

3 Card spread

So, as a complete beginner, how do I start?

The best way to start reading the Tarot is just to start reading! I suggest a daily three-card spread (or do one most days!)

Card 1 –Past Card 2- Present/advice Card 3 – Likely future.

Then:

1. **Look:** When you first do your spread, sit quietly, gaze at the cards.
2. **Record:** Write down any insight gained.
3. **Research:** Now look up the meanings of the cards you don't understand.
4. **Reflect:** At the end of the day, reread your notes and consider the day. With hindsight, did the cards offer any workable insight or advice?

In this way you are learning about the Tarot through wisdom (traditional meanings), inspiration and practical applications.

This spread can also be used to represent three cards (with no placement) in answer to the question “What do I need to know” or “ How am I doing”

You can also use the spread in my book (that goes with the crib-sheet) which alters the order slightly.

Card 2- A warning. Card 1- The situation. Card 3- Advice.



9 card spread

This is my “work horse” spread which I adapt to most questions .

I choose to start in the middle and then read either side- if this annoys you then do feel free to change the order!

Basically the middle card is the focus, and the cards either side add detail.

The centre card could be “blue” with the cards either side being “dark” and “metallic”.

Note any patterns in the rows, columns, and diagonals.

Cards 1-3 The past impacting this situation.

Cards 4-6 The present, which includes advice as to how to best use the present moment.

Cards 7-9 The most likely future.

Think of this spread as a frame that allows the cards to speak to you, rather than being over rigid about which card is in which place.

It can be used for all sorts of questions. If there is a choice to be made you could do my choice spread to get an idea, then use this spread to look in-depth at various options, or to get a flow of the most likely forward direction.

“Should I go to university this year?” Read this spread to see if it reflects University as a likely option (looking for cards of study, teaching, movement etc) or use this spread to ask outright “Can I go to university this year, and what will it bring me.”

You can use this spread to understand any situation, including relationships (though I also have a relationship spread to try).

Phrase questions like “how is my job going” “how is my relationship” “am I right to be looking for another job” or just look at life as a whole.

If I am in doubt I will usually start with my reflection spread, then do a three card “what do I need to know” spread, then deep dive with this spread.



Reflection Spread

This is loosely based on the Celtic Cross spread, I use this to better understand someone.

Card 1- How the person is right now.

Card 2- (crossing) an issue for them at this point.

Card 3- Their unconscious mind (the most important card in the spread)

Card 4- The recent past.

Card 5- Their conscious mind.

Card 6- The near future.

If I am doing an in-depth relationship spread I would do this spread for each individual to better understand them, and then do the relationship spread.

I often do this at the start of a professional reading to understand how my client is in their life. I regularly do this for myself as a “check in”.



Pyramid spread

When I first started out as a tarot pro- this was the ONLY spread I used. Maybe you will prefer it to my 9 card spread which for me has proven a little more flexible.

Bottom 4 cards – the past up to this point.

Middle 3 cards- The present, with advice implicit.

Top 2 cards- Near future.

Top card- Outcome.

(Re-read all my support notes for the 9-card spread, I would ask the questions in the same way)



Relationship spread

This explores the relationship between any 2 people (and you can add a third “individual” if you choose) mother and daughter, romantic relationship, you and your boss.

You/client:

Card 1: You in the relationship

Card 2: (crossing) a problem you have impacting/connected with the relationship.

Card 3: How you are relating to them.

Them:

Card 4: You in the relationship

Card 5: (crossing) a problem you have impacting/connected with the relationship.

Card 6: How you are relating to them.

Before you shuffle and lay the cards decide if you are pulling three cards for advice, or three cards for prediction.

Then:

Cards 7, 8, 9 can be advice on the relationship.

Or: Card 7 – past, Card 8 – present, Card 9- most likely future



Decision making spread

If you have choices to consider its really helpful to do a serious of small spreads so you can see each option in one cohesive whole.

You could add a 4th card to each spread which would then give you

Card 3- short term outcome.

Card 4- long term outcome.

Use pen and paper (or stickit notes) to list the order of your choices.

E.G I want to create a Tarot project, which is the best for my next focus? Book, Online course, In person course.

Then shuffle and lay out (in this case 9 cards) three for each choice.

One choice may obviously be not right so simply remove those cards.

One choice may be harder- but with better rewards, if I am reading for a client I would express that and let them decide- do they want the hard work for the results? Or are they in need of the simplest option?



Card at the bottom of the pack

I always look at the card at the bottom of the pack.

Before you start shuffling you can decide this card is whatever you want to be.

It can be:

- What the Tarot wants to say on the matter (which may not be answering your question, but useful advice.)
- The “doorstop” card- the root of the issue, its important for you to know.
- Something outside of your control.
- What is the long-term outcome
- What is my point of learning in this situation.
- What do my guides want to say to me.
- Or anything useful to your question.

Phrasing the question

The question matters.

If you don't want to know the answer, or you are asked to read for something you are not comfortable with- either don't, or re-phrase the question.

Rephrasing the question is a HUGE part of my job.

The simple question “will I get the promotion” secretly asks:

- Is there anything I can do to improve my chances of getting the promotion.
- Can I get the promotion.
- If I get it, is it the right choice for me.
- Is there something better I could be focusing on?
- Do I have a block that might prevent me from getting the promotion, or is keeping me tied to a career that doesn't really suit me.

In my 9 card spread I would be asking “about the possible promotion”.

I would be looking for are they happy in this career/workplace, are they well suited to their role, do they fit in with their work team (3 past cards)

Is there anything they can be doing right now to empower their best possible future (3 present cards)

Do the cards suggest the promotion is likely, and if so does it look like a good choice (3 cards for the future)

Is there anything else I need to know about this (card at the bottom of the pack).

Take your time phrasing the question. Write it down to be clear.

If using closed questions "will I get the promotion by March" be ready to re-read if the cards just say No, or are very muddled. The answer may be you will get the promotion in April, or the cards may be saying- Thank God you didn't get it!

If in doubt ask;

- What do I need to know about
- What should I focus on right now.
- What is holding me back.
- What do I need to know.
- How am I doing?

All of these would work really well for my 3 and 9 card spread.

Where does the information come from?

I really can't answer this for you- it is down to world view and spiritual beliefs. Here are some ideas.

- Your own unconscious
- Collective unconscious/ knowing field
- Spirit guides
- Divine/universal intelligence
- Connecting into universal lores
- Simply a "knowing"

Timing

I think prediction, and timing is the hardest part of tarot. Particularly as I don't believe the future is fixed, and we all have free will.

For timing I would do one of two things:

- Make timing implicit in the spread. "Will I sell my house by the end of March?"
"Where will my project be in 6 months time"
- Do a time focused spread. I would then do three cards for each period of time (week, month, season) to get a feel of the energies and how they are moving.
- There are certain cards that might indicate it's happening quickly or soon (ace, 8 wands etc) or cards that suggest it's not happening as soon as you hoped (hanged man, 4 cups etc) but I usually allow the spread to define the timing.