

The Wandering Hermit

Learning the Tarot

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Tarot Spreads

What Are Spreads?

Tarot spreads are patterns we use for placing the cards so we can read them and gain information. We'll start with a simple spread. Focus on a question you have and shuffle the cards and cut them into three piles, face down, like this:

Pile 1 Pile 2 Pile 3

Pile 1 represents the past. Pile 2 represents the Present. Pile 3 represents the future. Turn the piles over. Remember the topic you were concentrating on when you shuffled and cut the cards. That is the focus of this spread. Pile 1 tells you what has happened. It might not be what you expect and can often add extra insight into past events. Pile 2 is what is going on now and Pile 3 is what you can expect in the future. It's that simple. If you have not read the section on the Minor Arcana yet, you can do this with only the 22 cards that make up the Major Arcana, but you will get a clearer reading if you use the entire deck.

I've included two more spreads for you to learn here, The Gateway to the Soul, and The Celtic Cross. The Gateway to the Soul is much like the one you just did, but more intended for meditational use. It is a spread I made up. The Celtic Cross is one of the most popular spreads used today. Many people use it almost exclusively. On the other hand, some don't like it at all. Try it and see what you think. Remember General Answer #1!

Shuffling and Cutting

I already left notes about shuffling earlier in the tutorial. I start every spread by shuffling, then using a three pile cut like above and read it as an introduction. Some other readers do that, some don't. Then I pick up the cards, starting with Pile 2, then 3, then 1. Then, starting with the cards face up, I deal them or place them in the spread. Some readers don't cut the deck, some cut it once, then use one side, some deal the

cards face down and turn them over one by one, some put them out face up. There are many variations. Use what works for you.

Creating Spreads

Whenever I mention to students that they can make up their own spreads, their eyes pop out. You'd think I told them to plot the Moon's orbit using three dimensional differential equations! One of the first spreads I ever created came out of questions I had about a possible romantic relationship. I designed it around the shape of scales and called it The Libra Relationship Scale. I thought about what I wanted to know and how a scale symbolized the relationship. Many of the answers were obvious. Then I decided where the locations were for the cards and in what order they should be placed. Voila! I had my first spread! I still use it today and I use it when I teach my classes. It is one of my most popular spreads! It is so popular, in fact, that a while ago when I was at work, one of the managers was trying to focus on a question and try some spreads on her own. I told her I had one that was designed for romantic relationships, but it could work for any kind of relationship. She asked me to show it to her and she recognized it. One of my students had taught it to her somewhere else.

I encourage you to decide what questions you need answered. Design your own spreads to find the answers. Create your own spreads! It's easy. You can also modify spreads you've learned. I rarely use the Celtic Cross, but when I do, I use it with some modifications.

So take a look at the spreads I've included here. I placed them in separate files on separate pages, since the picture files for them are large and can take time to load. (I did not want to include both graphics on the same page.)

[Click here to learn the Gateway to the Soul.](#)

[Click here to learn the Celtic Cross.](#)

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