of anything, while others will give you their entire life story. I love the people in the middle but they seem to be few and far between! If someone doesn't want to say much, reiterate your confidentiality policy, and try to focus on specific information you'll need for the reading. If someone spills too much, try to parse through the information and focus on what you need. It's all about what is needed for the reading!

When someone books a reading, make sure they know when to expect it. If it's a live reading, reiterate the date and time (and location if it's in-person). If it'll be sent via email/recorded, give them a time frame of when that'll happen (I usually tell them it'll be the week of [Monday of the week it'll be finished], like the week of September 30th). If it's far out and you're booked way in advance, you may want to check back in with

them shortly before the reading to remind them and see if there's anything they forgot initially.

Then there is during the reading. When it's a live reading, the most important thing is to be on time. Be on time, be on time, be on time! They can be late (though you may want to include in your policies what happens if they're x amount of time late), but you absolutely cannot be (unless it's some sort of unexpected emergency, of course - you can't help it if you end up in a coma or something!). It's completely unprofessional to not be on time, and the client will most likely not book another reading with you. So BE. ON. TIME! (if you're someone who has a hard time with that, then don't offer live readings - don't set yourself up for failure!)

For the live reading, make sure you have everything on hand that you may need - charts, notes, data - and have an idea of where you want the reading to go so you're not aimless. Try not to get too off-track when they ask questions (or tell them to ask questions when you're done). For in-person readings, bring paper and a pen with you for them to write things down (in case they don't). It's a good idea to record your live readings so they can come back to it later without having to ask you (there are lots of phone apps and computer programs you can use to record readings; in-person, you can even use a good old-fashioned tape recorder!).

If your readings aren't live, you're pretty much stress-free on the delivery. Just make sure you send it during the time span you told them you would, and keep a copy of it in case they lose it (there will be some who do). If you don't hear back from them, you may want to contact them again in a week or two to make sure they got it (emails love to disappear in the internet ether).

I would say, try to refrain from swearing during readings, but ya know, that's some people's style, so if it's yours, so be it. Do be mindful of anything offensive though - don't use slurs, don't use anything loaded, cut down on offensive humor (that's the hard one for me! I am a little dark and insanely sarcastic in person but it doesn't translate written so I lay off).

And then comes the after. This is where potential followup readings may occur. Make sure that's outlined in your policies so you can be ready. Live readings, you may have an idea by the end if they'll have followup questions. Some may want to book another reading again quickly. I've always given preferential treatment to repeat clients, so I'd try to get them in sooner than if they were new (up to you if you want to do that, but it does help keep them coming back, and most of my repeat clients are repeaters many times over).

If you'd like testimonials or reviews (like on your website/blog or social media), you can ask them for one and direct them to where they can do that. I actually always struggled with getting testimonials/reviews when I'd ask for them - don't know why! Guess I'm bad at asking, so for how to ask, find someone else to give you that advice (ha). Most of the reviews/testimonials I got were unsolicited. One little tip I learned from a guru: when someone emails you glowing praise for your reading, take a screenshot of it and save it. Then when you want to share it, you can just ask the person for permission and they don't have to do anything else, and you've already got it on file to use. Saves time for everyone!

Make note: What information do you need before the reading? What preparations do you need to take for during the reading? How can you manage the client after the reading? Will you need anything from them after the reading? Will you plan to contact them again after the reading?