

# *Basics of Astrology*

*Signs, Planets, Houses & Aspects*

a guide written by :

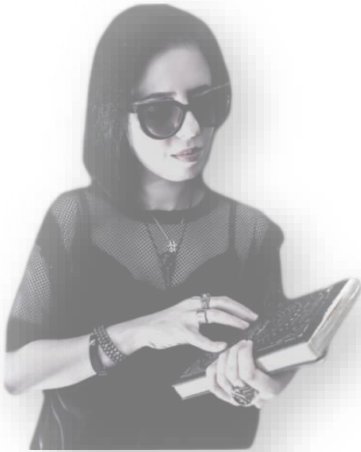
*NightFall  
Astrology*



[www.nightfallastrology.com](http://www.nightfallastrology.com)

# WELCOME

## ABOUT YOUR ASTROLOGER



Hi, my name is Theodora, the founder of “NightFall Astrology “.

I’m a professional astrologer of Bulgarian and Lebanese/Phoenician heritage. I have a background in Science (specifically, Physics) and International Law/Relations

I’m currently based in Strasbourg – France. I’m also a French national.

Astrology came into my life at the age of 27 through tarot and occultism.

In my astrological practice, I incorporate Stoic philosophy. Stemming from this philosophy, I aim at debunking the traditional fatalistic views in astrology. That’s because astrology, in its core, as a metaphysical science, teaches us the best way in which we can live our lives.

Thus, the type of astrology I practise is qualified as “**evolutionary astrology**“. My objective is to show you the way towards self-development and improvement in your life.



A night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy, with a dark silhouette of a forest in the foreground. The Milky Way is visible as a bright, yellowish-white band of stars stretching across the sky. Two shooting stars are visible in the upper right quadrant. The foreground is a dark, silhouetted forest of trees.

*Astrology*  
*The basics*

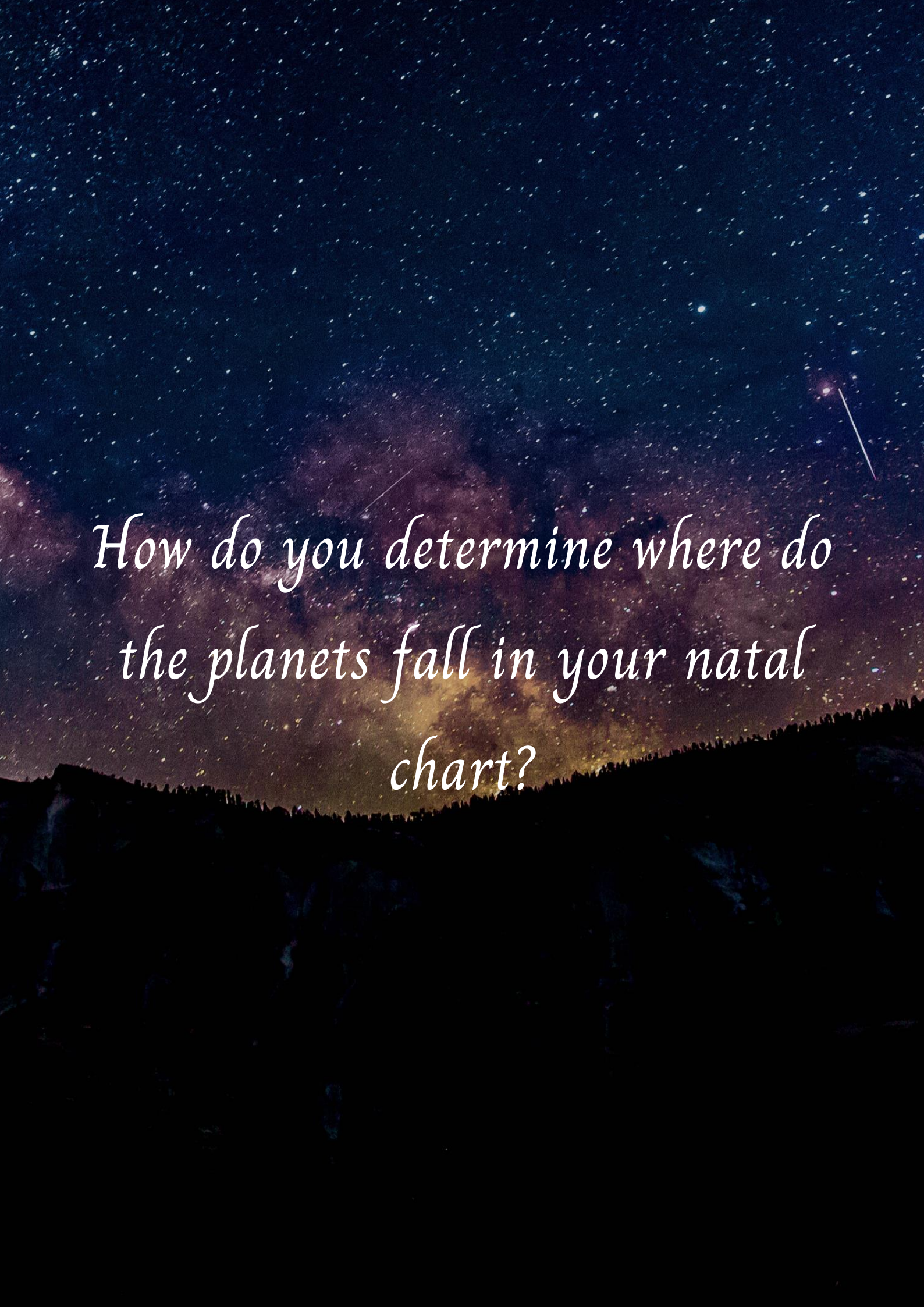
If you're starting with astrology and would like to be able to locate planets, signs, and houses in your natal chart or in transits (that's where horoscopes come from), then this is the guidebook for you.

In astrology, the luminaries (Sun and Moon) are also considered as "planets" for interpretation purposes. So, we end up with 5 fast-moving personal planets: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus and Mars. Why are they called personal planets? Because astronomically speaking, they're the closest to Earth, they move fast around the Sun, affecting us the most. In a natal chart, they're the ones we, astrologers, look at first to determine the client's main personality traits. Then, we come to Jupiter and Saturn. We call them "generational planets" because each one of them stays, respectively, 1 and 2.5 years in a sign. Any group of people born in the same year will most likely have these 2 planets in the same sign, marking a new generation that shares that planet's qualities in that particular sign. For example, anyone born in 1989 and 1990 will have Saturn in Capricorn.

The inner planets, meaning the planets we can see through the naked eye, stop at Saturn. Anything beyond that needs a telescope to be seen, which leads us to the 3 outer planets: Uranus, Neptune, Pluto. These are also generational planets as they stay a long time in a sign: 7-15 years. These planets bring reforms, changes, new social orders, big events. They're so far away from us that when our natal charts are affected by transits from them, it can feel otherworldly; we can't comprehend what's happening. Things are very psychological.

You've also probably heard of the term "houses" in astrology. Metaphorically speaking, if the planets were actors and the signs which they're in were their roles, an astrological house would be a stage where they're performing. In a natal chart, a house is the area of life of a person where the planets were located at the moment of birth, or where they're transiting in time (horoscope).



A night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy, with a silhouette of a forest in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the sky.

*How do you determine where do  
the planets fall in your natal  
chart?*

That's where your time of birth is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. The exact time of birth determines the ascendant/rising sign: the constellation rising at the eastern horizon when you were born. The exact hour and minute determine its degree. When that degree is found, all the 12th houses (a division of the sky in 12 sectors of life) fall into place with the planets in them. Each house begins in a specific sign, counting counter clockwise from your ascendant.

Most of the time, each planet rules, 2 signs, that's what we call their "home sign(s)" or "dignity sign(s)". A planet being in its home sign (Mars is in dignity in Aries and Scorpio, for example), means that it's operating with its full power. If a planet is in the opposite sign of its rulership (e.g. Mars in Libra, as Libra, is the opposite sign of Aries), it is called "in detriment", which means that its power is weakened, it's not operating at its best. Planets also have exaltation signs, signs of a similar nature to their signs of rulership, strength and energy. If a planet's home sign is literally "its home", it's where it's most comfortable, its exaltation sign is its 'vacation house' (e.g. Mars is exalted in Capricorn). If a planet is in the opposite sign of its exaltation one, it's in "fall", meaning it loses most of its strength and influence, its weakest position (Mars is in fall in Cancer).

Every sign rules a part of our physical body (e.g. Aries rules the head).

Here's a full overview of the signs, planets, and houses with their meanings:



A night sky photograph featuring the Milky Way galaxy, a meteor streak, and a bright planet over a dark landscape silhouette. The Milky Way is visible as a dense band of stars and dust, stretching across the sky. A bright meteor streaks across the upper right portion of the frame. A single, bright planet is visible in the upper right quadrant. The foreground shows a dark silhouette of a forested hillside.

# 1. *The planets*

**THE SUN** rules Leo, is exalted in Aries, is in detriment in Aquarius, falls in Libra. The Sun is our will, our vitality, our ego, our soul.

**THE MOON** rules Cancer, is exalted in Taurus, is in detriment in Capricorn, falls in Scorpio. The moon is our emotions, our roots, origins, our mother, our home.

**MERCURY** is both malevolent and benevolent (neutral). It's more of an attitude. It rules Gemini, is exalted in Virgo, is in detriment in Sagittarius, falls in Pisces. Mercury is our communication, our mental processes, our perception of the world.

**VENUS** rules Taurus and Libra, is exalted in Pisces, is in detriment in Scorpio and Aries, falls in Virgo. Venus is our behaviour and approach towards relationships, our values, our money.

**MARS:** Mars rules Aries and Scorpio, is exalted in Capricorn (it likes to reach the top of the mountain), is in detriment in Libra and Taurus, falls in Cancer (it's lazy and likes to take time off). Mars is our drive, our ego expression through action, our passion, the warrior inside of us.

**JUPITER** is more of an outlook. It rules Sagittarius and Pisces, is exalted in Cancer, is in detriment in Gemini and Virgo (focus on small things instead of big ideas), falls in Capricorn (expanding only one goal instead of many). Jupiter is our faith, our philosophy in life, our



higher education, our luck, the expansion of our horizons (big ideas), our belief-systems, our religion.

It stays in a sign for around a year, and takes 12 years to go around the zodiac.

**SATURN:** Planet of Karma. Restrictions, decision, structure. It doesn't mess around. It is symbolised by the God Chronos. When Saturn and Jupiter are in conjunction, this is a very powerful aspect. He's the God of time. He brings everything that he's promised: rewards, and then, on the other hand, he'll limit us and tear us apart. Rules Capricorn and Aquarius. It's the last planet visible to the naked eye. It rules our growth. It doesn't make us grow nicely. It's exalted in Libra (fair judgement), is in detriment in Cancer and Leo, falls in Aries. It stays in a sign for about 2.5-3 years, and takes 29 to 30 years to go through the entire zodiac.

***Outer planets have a non-physical aspect to life. We are dealing with the subconscious.***

**URANUS:** Planet of revolution, technology and innovation, freedom, rebellion, eccentricity, originality, sudden change, intellectual and spiritual ascension (the higher mind and intellect; it's considered the higher octave of Mercury), humanity and humanitarian action.

Uranus is in dignity in Aquarius and in detriment in Leo. It's exalted in Scorpio and in fall in Taurus.

Uranus exhibits the ideals of the 18th century, where people such as

Benjamin Franklin endeavoured to use their inventive mind to move man into a more enlightened era. It has an orbit of 84 years, staying in each sign of the zodiac for approximately 7 years.

**NEPTUNE:** Intuition, fantasy, media, invisibility, spirituality, connection without words, the past, sleep, the unconscious, escapism (drugs, alcohol, toxic substances), oil and gas, music. God of the sea. Has a psychotic aspect. Sensitive, emotional positions. In and out of reality aspect. When Neptune comes, there's an element of uncertainty. Neptune is the antenna in our life. Rules deception and illusion. When he's bringing something into our lives, we can intuitively feel it coming and then, when it finally shows up, it passes us. He rules horses. Neptune is where we slip up. Soul cleansing. Neptune truly blesses too; there's a Pope element to it. Neptune can also rule division, dissolution. Neptune is a neutral planet. It's the higher octave of Venus; collective love. It co-rules Pisces with Jupiter. Exaltation in Cancer. It's in detriment in Virgo and falls in Capricorn.

Stays in a sign for about 10-12 years. It takes 165 years to go around the Sun, and thus around the zodiac.

**PLUTO:** God of the underworld! Hades! Rules death, transformation, extremes, obsession, power. It deals with the things we don't face, taboos. It isn't considered a planet by astronomers anymore. It's considered a dwarf planet. It rules sex, secrets, anything hidden. The underworld is our truth. Everything comes to an end; Pluto reminds



us of this. It rules our true power and spiritual hunger. It rules our fears. We have to trust Pluto and where he will take us. Pluto rules other people's money, financial institutions, government money, inheritances, the occult. Pluto is in dignity in Scorpio, in detriment in Taurus, is exalted in Leo, falls in Aquarius. Pluto is considered the higher octave of Mars.

Stays in a sign for about 12-15 years. It takes 248 years to go around the Sun, and thus around the zodiac.

A night sky photograph featuring the Milky Way galaxy. The galaxy's core is visible as a bright, yellowish-white band of light, transitioning to a reddish-pink hue as it extends across the sky. The foreground shows a dark silhouette of a forest or mountain range. The text "2. The zodiac signs" is overlaid in a white, cursive font in the center of the image.

*2. The zodiac signs*



The Sun travels through the belt of 12 constellations of the zodiac (geocentric view). Every sign represents parts of our body and our consciousness. They are the core ingredients of every part of life.

The head is Aries; Taurus is the throat; Gemini rules the arms; Cancer rules the chest; Leo rules the chest; Virgo rules the stomach; Libra rules the kidneys (balance); Scorpio rules the genitals (intimacy, privacy); Sagittarius rules the legs (movement, going, exploring); Capricorn rules the knees representing having the ability to go up the mountain and face challenges. Aquarius rules the ankles (flexibility); Pisces rules the feet (duality of consciousness and unconsciousness).

**ARIES** ♈ (March 20th-April 19th): rules Mars; masculine sign; cardinal fire sign. Starts things with a lot of energy (fire). Rules ego, identity, war, strength and the 1st house. The downside of Aries; doesn't have enough energy to keep it going. Starts spring.

**TAURUS** ♉ (April 20th-May 20th): fixed earth sign. It wants to hold things. It rules money, Venus, values, manifesting, the bull, self-worth, not letting go of things. It's like a solid rock that won't let go—one of the strongest fixed signs. Fixed signs are the strongest cause they are in the middle. Doesn't waste time on things it doesn't want to do. It has to be worth it. Mars in Taurus, for example, doesn't waste action energy on worthless things. Middle of spring.

**GEMINI** ♊ (May 21st-June 20th): mutable air sign. It's all about intellectual change. Rethinks all the time. Gets bored easily. Rules communication, siblings, immediate environment, neighbours, proximity. The duality of life (arms). It's changing its mind A LOT. End of spring.

***N.B. No water signs in the springtime because we just finished winter with a water sign (Pisces).***

**CANCER** ♋ (June 21st-July 22nd): cardinal water sign. Starts the summer. Rules emotions, the moon, the crab. Every action starts with emotions.

**LEO** ♌ (July 23rd-August 22nd): fixed fire sign. Peak of the summer/the heat. Rules the Sun. Heart, love, courage, lion, royalty. Very intense; holds things forever.

**VIRGO** ♍ (August 23rd-September 22nd): ruled by Mercury, the virgin, mutable Earth. It represents purity of the soul, the mind and the physical body. Very analytical and detail-oriented sign. Being overly critical is one of its dark sides.

What's missing from the summer is air. We don't think too much throughout the summer. But Virgo is the most ungrounded of the earth signs cause it's changing, that's why it rules the harvest. It rules purity. We end the middle of the year with the earth element.

**LIBRA** ♎ (September 23rd-October 22nd): Cardinal air, ruled by Venus, the scales, relationships, the only sign that is neither a human nor an animal. We move into fall with Libra. Starts justice, relationships, justice, fairness, very intellectual sign, it will start a thought. All cardinal signs deal with taking action. It's the crossing over of the seasons that's why it has the balance/harmony theme.

**SCORPIO** ♏ (October 23rd-November 21st): fixed water, scorpion, ruled by Mars and Pluto, death, rebirth. Very psychic and intense sign. It fixates on a psychic awareness, a lie detector. With Scorpio we move to full darkness, we change our clocks, days are getting shorter. The last 6 signs are more mature and serious because the sign is going to its death process starting from autumn. Scorpio has a survival aspect.

**SAGITTARIUS** ♐ (November 22nd-December 20th): offers hope after the darkness. The archer points towards hope, it's mutable fire, ruled by Jupiter, expansion, adventure. The guru, the teacher. Mutable fire: when a fire is scattered, it's not very strong. It's like fading away a little bit, so we gotta keep the hope alive. Believe that the fire can come back!

**CAPRICORN** ♑ (December 21st-January 19th): Cardinal earth. A restart of the Earth with winter. The sea goat, ruled by Saturn, it represents achievement. It's the sign of growing and moving forward, moving up. The big push forward is done by cardinal signs.



**AQUARIUS** ♒ (January 20th-February 19th): fixed air, the water bearer, ruled by Uranus, innovation/connection. It rules science and technology, and humanity in general. Strongest intellectual energy in the fixed signs. It fixates on the project the longest— there's a detached aspect to it.

**PISCES** ♓ (February 20th- March 19th): mutable water, ruled by Neptune, the fish, spirituality, unconscious, churches, Jesus. There's no fire in the winter. It's like a cyclone of water (mutable).

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**N.B. A modality of a sign: think of a plane: it needs the energy to get going (cardinal energy), then it stays in the air (fixed), and it lands and stops (mutable). Modality is like a pulse. Cardinal signs give the energy so have a hard time to keep things going. Fixed signs have the energy to keep it moving. Mutable is like “I’m over this, let’s make a CHANGE”. Cardinal is starting things, fixed is keeping them, and mutable is changing them.**

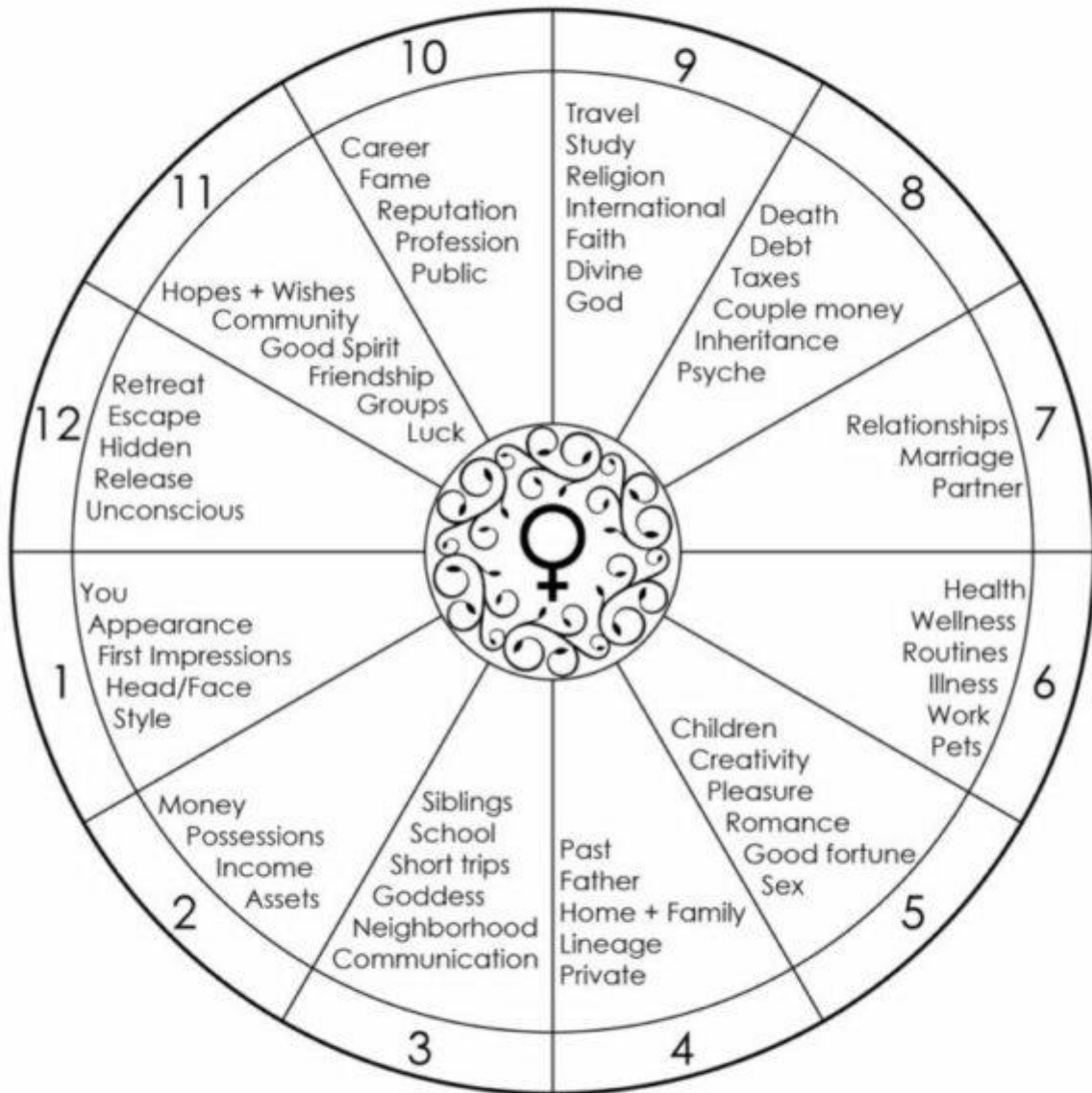
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The elements: fire, air, earth, and water. Fire signs bring intensity, but they also bring personality and hotness to it all. Air is more of an intellectual element, thought-provoking, communication, mental stimulation. Earth is a grounded, physical energy. Earth signs have to do with creating things physically, manifesting. Water is emotional, intuitive, psychic.

Each season starts with a cardinal fire sign (e.g. Aries starts spring), gets to its middle with a fixed sign (Taurus) and ends with a mutable one (Gemini).



# The Astrological Houses



A night sky photograph featuring the Milky Way galaxy, a meteor streak, and a satellite trail over a dark forest silhouette.

*3. The Houses*



There are 12 houses in astrology, 12 areas of life for every person living on Earth.

**1ST HOUSE:** The first house begins the zodiac and covers the all “firsts”: first impressions, the self and appearance, leadership, new initiatives, fresh starts and beginnings. The sign on the cusp, or starting edge, of this house, is referred to as your rising sign or ascendant. (Ruled by Aries).

**2ND HOUSE:** The second house covers all matters related to your immediate material and physical environment—taste, smells, sound, touch, sights. The second house also rules income, money, and self-esteem. (Ruled by Taurus).

**3RD HOUSE:** The third house rules all communication forms—talking, thinking, gadgets and devices (cell phones, pagers, Instant Messenger, etc.). The third house also covers siblings, neighbours/neighbourhoods, local travel, libraries, schools, teachers and community affairs. (Ruled by Gemini).

**4TH HOUSE:** The Cancer-ruled fourth house sits at the very bottom of the zodiac wheel and rules the “foundation” of all things. This includes your home, privacy, your basic security, your parents (particularly your mother), children, your own mothering abilities, nurturing, and TLC. (Ruled by Cancer).



**5TH HOUSE:** Dramatic Leo rules the fifth house, and it governs self-expression, drama, creativity, colour, attention, romance, fun and play.

**6TH HOUSE:** The sixth house is the domain of health and service. It rules schedules, organisation, routines, fitness, diet and exercise, natural and healthy living, helpfulness, and service to others, open enemies. (Ruled by Virgo).

**7TH HOUSE:** The seventh house is the sector of relationships and other people. It governs all partnerships, business and personal, and relationship-associated matters, like contracts, marriage, and business deals. (Ruled by Libra).

**8TH HOUSE:** The eighth house is a mysterious sector that rules birth, death, sex, transformation, mysteries, the occult, merged energies, and bonding at the deepest level. The eighth house also rules other people's property and money (real estate, inheritances, investments, et al. (Ruled by Scorpio).

**9TH HOUSE:** The ninth house covers the higher mind, expansion, international and long-distance travel, foreign languages, inspiration, optimism, publishing, broadcasting, universities and higher education, luck, risk, adventure, gambling, religion, philosophy, morals and ethics. (Ruled by Sagittarius).

**10TH HOUSE:** The tenth house is at the very top and most public part of the chart. The tenth house governs structures, corporations, tradition, public image, fame, honours, achievements, awards, boundaries, rules, discipline, authority, fathers and fatherhood. The cusp, or border, of the tenth house, is also called the midheaven, and it clues astrologers into your career path. (Ruled by Capricorn).

**11TH HOUSE:** The eleventh house rules teams, friendships, groups, society, technology, video and electronic media, networking, social justice, rebellion, and humanitarian causes. It also rules originality, eccentricity, sudden events, surprises, invention, astronomy, science fiction, and futuristic things. (Ruled by Aquarius).

**12TH HOUSE:** The zodiac completes with the twelfth and final house, which rules endings. This house covers the final stages of a project, tying up loose ends, completions, the afterlife, old age, and surrender. It's also associated with separation from society, institutions, hospitals, jails, hidden agendas, and secret enemies. And it rules the imagination, creativity, arts, film, dance, poetry, journals, and the subconscious mind. (Ruled by Pisces).

A night sky photograph showing the Milky Way galaxy in a dark, starry sky. The galaxy's core is visible as a bright, yellowish-white band of light, transitioning to a reddish-purple hue towards the edges. A bright meteor streaks across the upper right portion of the sky. In the foreground, the dark silhouette of a forested hillside is visible against the starry background.

## 4. *The Aspects*



If the planets are characters/actors in the play/movie of your life, the conversations they have with each other are called aspects. Aspects are measured by mathematical angles between 2 or more planets, but hey, don't get too worked up with mathematics here!

The type of aspects/conversations the planets make in a birth chart, or any type of chart, will determine HOW their energy will act out in your life. Will it be challenging, harmonious, mixed, neutral?



**CONJUNCTIONS** are the most important aspects. They give us the urge from the inside to act. We feel this aspect the strongest. 0-degree angle. The conjunction has the most powerful energy. It is all the other aspects combined. It is like when something new is being born. In the case of conjunctions, the slower planet has a bigger influence.



**SQUARES** are a call to action to get out of our comfort zone. Squares are felt strongly too. A challenge. 90 degrees angle. It has the energy of Mars, something aggravates us and frustrates us, and requires us to act in a different way. We have to try to satisfy both ends at the same time.



**OPPOSITIONS** make us work and adapt to circumstances. They usually come with an external factor. They're felt 25% less than a square, but they're still quite

challenging. 180 degrees angle. An opposition has a Saturnian effect, it makes us stop and reflect. Slow down.

A challenging aspect, but when well used can give very good results. If not, it gives bad results.



**A TRINE** is also a very powerful aspect. 120 degrees angle.

Usually both planets are in the same element (earth, water, fire, air). Very helpful aspect. Auspicious. The trine is about growing things. The trine has the energy of Jupiter: something grows, something expands. We are seeing results and rewards. It's a weaker aspect. It doesn't shake our world. Unless it's a Jupiter trine; in this case it's as powerful as a conjunction. Jupiter's trine is stronger than Jupiter's square. Powerful in a positive way.

In a natal chart, it represents the gifts that we are naturally born with. It comes easily.



**SEXTILE** (60 degrees angle between 2 planets): The

classical astrology meaning of a sextile is that the powers involved cooperate smoothly, so that they encourage and inspire one another. So, both sides of the sextile gain by the aspect between them. This mutual stimulation is usually very creative, on a daily basis. The sextile can be regarded as sort of a lesser trine. Where the latter signifies a kind of harmony that does not necessarily lead to concrete results but is present and helpful anyway, the sextile is often

evident and leads to intensified activity as well as palpable results. It is the weakest of the five major aspects (conjunction, opposition, trine, square, and sextile), but it still enhances the planets involved somewhat, compared to what their importance would be without that aspect. The closer the sextile is to  $60^\circ$ , the stronger the aspect is, and the more it enhances the planets involved. In some cases, there can be three or more planets or other points in a sextile, if one or both sides of it has a conjunction. Of course, such a sextile is even more important.

Sextiles represent opportunities. The origin of the astrological significance of the sextile is from the Zodiac: it is the aspect that connects Zodiac signs of the same charge - positive or negative. Air and fire signs are positive, whereas earth and water signs are negative. It's a charge, not a value. It can be compared to the Chinese concepts yin and yang. The positive signs are outward and upward, but the negative signs are inward and downward. The former are also warm, and the latter cold in their natural state. So forces within signs of the same charge have the same direction, which makes them stimulate one another. Also, there is math in the aspect: the circle's  $360^\circ$  divided by six is 60.



# *Final thoughts*

“Astrology is the bridge between the scientific and the spiritual”. It uses astronomy, mathematics, psychology, geography, and history.

Astrology, in its core, as a metaphysical science, teaches us the best way in which we can live our lives.

That's by realising that we're ACTORS not SPECTATORS. Yes, events are predetermined, most of the time, but WE ALWAYS HAVE THE CHOICE HOW TO REACT to them. And guess what? Astrology is only a time indicator; it shows the 'nature' of a certain period.

It's up to you how you're going to use this information in your own lives, and EVOLVE.

*Your Astrologer - Theodora Nighthall*



# *What's next?*

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