

## On Consulting the I Ching with Coins

### The Question

Before consulting the I Ching, consider the question you want to ask of the oracle. Ask open-ended questions rather than yes-no ones. The more specific your question, the more specific will be I Ching's response. Have a paper and pencil ready to mark the lines.

### Throwing and Marking the lines

Commonly, three pennies are used. Hold the three coins in your hand and focus on the question you ask the I Ching. When ready, cast all three coins down together on a flat surface covered by a soft cloth to help keep the coins from scattering

The side of the penny with the head has the value of three, and the other side (tails) has a value of 2. The sum of these values of the three coins results in either a solid or broken line:

Three heads	9	---○---
Three tails	6	---x---
One head and two tails	7	-----
Two heads and one tail	8	--- ---

**The lines with a total of 9 or 6 are called moving lines.**

The coins are thrown six times, and each throw gives a line. After each throw, identify the line and mark it down on paper, one above the other. The line from the first throw of the coins is the first line of the hexagram, which stands at the bottom. After each of the remaining throws, place the lines above the other until you have six lines. After six throws, you have completed the form of the hexagram.

The lines are numbered from the bottom to top. The bottom line is line 1, and the top line is line 6.

Let us say that you have thrown the coins six times and have come up with the hexagram that appears below. Notes that Line 2 and Line 9 both have moving lines. [The lines with a total of 9 or 6 are called moving lines.]

	Value
-----	8 line 6
---x---	6 line 5
-----	8 line 4
-----	7 line 3
---○---	9 line 2
-----	7 line 1

### Identifying the Hexagram

When identifying which hexagram you received, first see your hexagram as if it had no moving lines. Whole moving lines (9) become simply ----- . Broken moving lines become --- --- .

Thus our hexagram example appears as ☰☷.

The upper three lines are the upper trigram. The bottom three lines are the lower trigram.

Thus, for this example, the upper trigram is ☰. The lower trigram is ☷.

Look at the hexagram guide below. Find the upper trigram and its column that looks like our example. Then find the lower trigram and its row.

Where the row and column for the upper and lower trigrams meet, the number in the box is the number of the hexagram you received. For our example, that would be Hexagram 11.

With the number you find for your hexagram, you can now go to the I Ching and find the hexagram reading for that number.

You might want to Google “hexagram guide” in images to print out a hexagram guide for your easy reference.

		UPPER TRIGRAM								
		☰	☱	☲	☳	☴	☵	☶	☷	
LOWER TRIGRAM	☰	1	34	5	26	11	9	14	43	
	☱	25	51	3	27	24	42	21	17	
	☲	6	40	29	4	7	59	64	47	
	☳	33	62	39	52	15	53	56	31	
	☴	12	16	8	23	2	20	35	45	
	☵	44	32	48	18	46	57	50	28	
	☶	13	55	63	22	36	37	30	49	
	☷	10	54	60	41	19	61	38	58	

### Reading the Hexagram

Read the text for the hexagram you received up to the section that says *Line 1*. Beyond that, read only the sections for any changing lines your hexagram might have. In the example hexagram, that would be lines 2 and 5.

If you have questions, contact me at [lgorenflo@gmail.com](mailto:lgorenflo@gmail.com)