

Read Your Own Spread

A practical guide to reading
two or three tarot cards together.



Illustrated examples, guided practice, and reusable worksheets.

Classic Rider-Waite-Smith illustrations by Pamela Colman Smith

YOUR FIRST READING

When pushing harder isn't helping

I keep jumping between tasks. What would help me finish today's work?

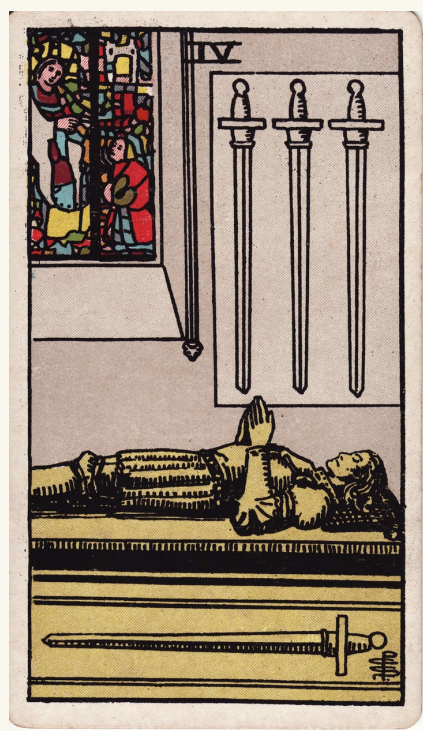
Suppose you sit down to work, check a message, remember another task, and switch again. By lunch, you've started five things. Nothing is finished.

SITUATION

**The Chariot**

The black and white sphinxes face forward beneath the driver.

HELPFUL RESPONSE

**Four of Swords**

A knight's stone figure lies with hands together beneath three swords.

THE READING

I'm putting in effort, but a pause could help me decide where it should go. I'll step away for a few minutes, choose one task, and return to it before taking on the next.

YOUR FIRST READING / WORK IT THROUGH

How the pair becomes an answer

The Four's pause changes how you use the Chariot's effort.



The Chariot

Situation



Four of Swords

Helpful response

Before drawing, you chose Situation for the first card and Helpful response for the second. Keep those questions in mind as you work through the answer.

Step	Working through the pair
1. Ask	I'm asking about today's unfinished work. The first card describes my approach; the second offers a response.
2. Read	The Chariot suggests directing my effort. The Four of Swords suggests stepping away long enough to rest or think.
3. Connect	The pause could help me choose a direction. Pushing on without choosing may just mean switching tasks faster.
4. Write	I'll stop for a few minutes, choose one task, and return to it. My effort will have somewhere to go.
5. Check	Am I tired, or am I avoiding a choice? Take a short break, pick one task, and notice whether it becomes easier to stay with it.

Try a pair of your own

Before shuffling, write your question and choose Situation / Helpful response. Look up each card, then explain how the second responds to the first. Keep your notes on the two-card worksheet.

WORKED PAIR / TENSION

The reply you've been rewriting

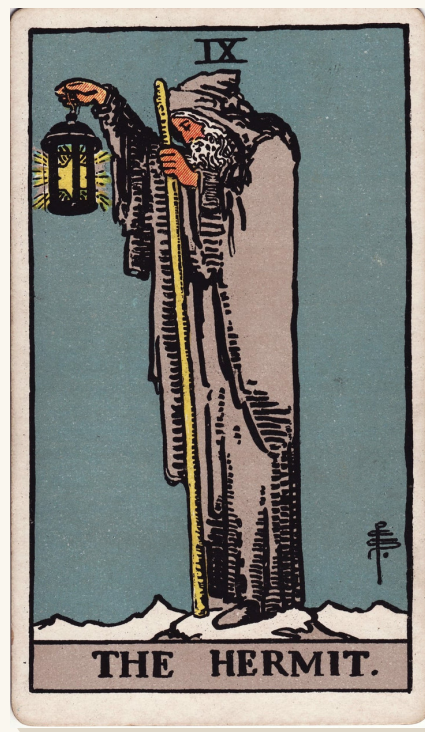
I keep putting off replying to an old friend. What is getting in the way?

SITUATION

**Two of Cups**

Each person holds a cup toward the other.

CHALLENGE

**The Hermit**

A lone figure holds up a lantern.

THE READING

Thinking about the friendship has started to take the place of speaking to your friend. Send a short, honest reply and give them a chance to answer. You can work out more when both of you are in the conversation.

WORKED PAIR / LOOK MORE CLOSELY

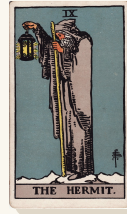
Why this reading fits

The reply you've been rewriting



Two of Cups

Situation



The Hermit

Challenge

Suppose your friend has asked whether you'd like to meet, and you've spent three days drafting a reply. The two people in the Two of Cups face each other, cups in hand. The Hermit stands alone with his lantern. In this reading, the contrast matters: there's a conversation available, but you're trying to work out the friendship by yourself. The unanswered invitation makes withdrawal a useful meaning for the Hermit in Challenge.

Read them together

The Hermit makes you examine what's happening around the Two of Cups. Reflection can help a friendship, but here it has become the thing delaying contact. The Challenge position keeps that difficulty in view.

Another possibility

Perhaps you don't know what you want to say yet. The Hermit can show difficulty finding a clear view; the Two of Cups can offer a conversation that helps you reach one.

Try it

Read the invitation again. Answer what it actually asks: whether you'd like to meet. If you need time, say that. You don't have to settle the whole friendship in the first message.

LOOK AGAIN

'My friend is avoiding me' turns the Hermit into a claim about the other person. This question concerns your own delay, and your friend's invitation is already part of the example.

TRY IT YOURSELF

The paper you're saving

How can I enjoy what I have?

Suppose you own good art supplies but rarely use them. Before drawing, you choose Situation and Challenge. Look at these two upright cards, then ask what might be stopping you from using what you have.

SITUATION

**Nine of Pentacles**

A woman stands among vines, coins, and grapes.

CHALLENGE

**Four of Pentacles**

The figure grips one coin, with others above the head and under the feet.

Write a reading that uses both cards. What could you try?

TRY IT YOURSELF / COMPARE YOUR ANSWER

What are you protecting?

Look at why the interpretation fits, even if your words differ.



Nine of Pentacles

Situation



Four of Pentacles

Challenge

The Nine shows a woman in a cultivated garden. The Four holds tightly to a coin, with others above the head and under the feet. You have something you could enjoy, but you might be holding on so tightly that you never get to enjoy it.

One possible reading

I have materials I could enjoy, but keeping them perfect is stopping me from using them. I'll try one drawing on the good paper, after checking that I can spare a sheet.

You might instead be protecting a genuinely scarce supply. That matters. Check whether the hesitation comes from having very little left or from being afraid of making a bad drawing.

What would help you choose between those explanations?

The Nine brings the resources; the Four makes you examine how you hold them. A different answer can work if both cards still have a part.

THE COMPLETE KIT

Bring a question of your own

Keep practicing with the deck you already use.

The complete Read Your Own Spread kit walks you through choosing a meaning, connecting the cards, and writing an answer you understand. The examples show the classic cards beside the readings, then explain why those interpretations fit.

- Six worked pairs and six worked trios, each with a page explaining the reading.
- Lessons for cards without positions, unexpected advice cards, and reversals.
- Eleven exercises and answer notes, ending with a spread you haven't practiced.
- Six reusable templates across nine printable, digitally fillable pages.
- An offline reader that saves exercise answers and lets you export your notes.
- A week of practice and a reference to keep beside your deck.

Try another pair today

Choose one thing you want to understand. Find a meaning for each card, then explain what happens between them. Keep your answer and something you'd like to check.

Visit YouTarot at youtarot.app.

Original YouTarot text and fictional exercises. Classic Rider-Waite-Smith artwork by Pamela Colman Smith. Illustrated edition 2.1 / October 2026.