

Lesson 1: Predictive Astrology - Understanding Karma, Fate, & Free Will

Anyone interested in seriously learning astrology eventually has to grapple with the age old philosophical questions regarding fate and free will. Is our fate linked inexorably to our moment of birth or is there some wiggle room for free will? If so, how much? Obviously, astrologers *can* predict events, which proves there is some element of fate at work. But at other times predictions fail. This may either be a reflection on the astrologer's skill level, the accuracy of the predictive system itself or because there really is the elusive power of free will at play. This article is written to help clarify these questions.

Fate Versus Free Will – East & West

In the West, we feel very uncomfortable with the idea of fate or destiny and relish our free will. It's not uncommon to hear someone boldly defending the concept of "creating our own reality" and of being an unlimited co-creator with the divine. However, in India it's much different. In their culture, it's not uncommon to hear someone resign themselves to a situation by simply saying "this is just my fate."

However, while on the surface it may appear that our Western attitude is the wiser of the two, we may want to reconsider. After all, how "free" really is our free will when we're limited by our past conditioning? Usually, we're such creatures of habit that we can't even follow through with our new year's resolutions past February! Our habits are often so difficult to change that it can be like trying to hold down a log in water – no matter how long we hold it down it quickly rises back to the surface. On the other hand, the attitude of resigning ourselves to our fate could reflect a level of acceptance and trust that could be considered very wise.

Due to the differences of cultural conditioning, generally the astrologers of India tend towards a fate orientation, while the astrologers in the West tends toward a free will orientation. And it's very easy to err on one side or the other. We may not even be aware that what we're saying to a client has a fatalistic tinge or an overly optimistic free will sugar coating.

As a general rule I believe it's better to err on the side of being free will oriented. I tend to believe in the power of suggestion and how negative thoughts, spoon fed to us by astrologers, can become self-fulfilling prophecies. But, whichever you prefer, it's our responsibility as astrologers to recognize the karmic implications of what we tell our clients.

The Predictive Systems in Vedic Astrology

People often get interested in learning Vedic astrology because they want to learn their famous predictive systems. It's true - Vedic astrology has evolved many fascinating systems of prediction, over its some 5,000 year old history, making it possible to forecast time periods for marriage, career changes, financial rises and falls etc. often with remarkable accuracy.

The singular, most popular predictive system is the vimshottari dasa system, which we will cover in depth in this tutorial course. In addition, there are well over 50 other predictive systems like ashtakavarga and chara dasa. In other words, there is no shortage of predictive systems.

The Value of Predictive Astrology

The ancient seers, like the sages Parashara and Jaimini, devised these systems in order to help people align with their "dharma" or life purpose by giving them a bird's eye view of their life and suggesting what to do and when. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1. The value of predictive astrology is to help us come into harmony with the seasons of our lives. If we plant a seed out of season it has a more difficult time coming to fruition. Likewise, we can use predictive astrology to pin point favorable time periods for any activity in our life.

Predictive astrology is generally "event oriented" as opposed to "psychology oriented". However, since astrology encompasses our entire lives, both the internal and external, it's difficult to separate events from psychology. In other words, since events happen to people, with their unique psychological patterns, predictive astrology encompasses psychology. For instance, if a predictive astrologer foresees a difficult financial period, then the event discussed may be potential financial loss, but the psychological pattern discussed may be extravagant spending or excessive risk taking.

The astrology chart is a map of our life and the astrologer's job, then, is to empower people by helping them navigate the map and make discriminative choices along the way. Vedic astrology gives us additional navigation systems to help us avoid the foreseeable roadblocks, and to learn how to use time to our best advantage – both materially and spiritually.

Misuses of Predictive Systems

Generally, astrology clients don't consider positive predictions to be a problem. Bring them on! Marriage, money, travel, successful careers etc...We love having our ego's pampered and puffed up with the possibilities of positive events in the future. It's often why we seek out astrologers in the first place.

However, the problem is that many astrologers misuse predictive systems by making negative predictions using fatalistic terms. For instance, you might hear an astrologer say something like "you're going to lose your job, get depressed and apathetic, and gain weight." You're left feeling discouraged because, according to your astrologer, your life (plus 20 more pounds!) is already predetermined and you're just "along for the ride". How useful is that? Astrology is not meant to paralyze our will – quite the opposite.

But it gets worse. I've heard repeated horror stories of clients seeking recovery after hearing negative predictions, like the onset of a terminal illness or a terrible car accident, from fatalistic astrologers. I fail to see any value in this.

However, there is one exception. In some cases, telling a client honestly that they're entering a difficult period could help them "surrender" and come to acceptance of their situation, which could be a positive relief if they've made continued effort to improve their situation to no avail.

Two Schools of Thought: Taking Action Versus Surrendering

There are two valid ways to responding to negative situations in our lives – taking action and surrendering. We take action to minimize or avert a negative outcome, which implies that we have the power of free will to effect change. Surrendering to a situation means that we give up our power to effect change and usually means we believe in the greater power of fate or destiny.

Both of these approaches, taking action and surrendering, represent one of two schools of thought in Vedic philosophy. The path of action, represents "Dvaita" or dualism and is generally

a proponent of a free will orientation. The path of surrender or non-action, represents "Advaita" or non-dualism and is generally a proponent of fate orientation.

Here's a quote of a modern seer and proponent of Dvaita and free will, Paramahansa Yogananda:

" Occasionally I told astrologers to select my worse periods, according to planetary indications, and I would still accomplish whatever task I would set for myself. It is true that my success at such times has been preceded by extraordinary difficulties. But my conviction has always been justified: faith in divine protection, and right use of man's God-given will, are forces more formidable than are influences flowing from the heavens."

Here's a quote of another modern seer and proponent of Advaita and fate, Ramana Maharshi:

" The ordainer controls the fate of souls in accordance with their prarabdha karma. Whatever is destined not to happen will not happen, try as you may. Whatever is destined to happen will happen, do what you may to prevent it. This is certain. The best course, therefore, is to remain silent."

Both of these modern seers speak with conviction and command respect in their respective schools of thought. Therefore, in order to understand how both seemingly paradoxical view points could indeed be valid, we need to understand the law of karma.

The Law of Karma

Our astrology chart is a map of our "karma". Karma basically means "action". When we talk about "our karma" we're talking about the actions we've "sown" or performed in the past (including our past lives) that are the cause of what we "reap" in our current life situation. This either becomes our karmic burden or our karmic blessing depending on whether we've performed positive or negative actions in the past. The Vedic scripture, the Mahabharata, says that just as a calf can always find its mother, even if its wandered into a large herd, so our past karma will always seek us out and find us. This is the law of karma.

However, our astrology chart is a relatively flexible map because our karma is relatively flexible – meaning that some karma in our lives is fixed or fated and some karma is flexible and can be changed by our free will. Our lives, then, are a dynamic interrelationship between both fate and free will.

The Four Kinds of Karma

Our karma makes up both our fate and our free will because there are four kinds of karma – two that represent our fate and two that represent our free will. The two kinds of karma that represent our fate are:

1. Sanchita Karma – Our entire accumulated karma that represents all the actions we've performed in all our past our lifetimes.

2. Prarabdha Karma – Our current life karma. Our prarabdha karma is that portion of our entire sanchita karma that is allotted to us to experience in our current lives.

The two kinds of karma that represent our free will are:

3. Kriyamana Karma – This is our free will to take current actions to change our current life situation.

4. Agama Karma – This is our free will to make a plan or set an intention to take an action in the future.

To use our free will effectively we have to “plan our work” and “work our plan”. The former is our agama karma, while the latter is our kriyamana karma. Without kriyamana and agama karma our life would be entirely predestined at the moment of birth. We would, in effect, be automatons at the mercy of our past karma.

Let’s say we go on a bike ride and get into an accident. The accident would be considered our prarabdha karma – our allotted karma for this life out of entire sanchita karma. To bandage the wound in order to minimize our suffering would be our kriyamana karma. To set an intention to be more careful in the future would be our agama karma. To buy a bike light and reflectors in order to avoid future accidents would also be our kriyamana karma.

The Three Levels of Karmic Magnitude

In addition to the four kinds of karma, there are three levels of magnitude to any given karma. Karma can be fixed/strong or non-fixed/weak, or a combination of the two. If the karma is strong then the predetermined event will almost certainly happen. If the karma is weak then it may be relatively easy to avert it. The three levels of magnitude are:

1. Fixed karma (Dridha) – This is karma that cannot be changed by any effort on our part. Only the grace of

God can alter fixed karma (Dridha).

2. Mixed karma (Dridha/Adridha) – This is karma that can be changed but only with substantial effort.

3. Non-Fixed karma (Adridha) – This is karma that can be easily changed with some effort.

How Astrology Can Determine the Magnitude of Karma

Astrologers are like detectives. We’re looking for clues to reinforce a hypothesis. The more clues that we find to confirm our hypothesis, the more certain we become. Likewise, when we’re looking at a chart and trying to determine the level of magnitude of a particular karma we’re literally counting the number of reinforcing indications. A small number of indications represent a non-fixed karma (adridha), or only a *possibility* of the event manifesting. A large number of indications represent a more fixed karma (dridha) or a relative *probability* of the event manifesting. The following graph gives an illustration:

POSSIBILITY - PROBABILITY
 (uncertainty) - (certainty)
 <---<---<---<--->--->--->--->
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 (# of indications)

Examples of Karmic Magnitudes for Physical Health

In the following three example charts we will be acting like detectives and looking for either positive or negative indications for physical health. To simplify our study we will only be looking at the planets Saturn and the Sun, (without any planetary degrees) located in different houses, with Leo ascendant. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of indications and some combinations are not mentioned in order to keep it simple. This is meant to give an example of how astrology is used to determine karmic magnitudes.

In order to interpret the physical health of a chart we primarily look at:

1. Aspects to the ascendant and the ascendant lord.
2. Aspects to the Sun as the significator of the body.

Leo ascendant becomes a convenient example chart for examining physical health because the Sun is both the ruler of the ascendant *and* the significator of the body.

In order to help us in our detective work we need to understand a few basic interpretation rules:

1. Planets become harmed when they are located in the 3rd, 6th, 8th or 12th houses.
2. Planets cause harm to other planets when they rule the 3rd, 6th, 8th or 12th houses.
3. The malefic planets, Saturn, Mars, Rahu, Ketu, generally cause harm to other planets.
4. Malefic planets become more benefic when they are located in the "upachaya" houses - 3rd, 6th, 10th, or 11th.
5. Planets become more benefic when they are located in their own house.
6. Planets aspect the 7th house from where they're located.
7. Planets aspecting their own house strengthen that house.
8. Planets gain strength when they are located in an angular house – 1st, 4th, 7th, or 10th.
9. There are two families of planetary friendships: Sun, Moon, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, Mercury, Venus. Planets in their own families are generally friends, while planets of the other family generally are an enemy. Planets are harmed when aspected by an enemy.

Example 1 - Chart of a relatively Fixed Karma (dridha) for Physical Health Problems

SUN SATURN ♄ ♄	♈	♉	♊
♋			♌
♍			♎ ♏
♐	♑	♒	♓

Indications for Physical Health:

1. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is in the 8th House – Negative.
2. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is with Saturn the 6th lord – Negative.
3. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is with Saturn a malefic – Negative.
4. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is with enemy Saturn – Negative.
5. Sun, significator of the body, is in the 8th House – Negative.
6. Sun, significator of the body, is with Saturn the 6th lord – Negative.
7. Sun, significator of the body, is with Saturn a malefic – Negative.
8. Sun, significator of the body, is with enemy Saturn – Negative.
9. Sun, ruler of the ascendant, is in a friends sign, Jupiter - Positive
10. Sun, significator of the body, is in a friends sign, Jupiter - Positive

TOTALS – 8 Negative Indications, 2 Positive Indications

Example 2 - Chart of a Mixed Karma (Dridha-Adridha) for Physical Health Problems

♈	♉	♊	♋
SUN SATURN ♁			♅
♄			♆
♌	♍	♎	♏

Indications for Physical Health:

1. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is with Saturn the 6th lord – Negative.
2. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is with Saturn a malefic – Negative.
3. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is with enemy Saturn – Negative.
4. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is in an enemies sign Saturn – Negative.
5. Sun, significator of the body, is with Saturn the 6th lord – Negative.
6. Sun, significator of the body, is with Saturn a malefic – Negative.
7. Sun, significator of the body, is with enemy Saturn – Negative.
8. Sun, significator of the body, is in enemies sign Saturn – Negative.
9. The Asc. is aspected by the 6th lord Saturn – Negative.
10. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is located in 7th on an angle – Positive.
11. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is w/planet in own sign Saturn – Positive.
12. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, aspects his own house – Positive.
13. Sun, significator of the body, is located in 7th on an angle – Positive.
14. Sun, significator of the body, is w/planet in own sign – Positive.
15. Sun, significator of the body, aspects his own house – Positive.

TOTALS – 9 Negative Indications, 6 Positive Indications

Example 3 - Chart of a Non-Fixed Karma (Adridha) for Physical Health Problems

	♈	♉	♊	♋
SUN ☉			♌	
SATURN ♄			♍	♎
	♏	♐	♑	♒

Indications for Physical Health:

1. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is in enemies sign Saturn - Negative
2. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is located in 7th on an angle – Positive.
3. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, aspects his own house – Positive.
4. Ruler of the Asc. Sun, is not aspected by malefic – Positive.
5. Sun, significator of the body, is in an enemies sign Saturn – Negative.
6. Sun, significator of the body, is located in 7th on an angle – Positive.
7. Sun, significator of the body, aspects his own house – Positive.
8. Sun, significator of the body, is not aspected by malefic – Positive.
9. Saturn, is located in upachaya 6th house - Positive

TOTALS – 7 Positive Indications, 2 Negative Indications

Qualitative Factors in Determining Karmic Magnitude

In addition to developing a quantitative list of indications for a given chart, we also have to determine the qualitative factors involved. For instance, in the first example I listed 2 positive indications related to the Sun being located in a friends sign, Jupiter. However, this indication weighs much less heavily than the indication that the Sun is located in the malefic 8th house, or the fact that the Sun is aspected by his enemy Saturn. In other words, the house location

and aspects to the planet get more weight in Vedic astrology than the sign location for predictive purposes.

Learning the specific qualitative factors that determine the relative weights of an indication is a more subtle and advanced interpretative skill. In the beginning, it's enough just to learn the qualitative factors and listing them as positive and negative as shown above.

What to Do to Avert or Minimize Negative Karma

In the three example charts above the individuals would tend to have physical health problems to varying degrees. The individual in the first example, of a relatively fixed karma, would have to make considerably more focused and disciplined effort to gain good physical health than would the individual in the second example. By extension, the individual in the second example would have to make more effort than the individual in the third example.

The primary benefit of astrology is to learn how to navigate through the map of our karma and make wise, discriminative choices. There is no end to the kinds of positive actions that individuals can choose to take in order to avert or minimize negative karma. Vedic astrology is full of upayas or remedial measures – chanting mantras, practicing meditation, performing worship and fire ceremonies, giving donations to charities, wearing gems, reciting affirmations etc. There are specific remedies that can be prescribed for specific negative karma. Generally, any effort that brings a positive harmonious vibration into our minds and hearts and spreads that into the world is beneficial and will help.

Communicating to Clients About Negative Karma

Even in India, where the astrologers tend toward a fate orientation, it's commonly believed that *entirely* fixed karma is rare. Almost all karma can be changed at least to some extent. Because of this, I think it's better to never mention the idea of fixed karma to clients. What's more, it places ourselves above God to assume that we know if a client's karma is entirely fixed or not.

For instance, I would never say to a client "_____ will happen." The most extreme I would say is "it's like very, very likely that _____ will happen." As one astrologer friend said once, "we have to give God his share." Even if we hold out that God's share to effect positive change is only 1%, I believe it's more helpful to clients if we do so. When we give a 100% negative prediction it usually creates fear, paralyzes the will or at best makes a person complacent. The only exception, as mentioned before, is if we communicate it in such a way that it helps our clients come to a positive place of surrender, trust and acceptance.

As a general rule, I believe it's more helpful to give "descriptions" rather than to give "predictions". When we describe the planetary influences for any given time and the possible outcomes that could manifest, then the client is left feeling empowered to take positive action to navigate their karma towards a positive outcome.

I usually find it more helpful to say something like "you'll need to make a focused effort here to change this situation. It's like when the current of the river is strong and you have to swim hard upstream. It's difficult, but it is possible." This kind of a statement is neither too sugar coating, or too fatalistic. Then, the client has the ability to decide, in that moment, whether that level of commitment and effort is what they want to pursue. They may choose to move toward surrender and acceptance on their own.

Astrology as a Helping Profession

I think that it's underemphasized that astrology, like counseling, is a "helping profession." Because of this, it's important to ask ourselves, as a general rule, "is the information we're sharing and how we're sharing it *helpful* to our client?" When we're able to accomplish this, then predictive astrology becomes a means for people to align with a larger vision of their dharma or life purpose and navigate the map of the karma of their lives effectively.

The following quote, by Swami Sri Yukteswar, gives the best summary of the question of karma, fate and free will that I've seen:

"A child is born on that day and at that hour when the celestial rays are in mathematical harmony with one's individual karma. His horoscope is a challenging portrait, revealing his unalterable past and it's probable future results...The message boldly blazoned across the heavens at the moment of birth is not meant to emphasize fate – the result of past good and evil - but to arouse man's will to escape from his universal thralldom. What he has done he can undo. None other than himself was the instigator of the causes of whatever effects are now prevalent in his life. He can overcome any limitation, because he created it by his own actions in the first place and because he possesses spiritual resources that are not subject to planetary pressure."

– Swami Sri Yukteswar, guru of Paramahansa Yogananda, author of *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

Lesson 2: The Two Zodiacs - The Great Sidereal vs. Tropical Debate

The Two Zodiacs – The Great Sidereal vs. Tropical Debate

It's important to clearly understand the difference between the two zodiacs, the Vedic/Sidereal and the Western/Tropical, and their perspective places in the world of astrology. Without this understanding it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking one system is superior or inferior to the other and disregard their relative strengths.



The Two Zodiacs

So why two zodiacs anyway? Isn't one enough? After all, one sky seems to have worked out quite well - thank you very much. God made no mistakes there. One zodiac belt, about 16 degrees wide, with the 12 zodiac signs ranging from Aries to Pisces rising in the eastern horizon - no problems there. It's just astronomical fact. The stars shine equally on everyone, whether they're standing in New Delhi or downtown L.A., so why one "Sidereal" zodiac popular in the East and one "Tropical" zodiac popular in the West?

It's important to realize that both zodiacs are exactly the same in the sense that there are 12 zodiac signs progressing from Aries to Pisces. The elements - fire, earth, air, water; qualities - cardinal, fixed and mutable; and general characteristics associated with each sign are basically the same in both systems. Up until the last century or so, before the discoveries of Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and Chiron, the classical rulerships of the signs were used in both systems.

The classical sign rulerships are as follows: Mars rules Aries and Scorpio, Venus rules Taurus and Libra, Mercury rules Gemini and Virgo, the Moon rules Cancer, the Sun rules Leo, Jupiter rules Sagittarius and Pisces, and Saturn rules Capricorn and Aquarius.

The difference between the two zodiacs, therefore, is not so much in the contents of the zodiacs but in the calculation of the starting point of the 1st degree of Aries.

The 1st degree of Aries

In Western or Tropical astrology the calculation of the Sun passing through the 1st degree of Aries is marked by the spring equinox or March 21st. By extension, if you take out your western ephemeris you'll note that the beginning of each season is lined up with the Sun passing through each of the cardinal points in the zodiac - Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn. The Tropical zodiac, therefore, is a symbolic system based on the sun earth relationship and is oriented to the seasons.

In Vedic or Sidereal astrology the calculation of the Sun passing through the 1st degree of Aries is marked by the Sun actually passing through the observable fixed stars making up the constellation Aries and has nothing to do with the seasons. "Sider" means "star" and therefore sidereal astrology is based on the actual astronomical positions of the planets against the backdrop of the fixed star constellations. The Sidereal zodiac, therefore, is not symbolic but is oriented to an observable phenomenon.

David Frawley writes in his book, *The Astrology of the Seers*, that "the Sidereal zodiac is probably the original zodiac historically, as it is the observable zodiac. The Tropical, which is an abstract zodiac, must have been derived from it, as all abstractions are usually based on underlying observable things."

The Precession of the Equinox

An astonishing thing to contemplate is that the ancient Vedic rishis were aware of the fact that the earth changes its tilt or "wobbles" on its axis. Many centuries before the Europeans were debating over whether the earth was flat, the Vedic rishis were figuring out exactly what effect the Earth's wobble would have on the calculations of their ephemeris's!

Without the aid of telescopes or modern technology they calculated that the orientation of the equinoxes to the fixed stars precedes or moves backwards through the zodiac at a rate of about 50.3 seconds per year, or about 1 degree every 72 years. That they were actually able to calculate this gives us a clue as to how advanced the ancient Vedic civilization was in terms of mathematical and astronomical knowledge.

This phenomenon is known as the "precession of the equinox". In other words, where the Sun actually is at the time of the spring equinox moves backward through the zodiac. Sidereally speaking, this year 2003, the sun was at 6 degrees 03 minutes of Pisces, at the spring equinox. Therefore, the current mathematical difference as of March 21st 2003 between the two zodiacs is 23 degrees 57 minutes.

The Ayanamsha

This mathematical difference between the Sidereal and the Tropical zodiacs is called the "ayanamsha" in Sanskrit. As another example, on January 1st 1950, the ayanamsha was at 23 degrees 09 minutes.

However, to further complicate matters there are several commonly used ayanamshas that vary by as much as almost 2 degrees from one another. By far the most commonly used ayanamsha by Vedic astrologers worldwide is the Lahiri ayanamsha, which was given the stamp of approval by the government of India.

The Historical Alignment of the Two Zodiacs

Historically, it's generally agreed, that the two zodiacs were in alignment with one another about the year 285 A.D. with both ephemeris's listing the passage of the Sun into Aries at the spring equinox. So what happened? What went wrong?

I don't know that anything went "wrong". Obviously, our civilization was just meant to have both zodiacs.

When the Two Zodiacs Will Be Exactly Opposite

Due to the precession of the equinox, the Sun will be at the 1st degree of Libra at the spring equinox in 11,232 years! Mark you calendars! Then we'll really have a lot of explaining to do with regards to the two systems because they'll be exactly opposite one another!! The ayanamsha will be 180 degrees 0 minutes!! I'd say it'd be worth it to incarnate at that time just to join in the debate!

The Process of Debating

Let's face it - we're basically creatures of habit. We tend to feel comfortable with what we're used to and resist change. It's hard to be clear and objective when we feel threatened in any way and it's easy to dismiss a seemingly opposing viewpoint to save having to expand out of our comfort zones.

I think God gets a lot of mileage out of people debating and facing the stuff that comes up in the process. Take, for instance, how debating is an integral practice in the training of Tibetan Buddhist monks in the qualities of understanding and compassion. Eventually their resistances are broken down and they're able to contain a broader, more all encompassing viewpoint.

The Debate Today

The debate between the two zodiacs is, of course, centered around one main question: "How can both systems be right?" How can I be, for instance, both an Aries in the Western system and a Pisces in the Vedic system?

It could be argued, first of all, that it's rather simplistic to identify yourself as only one particular sign like we tend to do in the West. This is more of a recent cultural phenomenon

due to the popularization of horoscope columns. In the more distant past, Western astrology was oriented more to the ascendant than the Sun if it had to be limited to one sign. Vedic astrology today favors the emphasis of the ascendant over the Sun as well.

This makes sense because the ascendant is the starting point of the horoscope and the quickest moving indication in the chart so it could be considered more personally associated with your identity or "you". In practice, the ascendant or 1st house relates more to one's self, identity and personality traits than any other house.

However, if you asked someone in India "what's your sign?" they would likely assume you mean their Moon sign, since Vedic astrology is a Moon-based system and its primary predictive systems are based on the Moon.

Reasons for the Relevance of Both Zodiacs

The obvious reason why emphasizing one sign is limited is that there are so many potential configurations from which to interpret the same descriptive traits. For instance, your Sun may move from Aries to Pisces in your Vedic chart, but you also may still have three planets in Aries, or Mars in Aries. You certainly would tend to see strong Aries traits in the Vedic chart even though the Sun is not involved.

In fact, in my experience that's always been the case when I look at the two charts for a particular person. They've never contradicted one another looking at the chart as a whole.

Some people say that your Western chart is more "earthy" and represents your personality and your Vedic chart is more "heavenly" and represents your soul. This makes some sense due to the relative vantage points in terms of distance. In other words, the stars are further away than our Sun, which is the closest star.

On the other hand, this seems to imply that your Western chart is more grounded in practical matters on Earth, and your Vedic chart is more spiritual and ethereal. Whereas, the opposite could be argued to be the case because your Vedic chart is related to the actual observable fixed stars and your Western chart is symbolic. This is why some argue that your Vedic chart can be so accurate for prediction with actual events on Earth and your Western chart is better for describing the psychological effects the actual events may have on your psyche.

The Evolutionary Pattern of the Zodiac

I think that what's important is the realization that the zodiac represents an archetypal evolutionary developmental pattern beginning with Aries and ending in Pisces. As an illustration, the pattern of 12 signs can be visually likened to a clock. If you rotate the clock and get the Sidereal Vedic chart or the Western Tropical chart the clock still works at least symbolically if not literally because it's based on a true fundamental pattern.

This is why I think Western astrology makes sense even though it uses a symbolic zodiac. Our day to day life on earth is integrally effected by the seasons and so to transpose the zodiac over the seasons – works. The essential qualities of the signs of the zodiac do line up with the Sun passing through the seasons. For instance, the Sun passing into Aries conveys the qualities of spring – active, energetic, vigorous creative new life etc.

Likewise, you could take any developmental pattern and transpose the zodiac. One obvious one would be take the 12 year transit return of Jupiter. Each year is like one sign of the zodiac. The first year when Jupiter is transiting over natal Jupiter is new, energetic and expansive in growth like Aries even though the actual Jupiter return may happen to land in another sign. The twelfth year, like Pisces, has qualities of dissolution and death before the rebirth again with the next Jupiter return.

The Zodiac Wrap Up

Being that the Tropical system is Sun-based the commonly held opinion is that the Tropical system is better at describing the personality and psychological patterns. Whereas, the Vedic system is better at describing the soul nature and predicting actual events because it's tied to the actual fixed constellations.

And that's how the reference texts read in practice. The Vedic texts shed very little light on psychological patterns and emphasize prediction whereas it's just the opposite with the Western reference texts.

I think that the bottom line is that you can get an accurate reading, both in terms of psychological interpretation and prediction, using either system. In the final analysis I think that the accuracy of the system depends more on the astrologer than on the system.

Lesson 1 Exercise: How to Calculate Your Vedic Chart - Subtracting the Ayanamsha

Obtain a copy of your western chart, if you don't have one already. Make a list of your planets and their degrees as shown below. Subtract the ayanamsha or 23 degrees from each Tropical planetary position and the ascendant to get their Sidereal position.

Example Calculations:

Tropical Positions Sidereal Positions

Asc: 11 Gemini - 23 = 18 Taurus

Sun: 14 Scorpio - 23 = 21 Libra

Moon: 10 Virgo - 23 = 17 Leo

Mercury: 28 Libra - 23 = 5 Libra

Venus: 8 Libra - 23 = 15 Virgo

Mars: 25 Capricorn - 23 = 2 Capricorn

Jupiter: 9 Pisces - 23 = 16 Aquarius

Saturn: 24 Aquarius - 23 = 1 Aquarius

North Node: 18 Sagittarius - 23 = 5 Scorpio

South Node: 18 Gemini - 23 = 5 Taurus

(Optional)

Uranus: 24 Leo - 23 = 1 Leo

Neptune: 3 Libra - 23 = 10 Virgo

Pluto: 14 Virgo - 23 = 21 Leo

An easy way to do this in your head, if the planet's degrees are less than 23 degrees in any given sign, is to add 7 degrees and go back a sign. For example, if a planet is at 11 degrees Gemini then add 7 degrees and go back to Taurus. The Sidereal position would be 18 degrees Taurus.

If you want to get the exact position of the planet down to the minute then get out a calculator and calculate the exact ayanamsha of the year and month you were born.

Use the following dates for the ayanamsha as a starting point:

January 1st 1940 - 23 degrees 01 minutes

January 1st 1950 - 23 degrees 09 minutes

January 1st 1960 - 23 degrees 18 minutes

January 1st 1970 - 23 degrees 26 minutes

January 1st 1980 - 23 degrees 34 minutes

Use these approximate figures:

4 minutes 11 seconds per 5 years

1 minute 40 seconds per 2 years

50 seconds per 1 year

4 seconds per month

Lesson 3: Vedic Chart Styles and The Kepler Horoscope Discovery

In the previous lesson we learned how to calculate our Vedic charts by subtracting the ayanamsha, which is approximately 23 degrees, from each planet and the ascendant in our Western charts. This gives us the Sidereal or Vedic positions. The next logical thing to do is to learn how to draw up our Vedic chart and place our Vedic planetary positions into the chart itself.

In Vedic astrology we have two chart styles to choose from - the North Indian or the South Indian chart style - just in case only one isn't enough fun (or enough complication!). But before we talk about these, let's take a look at an interesting recent historical discovery relevant to the subject of chart styles.

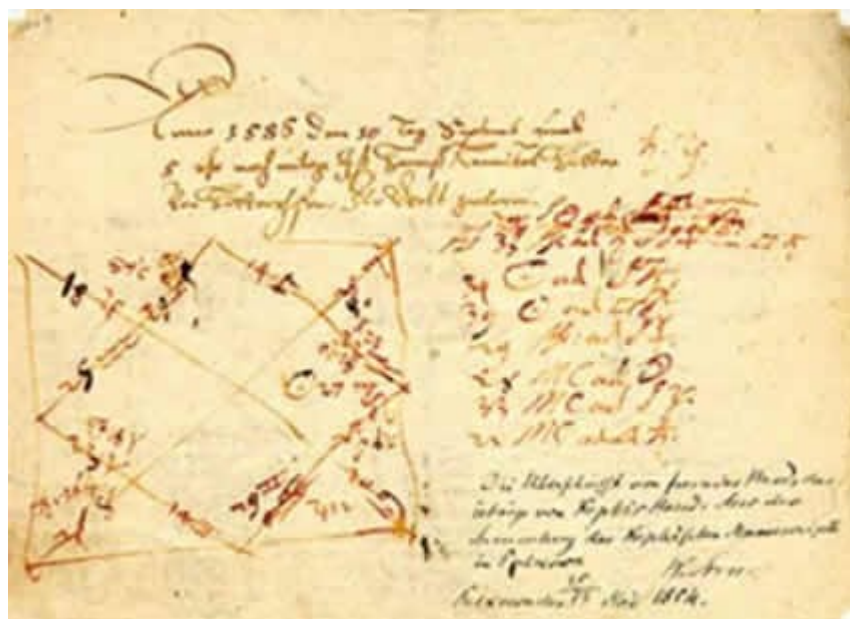
The Great Kepler Horoscope Discovery At UC Santa Cruz



In December 1998, Anthony Misch, an astronomer at the Lick Observatory at UC Santa Cruz, came across a 400 year old horoscope manuscript, by chance, while leafing through old documents purchased by the observatory over a century ago.

Misch had the document authenticated, by a European firm, to be penned by the great 16th century German astronomer, Johannes Kepler, considered to be one of the fathers of modern astronomy along with Copernicus and Galileo. Kepler is famous for discovering the elliptical orbits of planets, as well as for being the first to realize that the tides are caused by the Moon. He also coined the word "satellite".

The horoscope Kepler drew up in the manuscript was for an Austrian nobleman, Hans Hannibal Hutter von Hutterhofen, born on September 20, 1586. The chart clearly shows the Tropical position of the Sun to be 27 deg Virgo proving Kepler used a Tropical zodiac.



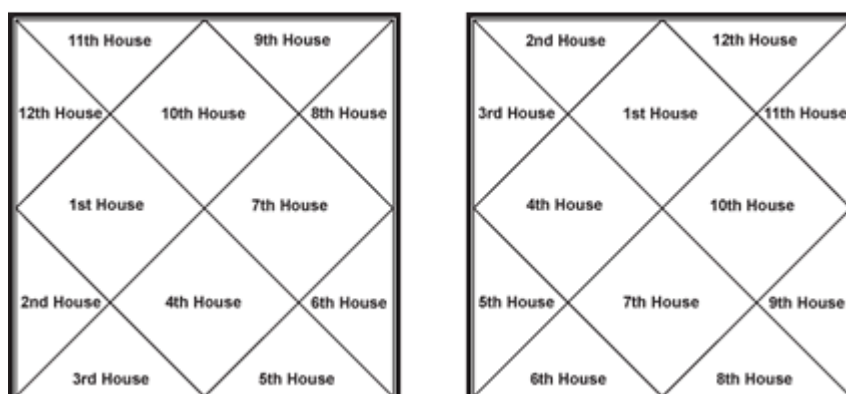
The other planetary degrees are: Mo 7 deg Cap; Me 22 deg Lib; Ve 0 deg Sco; Ma 6 deg Leo; Ju 12 deg Can; Sa 1 deg R Tau; N.Node 18 deg Lib; S. Node 18 deg Ari.

Of course, there are no outer planets since they hadn't been discovered yet.

For more information go to: <http://www.ucsc.edu/oncampus/currents/98-99/03-01/kepler.htm>

This discovery proves that Western astrologers previously used a square chart style, and that the round "wheel" chart popular in the West today has only more recently come into use. It also lends justification to the claim that the old Western astronomers were also astrologers, as was always the case in the East. Lastly, it proves that there was an astrological connection between Europe and India due to the strong resemblance of the chart style in use in Old Europe and the chart style still in use in North India today.

The European Chart Used By Kepler (left) and The North Indian Chart (right):



The only difference between the two charts, besides the fact that one is Tropical and the other Sidereal and that they use different house systems, is that the European chart style Kepler used places the 1st house at the left, whereas the North Indian chart styles places the 1st house at the top.

The Two Chart Styles Used in Vedic Astrology

As previously mentioned, there are two chart styles commonly used in Vedic astrology today – the North Indian and the South Indian chart styles. The North Indian is a house-based chart, meaning that the houses always stay in the same positions in the chart and the signs move. Whereas, the South Indian is a sign-based chart, meaning that the signs always stay in the same positions in the chart and the houses move. This will become clearer as you draw up each chart and enter in your planetary positions during the exercise at the end of the lesson.

The North Indian Chart Style

Since the North Indian style chart is a house-based chart, the signs need to somehow be indicated. This is done by either writing in the glyph for the sign (♈♉♊♋) in each house or by writing in the number associated with that sign in the natural zodiac (Aries=1, Taurus=2 etc.) in each house. Usually the latter method is preferred.

The main advantage of the North Indian chart style is that the angular houses, the 1st, 4th, 7th & 10th, are emphasized by being full sized diamond shapes in the center of the chart. You never have to "hunt" for the ascendant or first house like you have to do in the South Indian style chart. It's always at the top of the chart, just as the 10th house is always on the right.

The angular houses are called the “pillars” of the chart and to have benefic influences in these houses add overall strength and stability to the chart. The North Indian style chart helps to train your mind to look for the influences on the angles and allows you to see at a glance what these influences are.

The South Indian Chart Style

♈	♉	♊	♋
♌			♍
♎			♏
♐	♑	♒	♓

The South Indian chart style is by far the most commonly used chart style in use worldwide today and the one we’ll be using throughout this tutorial course. Even in Northern India the South Indian chart style seems to be preferred.

In this chart style the signs read clockwise starting with Aries in the second box from the top left. You’ll find that it becomes quite easy to memorize this chart style to the point that you won’t need the glyphs or sign names to remember the sign locations. In fact, you’ll want to memorize this as soon as possible because most texts on Vedic astrology won’t give you any break by showing you the glyphs or sign names.

Since the South Indian chart style is a sign-based chart, the houses need to somehow be indicated. This is done by either putting a diagonal line through the box of the 1st house, or by writing in “Asc” for the ascendant. The ascendant is also called the “lagna” in Sanskrit so sometimes you’ll see “Lg” instead of “Asc”. From the 1st house the rest of the houses are just counted clockwise visually and are usually not numbered.

The main advantage I find to the South Indian chart style is that, at a glance, you can see the influence of the planets in the signs. For instance, if you see a cluster of 4 planets in the upper left hand corner of the chart you’ll know that this person has strong Piscean influences. They may be quite fluid, imaginative, mystical or even spacey.

The other advantage is that the South Indian chart allows you to track the major transits easily. For instance, once you’ve learned that the current transit location of Saturn is in Gemini, which is the upper right corner box, it stays there for a couple of years. So, when you’re interpreting a chart, you can quickly see the influence Saturn’s transit would have on the chart. Whereas, in the North Indian chart style you have to “hunt” for where Gemini is located in the chart before considering the influences of transiting Saturn..

Choosing a Chart Style

I actually started out using the North Indian style chart but after about two years I switched because I wanted to track the transits more easily. The other reason for switching was that I became tired of transposing charts into the North Indian chart style since most texts use the South Indian style chart.

I do recommend, however, learning both chart styles in the beginning. You will find books and articles that only use the North Indian chart style. For instance, Hart De Fouw and Robert Svoboda's excellent introductory book on Vedic astrology, *Light on Life*, only uses the North Indian chart style.

The Vedic Equal House System

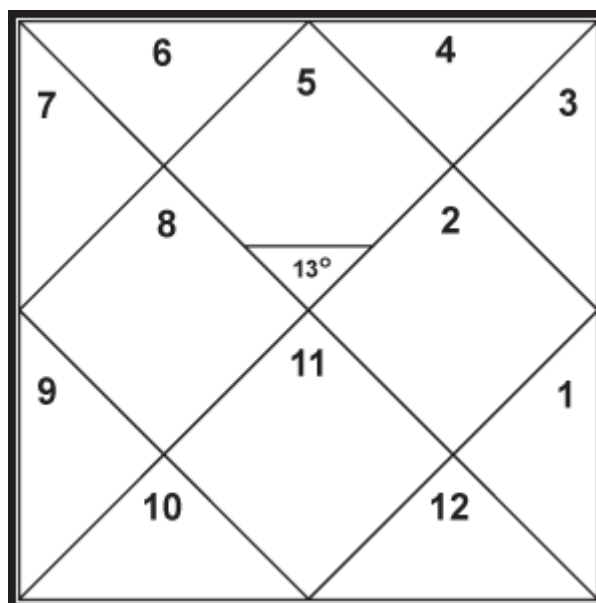
The Vedic system uses a much simplified house system compared to Western astrology. It uses an Equal House System, which means that each house is identical to the 30 degrees of a sign. In other words, you'll never find a sign that spans between two houses in the Vedic system. All signs are associated with only one house. Whichever sign a planet is located in will also be the house associated with that sign counting from the ascendant or 1st house. There is evidence that the old Greek and Arab astrologers also used a full sign Equal House System.

Lesson 2 Exercise: Drawing Up Your Vedic Chart

Draw the North Indian chart style as shown below. Use the Sidereal position of your ascendant that you calculated in the Lesson #1 exercise and write in the number associated with your ascendant sign (1=Aries, 2=Taurus etc) into the 1st house at the top of the chart. From the ascendant, write in the rest of the numbers of the signs into the remaining 11 houses as shown below. Lastly, enter in your other planetary positions and degrees.

Example:

North Indian style chart with Leo ascendant at 13 degrees:



Next draw the South Indian chart style as shown below. Draw a diagonal line through the box

of your ascendant sign or write in Asc. Draw the glyphs for each sign as shown unless you've already memorized them. Lastly enter in your other planetary positions and degrees.

Example:

South Indian style chart with Leo ascendant at 13 degrees:

	♈	♉	♊	♋
♌				♍
				13° ♎
♏				
♐	♑	♒	♓	

Lesson 4: The Essential Meaning of the Planets (Grahas)



In the previous lesson we learned how to draw up our Vedic charts using both the South Indian and the North Indian chart styles. We also inserted the sidereal degrees of our planets that we calculated in lesson 2. By now you should have a copy of your Vedic natal horoscope that you've either manually calculated, or that you've acquired a computer printout of.

Throughout this course we will be primarily working with our own natal horoscope in the exercises at the end of each lesson. Therefore, be sure that your chart is accurate and that you have copies of your chart in both the South Indian and North Indian chart styles, as we will refer to each. However, we will primarily be using the South Indian chart style as this is the one most commonly used.

We are now ready to learn how to make sense of our Vedic charts. The next 6 lessons will give you the fundamentals of the planets, houses and signs and their key indications. We will also be learning beginning chart interpretation skills in the exercises at the end of each lesson.

Learning To Think Astrologically

Throughout this course we'll be learning to think astrologically. In other words, instead of just giving you a list to memorize of the various indications for the planets, houses, and signs, which you can find in most books on Vedic astrology, we will be learning the fundamental logic behind how those indications are derived. Once you understand the logic behind the fundamentals, you will be a much more versatile, and astute astrologer.

For example, I gave a reading to a client recently who had the Moon in the 3rd house and who started his life in a Moon period in the vimshottari dasa planetary period system. I asked him if he had lost his mother early in life and he said, "Yes, she died when I was 2 months old."

How did I know that? You won't find many books on Vedic astrology that list the Moon in the 3rd house as representing the loss of the mother. But if you understand that the 12th house from any given house represents the "loss" of the indications of that house, and you know that the 4th house and the Moon relate to "mother," then you can logically understand that the Moon in the 3rd house (the 12th house from the 4th house) can relate to loss of the mother, especially in a Moon period. If I had been dependent on the indications given in books then I would not have been able to come up with that specific interpretation.

As I mentioned in the first lesson, astrologers are like detectives looking for clues to support a hypothesis. The more indications that they find the more certain they become. This is how the great astrologers come up with brilliant predictions and dazzling insights. They have seen a particular indication reinforced from many different angles, which they're able to do very quickly in their head. This approach of learning to think astrologically will serve you immensely in becoming a competent astrologer. You will be able to see a chart from many different angles and come up with your own dazzling insights.



Getting to Know the Planets

Astrology is said to be the oldest science on the planet. This is perhaps because ancient civilizations primarily learned through stories and myths that were developed out of direct observation of their environment. At night, there is not much left to observe except the sky and people gathered around a fire and watched the sky much like we gather at night and watch TV! In ancient India, many homes had outdoor fire pits called "howan kund" where

people would often spend time chanting mantras, observing the stars & planets, telling stories etc. You can still find this tradition happening in many parts of India today, especially in the rural villages.

Direct observation, I believe, is still one of the best ways to get to know the planets and their qualities. The word "planet" means "to wander" and the ancient Greeks called the planets "the wanderers" because of their observable movement through the fixed star constellations. I'd suggest getting a book on astronomy and becoming familiar with identifying the actual signs and planets in the night sky. You will gain insights into their nature just by tuning into them directly. In fact, the great sages of Vedic astrology, like Parashara and Jaimini, brought forth their knowledge out of intuitive insight. Therefore, by learning in this manner you are connecting to an ancient tradition.

The easiest planets to locate in the sky, besides the Sun & Moon, are Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Saturn and Mercury in that order. Venus and Jupiter are often so bright that they are the first stars out at sunset or the last stars visible at sunrise. Venus is also called "the morning star" for this reason and is the brightest object in the sky next to the Sun and Moon. Mercury is very difficult to see because of its close proximity to the Sun. You only have about a 30 minute window to view it at sunset or sunrise, and only if its sign placement is after the Sun at sunset, or before the Sun at sunrise.



Haleakala Crater, Maui, Hawaii

Recently, I decided to stay up all night on the full Moon on top of Haleakala Crater where I live in Maui, Hawaii. By sunrise I had seen every visible planet - Sun, Moon, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, and Mercury! The highlight, however, was not just seeing the planets but feeling their powerful emanations. It was well worth the loss of sleep and a very memorable experience that I'd recommend to anyone, especially students of astrology.

Grasping the Grahas

The Sanskrit word for planet is "graha" which means to "to seize or grasp." The implication is that the planets grab a hold of us and cause us to behave in certain ways. However, this is not the case. The great sage Parashara, in one of the opening chapters of his classic text, *Brihat Parasara Hora Shastra*, says:

"The Unborn lord has many incarnations. He has incarnated as the planets (grahas) to bestow on the living beings the results due to their karmas." (*Chapter 2, verse 3*)

The planets, therefore, are merely continuing what we have set in motion in the past and our astrology chart is an overall map of our karma. We are the cause, not the planets. The planets are just acting as agents to deliver us the results of our past actions, for better or for worse. In addition, we have the ability to modify the results of our karma to varying degrees through our free will, or *agama & kriyamana karma*, which represent the current actions we choose to take. Please review [Lesson 1](#) for an in depth discussion on karma, fate & free will.

It's more true to say that we are seized by our habitual behaviors or are in the "grip of desire" than that the planets have caused us to behave in a certain way. Additionally, the planets don't determine the outcome of a situation. It's the merit of our own karma that does. The planets merely reveal the merit of our karma. Otherwise, the planets would be in control of our lives, we'd be devoid of free will, and the outcome of every situation would be pre-determined. I personally don't believe that this is a very empowering or helpful perspective.

Of course, taking full responsibility for our lives may not always be easy. It's a lot more convenient to blame everything on the planets. "There's some ill-planet reigning!" as Shakespeare wrote, "Shall we curse the planets of mishap that plotted thus our glory's overthrow?!"

The planets will seize periods of time in our life, however, so that we can experience and learn from the karmic results of our previous actions. My jyotish guru, K.N. Rao, gave a very tangible illustration of this principle once that I'll never forget. He took a piece of fabric and carefully rolled it up. Then he started slowly unrolling it saying, "The dashas are the unraveling of our karma through time." By "dashas" he's referring to the planetary time periods in the *vimshottari dasha* system, which is a primary predictive method in Vedic astrology. For instance, a Sun period lasts 6 years, during which time the karma that the Sun represents in our chart will be dispensed. We'll discuss this concept in more depth later in the course.

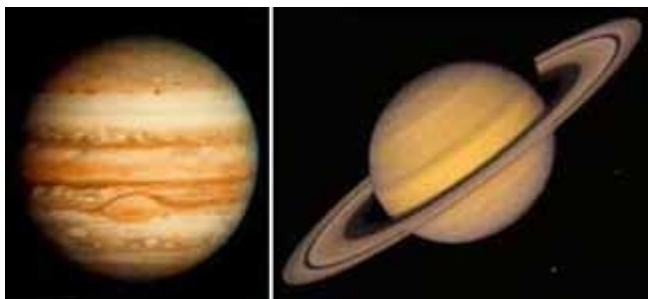
The Planetary Gardener

The best analogy I've found to understand the relationship that we have to the planets is to think of yourself as a gardener. Let's say you've planted a huge garden and you have to hire help for harvesting it. Your employees deliver to you baskets full of your produce - some are successful crops, while others fail. The planets are like these employees delivering to you the results of your past efforts. If you don't like what is delivered, you can't blame your employees, the planets. After all, it's your garden. You chose what to plant a long time ago and tended it yourself. What's more, you always have the free will to plant and tend new seeds at any time.

It's important to realize that ultimately we are not our astrology charts anymore than the gardener is his or her garden. An inherent problem in this great study of astrology is that we tend to get overly identified with our charts and lose sight of the big picture of our soul or "atman." The beauty of Vedic astrology is its connection to the spiritual tradition of India, which encompasses some of the most profound spiritual literature in the world. The *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Mahabharata* and many other ancient texts abound in descriptions of the souls's eternal nature. Here's a quote from the *Bhagavad Gita* which is a part of the *Mahabharata*:

"This Self cannot be cut, nor burnt, nor wetted, nor dried. Changeless, all-pervading, stable, immovable, the Self is eternal and everlasting."
(Ch 2, verse 24)

We have to remember not to lose sight of this when discussing astrology, which is merely the study of our karma as expressed through the agents of our karma - the planets.



Jupiter & Saturn

Benefic and Malefic Planets

Many Western astrologers have an aversion to the classical astrology concept of benefic planets that cause good and malefic planets that cause evil. It all sounds so fatalistic and black and white which I can understand. We've all had experiences where the worst thing that could have happened, like a loss of some kind, turned out to be a blessing in disguise. At the same time, we often hear of how the best thing that could have happened, like winning the lottery, ended up ruining people's lives. So how do you draw the line between malefic/evil and benefic/good influences?

In Vedic astrology making the distinction between benefic and malefic planets is vitally important for this simple reason: it allows us to get specific in our interpretations and predictions. It's only when we go beyond vague generalities that astrology gets exciting. The purpose of distinguishing between benefics and malefics is not so that we can make judgmental statements or fatalistic predictions. It's because our lives are complicated and any given planetary configuration can represent a wide range of potential interpretations. We need to have a way to narrow down the possibilities and determine where in the wide spectrum of positive and negative interpretations a planetary configuration lies. Learning to identify benefic and malefic influences is the primary means and cannot be compromised in order to practice Vedic astrology proficiently.

The benefic planets tend to cause positive outcomes relative to what most people would consider desirable - stability, gains, progress, ease, and success etc. The malefic planets tend to cause negative outcomes relative to what most people would consider as undesirable - instability, loss, obstacles, tension, and failure etc. We naturally classify these experiences as positive or negative, which are delivered to us generally by benefic or malefic planets.

However, for some people experiencing loss and instability may be just the perfect outcome if they're inclined towards travel and living simply. Ultimately our subjective experience is always dependent on our mental attitude and not on external situations.

The benefic planets are:

- Jupiter
- Venus
- Moon when waxing (located within 180 degrees after the Sun)
- Mercury when associated with benefic planets.

The malefic planets are:

- Saturn
- Mars
- Rahu
- Ketu
- Sun
- Moon when waning (located within 180 degrees before the Sun)
- Mercury when associated with malefic planets

It may appear confusing that the Sun is listed as a malefic planet. After all, can the source of life in our solar system really be malefic? The Sun is only considered a mild malefic in Vedic astrology. Its malefic status is due to the fact that it is a hot planet and can cause what's called "combustion" when other planets are too close in proximity. This can "burn up" the positive influences of these planets and render them weak.

Most Vedic astrologers only refer to the Moon and Mercury as mild benefics in practice. They never consider them as serious malefics even when the Moon is waning or the Mercury is associated with malefics. Therefore, it's generally agreed that the most seriously malefic planets are only these four: Saturn, Mars, Rahu, and Ketu.

Natural vs. Temporal Benefics and Malefics

It must be noted that this list is referring to what can be called "natural" benefic and malefic planets. By "natural" we mean the planet's innate, natural state as either benefic or malefic.

There is another concept called "functional" or "temporal" benefic and malefic planets, which is based on house rulerships. For instance, Mars rules over the signs Aries and Scorpio, so if your ascendant is Aries, Mars rules the 1st house and the 8th house because Aries and Scorpio fall in the 1st and 8th places from Aries.

The basic method for determining which planets are temporal benefics and malefics for each ascendant is to see which planets rule the trinal houses 1, 5, 9. These will be the temporal benefic planets regardless if they are natural malefics. This is because the trinal houses are always considered the most benefic houses. For example, for Aries ascendant Mars, Sun, and Jupiter become temporal benefics because they rule houses 1, 5, and 9 respectively. All other planets will be temporal malefics or at best temporal neutrals for that ascendant. We will be studying this concept in more depth later in the course.

Benefic and Malefic House Placements

In addition to the natural and temporal status of the planets, there are several basic chart interpretation rules regarding the house placement of planets that need to be memorized. They are as follows:

1) The natural benefic planets function best when they are placed in the trinal houses 1, 5, 9 or the angular houses 1, 4, 7, 10. You'll notice that the 1st house is the only house that is both an angle and a trine, giving it primary importance as the ascendant or lagna in Sanskrit. Therefore benefic planets in the lagna, for instance Jupiter, are extremely helpful for the overall strength of the chart and the well being of the individual.

2) The natural malefic planets function best when they are placed in the upachaya houses 3, 6, 10, 11. This is because the malefic planets will tend to cause the least amount of harm when located in these houses. The upachaya houses are considered "growing" houses which means that they continually get better with time.

3) The malefic house placements for either natural benefic or malefic planets are the dusthana houses 6, 8, 12 (unless it's a malefic in the 6th house which is an upachaya house). Just like how the trinal houses 1, 5, 9 are the three most benefic houses, the dusthana houses 6, 8, 12 are the three most malefic houses. In general, you should treat the lords of the 6, 8, and 12 houses as malefic along with the natural malefic planets. However, if a planet also rules a trinal house 1, 5, or 9 in addition to a dusthana house 6, 8, or 12 then the planet becomes a temporal benefic. For instance, for Aquarius rising Saturn rules the 1st and 12th houses. Saturn's rulership of the benefic 1st house overrides it's temporal malefic status as the ruler of the malefic 12th house.

The Polarities of the Planets

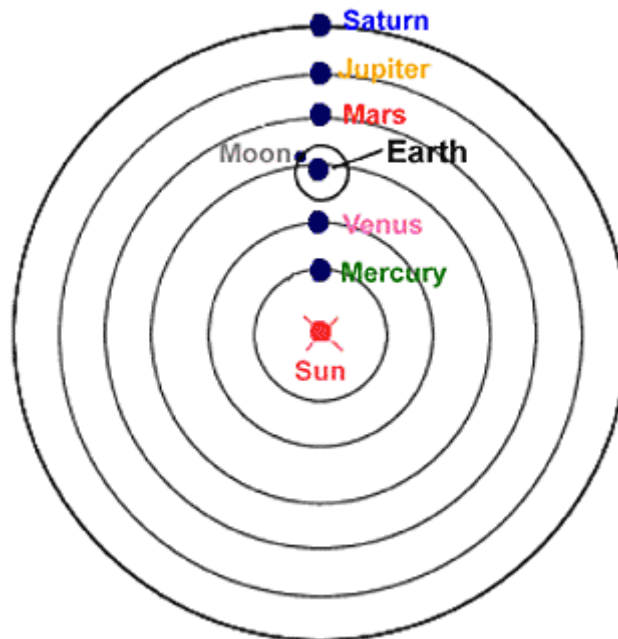
The nine planets are transmitters of universal, archetypal energy. The qualities of each planet help to maintain the overall balance of polarities in both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic universe - as above, so below. The sets of these polarities are as follows:

- ☉ Sun (male, active, expressive)
- ☾ Moon (female, passive, receptive)
- ♂ Mars (independence & ego-centered drive)
- ♀ Venus (interdependence & romantic drive)
- ♃ Jupiter (expansion, spiritual ideals & inspiration)
- ♄ Saturn (contraction, material work & perspiration)
- ♁ Rahu (extrovert, materialistic drive toward accumulation)
- ♅ Ketu (introvert, spiritual drive toward renunciation)
- ☿ Mercury has no polar opposite.

The Three Categories of the Planets

The nine planets fall into 3 categories of personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal planets.

The two luminaries, the Sun and Moon, are considered the personal planets because they represent our major character traits more than any other planets. They are the king and queen of our individual kingdom and all the other planets function in relation to them.



The planets Mercury and Venus are considered the interpersonal or inner planets because their orbits lie between the Sun and the Earth. They represent our social interactions more than any other planets.

The planets Mars, Jupiter and Saturn are considered the transpersonal or outer planets because their orbits lie outside of the Sun and the Earth. They represent the collective trends of humanity more than any other planets. The nodes of the Moon, Rahu and Ketu, also fall into this latter category even though they are mathematical points in space causing eclipses and

not actual planets with orbits. These five transpersonal planets - Mars, Jupiter, Rahu and Ketu, Saturn, - are the slowest moving planets, which is why they have a far greater influence on collective trends and are the most important planets to follow by transit.

In the South Indian chart style you can visually see the astronomical order of the planets in our solar system in relation to the Sun and Moon. For instance, Mercury is the closest planet to the luminaries so the signs it rules, Gemini and Virgo, fall on either side of the Leo and Cancer, the signs ruled by the Sun and Moon. Venus rules the signs Taurus and Libra, and is the next closest planet to the Sun and Moon after Mercury. Mars rules the signs Aries and Scorpio, and is the next closest planet to the Sun and Moon after Venus. Jupiter rules the signs Pisces and Sagittarius, and is the next closest planet to the Sun and Moon after Mars. Saturn is the farthest from the Sun and Moon and rules the signs Aquarius and Capricorn. The chart below shows this sequential progression from the personal, to the interpersonal, and the transpersonal planets.

PISCES Ruler: Jupiter ♊	ARIES Ruler: Mars ♈	TAURUS Ruler: Venus ♉	GEMINI Ruler: Mercury ♊
AQUARIUS Ruler: Saturn ♒	<p>signs of the Personal Planets: Sun & Moon</p> <p>signs of the Interpersonal Planets: Mercury & Venus</p> <p>signs of the Transpersonal Planets: Mars, Jupiter, Saturn</p>		CANCER Ruler: Moon ♋
CAPRICORN Ruler: Saturn ♑			LEO Ruler: Sun ♌
SAGITTARIUS Ruler: Jupiter ♐	SCORPIO Ruler: Mars ♏	LIBRA Ruler: Venus ♎	VIRGO Ruler: Mercury ♍

The Essential Meaning of the Planets

Understanding the meanings of the planets is the essence of the study of astrology since the houses and signs mean nothing until the planets are placed in them and rule over them. As previously mentioned, each planet governs and transmits essential universal qualities that maintain the balance in both the macrocosmic universe and the microcosmic universe. Venus, for instance, governs art. Therefore, it can be said that Venus inspires, to some extent, every expression of art in the universe. Hence, the whole range of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual qualities in the universe are governed by one of the planets.

It becomes vitally important, therefore, to understand the essential meaning of each planet or else you would have the daunting task of having to memorize millions of indications for each planet! This is where learning to think astrologically really becomes a great aid in our study of astrology. For instance, if you know that the Moon rules fluids then you can develop your own list of logical indications that follow – water, the ocean, milk, blood, tears, oils etc. As students

of astrology, our life long task is to continually increase our list of indications, as we think astrologically about the planets in all the varied contexts of our day-to-day lives.

About The First Glance Chart Interpretation Skills

It can be overwhelming when we first look at a chart and try to interpret it. We need a step-by-step, systematic approach.

While I was in New Delhi studying with K.N. Rao, my jyotish guru, he taught me that the first step in chart interpretation is to glance at the chart and see what it reveals. To begin with, don't look at the specific degrees for each planet, yogas (combinations), dasas (planetary periods), or any divisional charts. Just get a "feel" for the chart. The first exercises in this course are therefore called "first glance chart interpretation skills," and are designed to help you get a "feel" for the chart.

In the 1st Lesson I presented the idea that there are both quantitative and qualitative methods to interpreting a chart. Most of the first glance methods over the next several lessons utilize quantitative methods where we identify and tally key influences in the chart.

Lesson 4 Exercise – 1st Glance Planet Interpretation Skills

We are will now review the key chart interpretation methods covered in this lesson. These constitute the first glance planet interpretation skills that should eventually become second nature whenever you study a chart.

Materials needed:

- 1) Your South Indian chart
- 2) **Red** and **Green** Pens

Identifying Natural Benefic and Malefic Planets

Begin by locating the natural benefic planets in your chart: Jupiter, Venus, Moon and Mercury. Place a green **X** next to them. Next, locate the natural malefic planets in your chart: Saturn, Mars, Rahu, Ketu, Sun and place a red **X** next to them as shown in the example chart below.

	Mer 6° x	Sun 9° x Ven 21° x	Mar 17° x
♊	♈	♉	♊
Ketu 29° x			Sat 14° x
♋			♋
			Rahu 29° x Ascendant 13°
♌			♌
Jup 10° x		Moon 22° x	
♍	♎	♏	♐

Identifying Temporal Benefic and Malefic Planets

Next, identify your ascendant or lagna by putting a diagonal line through it as shown below. This marks the 1st house. The other houses can be found by counting clockwise from here. Now, locate the 5th and 9th houses by counting forward in this manner from the ascendant. The planets that rule the signs of the 1st, 5th and 9th houses will be the temporal benefics for your ascendant. [Click here](#) to review which planet rules each sign in the zodiac.

The following list gives the temporal benefics for each ascendant. The three planets listed are the rulers of the 1st, 5th, 9th houses respectively:

Aries: Mars (1), Sun (5), Jupiter (9)

Taurus: Venus (1), Mercury (5), Saturn (9)

Gemini: Mercury (1), Venus (5), Saturn (9)

Cancer: Moon (1), Mars (5), Jupiter (9)

Leo: Sun (1), Jupiter (5), Mars (9)

Virgo: Mercury (1), Saturn (5), Venus (9)

Libra: Venus (1), Saturn (5), Mercury (9)

Scorpio: Mars (1), Jupiter (5), Moon (9)

Sagittarius: Jupiter (1), Mars (5), Sun (9)

Capricorn: Saturn (1), Venus (5), Mercury (9)

Aquarius: Saturn (1), Mercury (5), Venus (9)

Pisces: Jupiter (1), Moon (5), Mars (9)

Place an **X** next to your temporal benefics. Place an **X** next to all your other planets except Rahu and Ketu who don't rule any houses. Later in the course we will refine our understanding of the temporal benefics and malefics by talking about temporal neutrals and other exceptions to these rules For now we will keep it as simple as possible.

In the example below the ascendant is Leo and therefore the temporal benefics are the Sun, Jupiter, and Mars. The Sun rules the 1st house of Leo, Jupiter rules the 5th house of Sagittarius, and Mars rules the 9th house of Aries.

	Mer 6° X 9th House ♈	Sun 9° X Ven 21° X ♋	Mar 17° X ♌
Ketu 29° ♎			Sat 14° X ♄
			Rahu 29° Ascendant 13° 1st House ♌
Jup 10° X 5th House ♐		Moon 22° X ♋	

Identifying Benefic House Placements of Planets

We will now identify the benefic house placements of the planets. As stated earlier in the lesson, the natural benefics function best when located in the angular houses 1, 4, 7, 10 or the trinal houses 1, 5, 9. Place an **X** next to any benefic planets that are located in these houses in your chart.

The natural malefic planets function best when located in the upachaya houses 3, 6, 10, 11. Place an **X** next to any malefic planets that are located in these houses in your chart.

In the following example you will find Venus in an angular house (10th house) and Jupiter and Mercury in trinal houses (5th and 9th house respectively). These are the only natural benefics in this chart that are located in either an angular or trinal house.

Next, you will find that the Sun and Mars are in upachaya houses (10th and 11th house respectively). These are the only natural malefics in this chart located in upachaya houses.

	Mer 6° x	Sun 9° x Ven 21° x	Mar 17° x
♈	♈	♉	♊
Ketu 29°			Sat 14°
♋			♋
			Rahu 29° 13°
♌			♌
Jup 10° x		Moon 22°	
♍	♍	♎	♏

Identifying Malefic House Placements of Planets

Lastly, we will identify the malefic house placements of planets. As stated earlier in the lesson, the malefic house placements for either benefic or malefic planets are the dusthana houses 6, 8, 12. Check and see if any planets are placed in the 6, 8, 12 houses in your chart. Place an **X** next to any planets that are.

See the example below. You will find that Saturn is the only planet in a dusthana house, therefore it has an **X** next to it.

	Mer 6°	Sun 9° Ven 21°	Mar 17°
♈	♈	♉	♊
Ketu 29°			Sat 14° x
♋			♋
			Rahu 29° 13°
♌			♌
Jup 10°		Moon 22°	
♍	♍	♎	♏

Exercise Summary

You now should have several accumulated **X's** and **X's** next to each planet in your chart ranging from 1 to 3 **X's** or **X's** each. This is a quick visual method that helps you get an idea of how the planets are operating in the chart. You now can see clearly which planet's will tend to give benefits and which one's will tend to give challenges.

For instance, in the chart below you can easily see that Jupiter with 3 **X's** has great potential to give benefit to this person. Saturn, on the other hand, has 3 **X's** indicating great potential to cause difficulties.

	Mer 6° XXX	Sun 9° XXX Ven 21° XXX	Mar 17° XXX
♈	♉	♊	♋
Ketu 29° X			Sat 14° XXX
♌			♍
			Rahu 29° X 13°
♎			♏
Jup 10° XXX		Moon 22° XX	
♐	♑	♒	♓

This exercise of placing **X's** or **X's** next to each planet will help train your mind to identify the relative benefic and malefic ways in which a planet may be operating in a chart. You will find that you get an initial, first glance feel for the chart which will assist you as you progress to more advanced interpretation skills.

In the following lesson we will be studying the key indications of the planets based on the fundamental logic that we've discussed in this lesson.

Lesson 5: Key Indications of the Planets

The Sun - Surya or Ravi in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - The Sun is only seen during the day and, therefore, represents our outer, public activity in the world. It represents the male, yang, active, externalizing, conscious principle. The Sun is the giver and source of life in our solar system and, therefore, represents the life force, vitality, and strength in our physical bodies. The Sun is also the source of light and, therefore, represents our inner light, radiance and how we shine in the world. It is luminous orange, yellow & red and represents fire, especially steady fires that are warm and peaceful as in a sacred fire. The Sun creates and sustains life and, therefore, represents our creative self-expression. Since all life is dependent on the Sun and all the planets shine with its reflected light, the Sun represents authority and political power. Worship of the Sun is the earliest form of religious worship, and represents the one light of God. On the personal level the Sun represents our "atman" or soul and its position in the chart shows where we shine, like to express ourselves creatively, take leadership, command authority and fulfill our purpose.

Main Indications - Soul (atman), one's identity, purpose, aspirations, overall health, vitality, body, appearance, self-confidence, charisma, fire, will power, creative self-expression, intelligence, conscious mind, career status, occupation, father, males, authorities, political power, organizational ability, organizations, governments, leadership

Significator for - 1st house (body), 9th house (father), 10th house (career)

Relates to - Leo and the 5th house

Planetary Cabinet - King

Relations/People - Father, males, authorities/superiors

Positive/Strong psychological traits - self-confident, noble, kind hearted, sunny disposition, humble, loyal, dignified, integrity, genuine, individuality, independent, leadership abilities, strong willed, playful, creative, self-expressive, courageous, mental clarity

Negative/Weak psychological traits - lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, proud, pompous attitude, egotistic, arrogant, self-centered, domineering, power seeking, power tripping, vain, lazy

Actions - Public outer actions, authoritative and decisive actions, taking charge, dynamic and expressive actions, drama, using conscious will, following one's vision, organizing, planning the future

Objects/Substances - Fire (especially sacred fire), gold, medicines, trees in general, wood, wool, stones, copper red objects, hot objects

Professions - governmental or administrative positions (politicians, diplomats, ambassadors etc.) managers, banking industry (bankers, financiers), working in an institution/organization, teachers, physicists, medical field (doctors, physicians, optometrists, pharmacists, chiropractors) body trainers, physical therapists, athletes, performers (actors/actresses, entertainers etc), goldsmiths

Parts of the Body - General health & vitality, heart, head, bones, stomach, sight & eyes esp. right eye

Ayurvedic Constitution - Pitta (Fire)

Places - Temples (places of worship), governmental institutions (palaces), mountainous regions, forests, hot sunny open places (deserts, beaches etc.)

Color - Dark copper red

Gems - Ruby, garnet

Gender - Male

Day of the Week - Sunday

Rate of Transit - One sign per month

Aspects - 1st and 7th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 10 degrees Aries
- Moolatrikona - 0-20 degrees Leo
- Own sign - 20-30 degrees Leo

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 10 degrees Libra

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 10th house
- Upachaya houses: 3, 6, 10, 11th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 8, 12th houses

The Moon - Chandra in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - If the Sun and daytime represent our outer, public life (work, career etc.) then the Moon and nighttime represent our inner, private life (feelings, perceptions etc.). The Moon is visible primarily at night and, therefore, represents our level of receptivity to feelings, and capacity to be sensitive, nurturing and supportive to others. It represents the female, yin, passive, internalizing, sub-conscious principle. The Moon is the fastest moving planet and the only planet that has phases and changes shape. It, therefore, represents changeability, moodiness, and fickleness. The Moon shines by the reflected light of the Sun and, therefore, represents our level of receptivity, but can also show dependence and vulnerability. The Moon represents the mind and its location in a chart shows our mental habits

- what we are inclined to think about a lot, where we are most comfortable, and how we gain support.

Main Indications - Mind (not intellect) and perceptions that are the cause of our feelings/emotions, mental attitude, sub-conscious conditioned mind, mother, females, psychology, the past, family heritage, memory, sleep, imagination, water, fluids, ocean, cold, support, food preparation & consumption, nourishment (eating, relaxing activities etc), receptivity, vulnerability, sensitivity, dependence, home, domestic life, nurturance, comforts, femininity, fertility, birthing process, early childhood, children, parenting, sweet speech, general happiness & peace of mind, the public, popularity, the masses - ability to sense trends

Significator for - 4th house (home, emotions, mother)

Relates to - Cancer and the 4th house

Planetary Cabinet - Queen

Relations/People - Mother, females, support persons

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Nurturing, protective, caring, gentle, cooperative, sensitive, intuitive, fluid, tolerant, compassionate, kind, receptive, open minded, devoted, patient, trusting, surrendered, contented, mentally stable, good habits, good memory

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Moody, dependent, self-centered, needy, depressive, passive, impressionable, distrusting, changeable, fickle, mentally unstable, forgets

Actions - Private inner actions involving feelings and perceptions, dealing with the past, accessing the subconscious (hypnosis), using imagination, daydreaming, sleeping, resting, relaxing, nurturing and supportive actions, healing, going with the flow, receptive & passive actions

Objects/Substances - Fluids (water, the ocean, milk, blood, tears, oils etc), silver, items of comfort (silks, soft cushions etc) jewels, plants (esp. vegetables & herbs), dairy products, salt, white objects, cold objects

Professions - Helping professions in general (nurses, healers etc.), work with females, work with the birthing process (delivery room doctors, midwives), work with early childhood (school teachers esp. pre-school, nannies etc.), work with food consumption (cooks, bakers, chefs, waiters, caterers etc) work within homes (housewives, home decorators, house cleaners, cottage industries etc.), work with the mind (psychologists & therapists esp. family therapists, hypno-therapists) work with charities (non-profits, humanitarian, aid & relief work etc), work with fluids (chemists, essential oils etc.) work with the sea (sailors, fishermen, sea products), work with plants (herbalist, agriculturist, farming & livestock esp., landscaping, gardening etc), work with hospitality (hotels, B&B's etc.), work with the dairy industry, gems & jewelry, fashion & clothing, travel industry

Parts of the Body - Bodily fluids & secretions (blood, urine, saliva, etc.), lymphatic system, breasts, stomach, brain, face, left eye

Ayurvedic Constitution - Kapha (Water)

Places - Any place near water (beaches, rivers, lakes etc), place of residence (home), accommodations (hotels, B&B's etc.), hospitals and healing centers, vegetable & herb gardens, cold snowy places

Color - White

Gems - Pearl, moonstone

Gender - Female

Day of the Week - Monday

Rate of Transit - One sign every 2½ days

Aspects - 1st and 7th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 3 degrees Taurus
- Moolatrikona - 3-30 degrees of Taurus
- Own sign - Cancer

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 3 degrees of Scorpio

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 4th house
- Angular & Trinal houses: 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 6, 8, 12th houses

Mars - Kuja or Mangala in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - When you view Mars at night you'll see that it has a reddish color. Red represents blood and this could be why Mars has been called "the God of War". Mars represents war and everything involved in war as you'll see in the following lists. Red also represents destructive fire, and, therefore, Mars carries many of the qualities of destructive fires - active, energetic, impulsive, violent, reckless etc. Mars is a fiery planet of action and ego desire and it's position in the chart shows where we like to be active and derive strength, as well as where we have strong desires but also may have conflicts

Main Indications - Strength & power, physical activity, energy, ego-centric desire, passion, lust, will, initiative, impulsivity, stamina, fighting spirit, the warrior, military, martial arts, weapons, enemies, conflicts, controversies, tools, sharp objects, machines, fire (inflammations, burns, fever), practicality, fixing things, property/buildings, accidents (wounds, cuts, injuries), litigations, sports, competitions

Significator for - 3rd house (younger siblings, courage), 6th house (accidents, enemies, litigations, acute diseases)

Relates to - Aries, Scorpio and the 1st and 8th houses

Planetary Cabinet - Military general

Relations/People - Siblings, allies, friends, husband

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Courageous, strong willed, fighting spirit, determined, active, energetic, ambitious, motivated, independent, resourceful, assertive, concentrated, clear boundaries and limits, protective, practical, no nonsense attitude, logical, perceptive, discriminating, cooperative

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Aggressive, violent, hostile, volatile, insensitive, intense, forceful, argumentative, ruthless, cruel, angry, impatient, hasty, inconsistency, impulsive, reckless, extremism, ruthless, domineering, controlling, critical, competitive, ego centric, selfish, lustful, jealous, defensive, inflexible

Actions - Courageous actions, using strength and will, forceful, violent, aggressive actions (litigations, arguments, combats, competitions, etc.), impulsive and rash actions, taking risks, accidents, striking and cutting actions, bleeding

Objects/Substances - Fire (esp. destructive fires), weapons, explosives, poisons, tools, metal objects, sharp objects, cutting objects, red objects, copper, gold

Professions - Military personnel, policeman, management & administrative positions, politicians, competitive businessmen, scientists, engineers, martial artists, athletes, uniformed jobs, work with fire (fire fighters, welders, industrial jobs), work with tools (surgeons, mechanics, technicians, handymen, construction workers, machine operators, heavy equipment operators etc.)

Parts of the Body - Muscle, bone marrow, head, gall bladder, blood, arms, chest

Ayurvedic Constitution - Pitta (Fire)

Places - Places near fire, places for violent actions (military installations, slaughterhouses, butcher shops, battlefields etc.) places of violent athletic games (boxing/wrestling rings, football stadiums etc.) places using tools (machine shops, mechanic shops etc)

Color - Bright red

Gems - Red coral, bloodstone

Gender - Male

Day of the Week - Tuesday

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign every 1½ months

Aspects - 1st, 4th, 7th, 8th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 28 degrees Capricorn
- Moolatrikona - 0-12 degrees Aries
- Own sign - 12-30 degrees Aries, Scorpio

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 28 degrees Cancer

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 10th house
- Upachaya houses: 3, 6, 10, 11th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 8, 12th houses

Mercury - Buddha in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - Mercury is the closest planet to the Sun and never strays more than about 28 degrees from it. This could be why Mercury represents youthfulness and intelligence since it absorbs so much of the Sun's vitality and brilliance. Mercury's close proximity to the Sun could also be why he is called "messenger of the gods" in mythology. He carries authoritative information and communicates it to the masses. Mercury is the fastest planet after the Moon and, and is also changeable by nature. Mercury is the planet of trade and commerce and English words that contain "merc" relate to Mercury - commerce, commercial, merchandise, merchant, mercenary etc. Mercury represents the intellect, speech, and learning and its position in the chart shows what we are inclined to want to learn, our capacity to absorb information and communicate, and our quality of speech.

Main Indications - Intellect (not mind), speech, communication, articulation, writing, publishing, wit & humor, logic, reasoning, specific details, sociability, networking, education, learning, teaching, languages, grammar, mathematics, astrology, commerce & trade, short distance travels

Significator for - 3rd house (communication, short distance travels), 5th house (education, studies), 10th house (career)

Relates to - Gemini, Virgo and the 3rd and 6th houses

Planetary Cabinet - Prince (some also say messenger)

Relations/People - Relatives (aunts & uncles, cousins), youth

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Intelligent, rational, objective, discriminative, adaptable, agile, quick thinking, communicative, sociable, eloquent, articulate, witty, clever, humorous, playful, detailed, organized, efficient

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Ungrounded, spacey, difficulty communicating, heady, nervous, excitable, fickle, duplicitous, changeable, deceptive, the "trickster", dishonest, cynical, gossiping, picky, critical, judgmental, close minded

Actions - Quick actions, gathering and sharing information, communicating, networking, buying and selling, making deals, calculating numbers, using logic and reasoning

Objects/Substances - Objects that store information (books, computers, tapes, CD's etc), objects of trade or commerce (money, currency, wallets), objects used for speaking or communicating (telephones, microphones, speakers etc), new or youthful objects, green objects

Professions - Work with language & speech (public speakers, speech writers, speech therapists, linguists, etymologists etc.), work with education (teachers, educators etc.), work with business & merchandise (economists, marketing, networking, commerce, trade, merchants, importers etc.) work with communication systems (internet, computers, phone industry etc.) work with writing & publishing (journalists, editors, writers, publishers etc.) work with numbers & math (mathematicians, accountants, data entry) work with performing (storytellers, actors/actresses, entertainers) astrologers, astronomers, athletes, yoga teachers

Parts of the Body - Skin, nervous system, respiratory system (lungs, nose, throat etc.), frontal brain, hips, intestines

Ayurvedic Constitution - Vata (Air)

Places - Playgrounds, amusement parks, places of non-violent athletic games, places of trade and commerce (stock exchanges, malls, swap meets etc.) places of communication (publishing houses, photocopy stores, press rooms, conference rooms, post offices etc), places of learning and knowledge (schools, colleges, libraries, bookstores etc.), places of short distance travel (local airports, bus & train stations etc)

Color - Green

Gems - Emerald, green tourmaline, jade, peridot

Gender - Neuter

Day of the Week - Wednesday

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign per month

Aspects - 1st and 7th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 15 degrees Virgo
- Moolatrikona - 15-20 degrees of Virgo
- Own sign - 20-30 degrees Virgo, Gemini

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 15 degrees Pisces

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 1st house
- Angular & Trinal houses: 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 6, 8, 12th houses

Jupiter - Guru or Brihaspati in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system with its mass totaling more than all the other planets combined! Jupiter is, therefore, a planet of expansion, growth and abundance. It is approximately 7 times farther away from the Sun than Venus, and yet is still almost as bright as Venus in the night sky. It is, therefore, a huge, distant and luminous planet that represents wisdom, law & ethics, and inspiration. Jupiter is the great benefic and the bringer of all good things and its position in the chart will reveal how one can earn money, gain abundance, and find inspiration. Jupiter reveals the level of integrity, faith, and generosity of the person as well as one's relationship to teachers and one's spiritual path and/or religion.

Main Indications - Wealth, fortune, expansion, growth, wisdom, intelligence, knowledge, one's philosophy and/or religion, ideals, dharma (one's duty), reputation, higher education, gurus & teachers, religious rites, traditions, classical learning, law, ethics, morality, solutions, ministry, faith, opportunities, diplomacy, long distance travel

Significator for - 2nd house (wealth), 5th house (children, luck), 9th house (guru, teachers, law, ethics, fortune), 11th house (financial gains, elder siblings)

Relates to - Sagittarius, Pisces and the 9th and 12th houses

Planetary Cabinet - Minister/advisor

Relations/People - Gurus, teachers, ministers, counselors, husband, children, grandchildren, grandparents

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Trusting, wise, generous, charitable, respectful, compassionate, optimistic, jovial, enthusiastic, positive, broad minded, magnanimous, ethical, truthful, fair, sincere, genuine, balanced, patient, control over impulses, solution oriented, spiritual, devotional, religious faith

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Overly optimistic, ungrounded, gullible, insincere, idealistic, unrealistic, unrestrained, indulgent, lazy, extravagant, risky, gambling, doubting, inscrutable, arrogant, self-righteous, fundamentalistic, materialistic

Actions - Positive & beneficial actions (uplifting, generous, charitable, healing actions etc.), expansive and abundant actions, finding solutions to problems, legal actions (representing justice, human rights, truth or the law), gathering and sharing of spiritual knowledge, religious rites (ceremonies), sacrifices (penance, tapas, austerities), long journeys

Objects/Substances - Sacred or pure objects (holy water, puja or worship utensils etc), objects storing spiritual knowledge (books, CD's of scriptures, sacred texts), objects storing legal information (books, CD's of law books, legal documents of law etc), valuable objects representing wealth (treasures, gems, family heirlooms, bank account statements, status symbols etc.), gold colored objects

Professions - Dignified jobs, professions with degrees, teachers, scholars, lawyers, judges, business administrators, bankers, philanthropists, psychologists, counselors, advisors, consultants, priests, ministers, healers, astrologers, travel industry

Parts of the Body - Liver, gall bladder, spleen, phlegm, fatty tissues, blood circulation

Ayurvedic Constitution - Kapha (Water)

Places - Prestigious and dignified places, financial institutions (banks, treasuries, vaults; charitable institutions), institutions of higher learning (universities), places of religious rites

and ceremony (monasteries, temples, altars, sacred fire pits), places of long distance travel (international airports)

Color - Gold yellow

Gems - Yellow sapphire, topaz, citrine

Gender - Male

Day of the Week - Thursday

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign per year

Aspects - 1st, 5th, 7th and 9th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 5 degrees Cancer
- Moolatrikona - 0-10 degrees Sagittarius
- Own sign - 10-20 degrees Sagittarius, Pisces

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 5 degrees Capricorn

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 1st house
- Angular & Trinal houses: 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 6, 8, 12th houses

Venus - Shukra in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - Venus is the brightest object in the sky next to the Sun and Moon. It is so bright that it is even visible after sunrise and, for this reason, is called the morning star. It gives off a steady, brilliant and beautiful light and is therefore called the "planet of beauty". Venus is also the planet of love and its placement in the chart will show qualities of the spouse we're attracted to, and one's capacity for romance and relationship. Venus also shows our artistic and creative tendencies.

Main Indications - Senses & sensual desires, pleasure, enjoyment, luxuries, comforts, romance, spouse, marriage, marital happiness, happiness in general, sensuality, sexuality (urge to merge), lust, social connection, charm, beauty, creativity, fine arts, culture, prosperity, vehicles, refined tastes, festivities, adornments (clothes, jewelry, perfumes)

Significator for - 4th house (vehicles), 7th house (spouse, wife, relationships)

Relates to - Taurus, Libra and the 2nd and 7th houses

Planetary Cabinet - Counselor/advisor

Relations/People - Spouse, wife, romantic partners

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Affectionate, kind, compassionate, harmonious, forgiving, diplomatic, gentle, elegant, graceful, sensitive, creative, sociable, playful, aesthetic, charismatic, refined tastes, cultural sophistication, charitable

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Self-indulgent, extravagant, vain, narcissistic, showy, jealous, glamorous, seductive, lustful, superficial, flattering, deceptive, hypnotizing, lazy

Actions - Connecting socially and/or romantically, sexual union or seductive actions, creative & artistic actions, adorning & beautifying, buying and selling valuables, social manners, festivities, parties

Objects/Substances - adornments (clothes, jewelry, perfumes, essential oils etc.), reproductive fluids, valuable possessions (gems, money, treasures), artistic objects (paintings, sculptures, poetry books, musical instruments), fine vehicles

Professions - Work in design (graphic, fashion, interior decorators, software etc), fine and visual artists of all kinds (singers, musicians, artists, potters, photographers, poets, writers, actors/actresses, dancers etc.), entertainers of all kinds, models, sexual work (prostitutes), work in beautification (aestheticians, hair dressers, makeup artists etc.), work with flowers (florists), work with adornments (clothes, jewelry, cosmetics, textiles), work with food and sweets (cooks, bakers, candy makers etc.), work with restaurants or hotels, massage therapists, botanists

Parts of the Body - Reproductive system (uterus, genitals, seminal fluid etc.), pelvis, urinary system (bladder, kidneys), chin, cheeks

Ayurvedic Constitution - Kapha (Water)

Places - Places of art and beauty (flower gardens, galleries, scenic natural areas, beauty salons), comfortable places, places of sexual pleasure (bed rooms, couches, brothels etc), shopping malls, places of amusement and entertainment (dance halls, theaters, symphony halls, night clubs), elegant and refined places, extravagant and posh places, restaurants

Colors - White, variegated or rainbow colored hues

Gems - Diamond, white sapphire

Gender - Female

Day of the Week - Friday

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign per month

Aspects - 1st and 7th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 27 degrees Pisces
- Moolatrikona - 0-15 Libra

- Own sign - 15-30 degrees Libra, Taurus

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 27 degrees Virgo

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 4th house
- Angular & Trinal houses: 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 6, 8, 12th houses

Saturn - Shani in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - Saturn is the second largest planet next to Jupiter and is the furthest planet from the earth that we can still see with our naked eye. The presence of rings around Saturn reveals that it is a planet of restriction, contraction and limitation. Being the furthest planet from the Sun (vitality), Saturn represents old age, sickness, death and sorrow. As the great malefic planet Saturn is the lord of karma and the taskmaster of life's hardest lessons but also the most rewarding. Saturn's lessons help us mature, be conscientious, responsible and ultimately teach us detachment, surrender and acceptance. Saturn's placement in the chart will show one's longevity, areas of restriction and challenge, and one's ability to be stable, responsible, disciplined, persevering and manifest through hard work.

Main Indications - Sorrows & misfortunes, losses, grief, separation, dejection, ugliness, death, old age, poverty, longevity, detachment, renunciation, solitude, isolation, structures, foundations, limitation, contraction, restriction, pressure, discomforts, focus, concentration, delays, obstacles, responsibility, humility, perseverance, patience, doubt, fear, anxiety, shame, guilt, fatigue, exhaustion, chronic diseases, debility, difficult lessons, poverty, ability to manifest through hard work

Significator for - 8th house (chronic disease, longevity, death), 12th house (losses, expenditures, renunciation)

Relates to - Capricorn, Aquarius and the 10th and 11th houses

Planetary Cabinet - Servant

Relations/People - Servants, subordinates, elderly, sick or deformed persons, foul and unclean persons (thieves, drug dealers etc.)

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Disciplined, focused, hard working, persevering, consistent, responsible, authoritative, conservative, practical, realistic, organized, orderly, precise, mature, concentrated, humble, honest, sincere, cautious, endurance, self sacrificing, sensitive to suffering

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Fearful, doubting, guilt ridden, self-denying, lonely, paranoid, inhibited, depressed, worried, miserly, stingy, greedy, bitter, ruthless, rigid,

unfeeling, callous, perverse, swindling, secretive, inhumane, ignorant, stupid, serious, negative, brooding, lazy, procrastinating

Actions - Working hard, being responsible and disciplined, austere actions, cold, bitter & ruthless actions (cruelty, bondage, torture), negative actions, self-destructive actions (drug addictions, overwork, self-mutilation etc.), laziness, humiliation, disorganization, procrastination, illegal actions, imprisonment, gambling

Objects/Substances - Anything old or dirty, ashes, structures, iron, lead, agricultural or tools, toxic chemicals

Professions - Manual labor jobs, tedious repetitive work, humble professions, servants, agricultural jobs, industrial jobs, work with the elderly and death (hospice care, coroners, morticians, funeral homes etc.), work underground (miners, excavators, archeologists), work with building structures (construction workers, carpenters, masons, architects, plumbers etc.), work with suffering (relief & aid, humanitarian work, psychologists, crisis and trauma centers etc.), illegal work (thieves, gamblers, drug dealers etc.)

Parts of the Body - Structural support systems (skeletal system, bones, teeth etc.), knees, calves, legs, feet, lymphatic system, rectum

Ayurvedic Constitution - Vata (Air)

Places - Dark or dirty places (sewers, gutters) ruins, slums and ghettos, lowly places, garbage dumps, subterranean places (basements, mines, graves, archeological digs), cemeteries, places of isolation (prisons, monasteries, hermitages, retreats)

Colors - Black, blue

Gems - Blue sapphire, lapis lazuli

Gender - Neuter

Day of the Week - Saturday

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign every 2½ years

Aspects - 1st, 3rd, 7th and 10th houses from itself

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - 20 degrees Libra
- Moolatrikona - 0-20 degrees Aquarius
- Own sign - 20-30 degrees Aquarius, Capricorn

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - 20 degrees Aries

Strongest house placements:

- Dik Bala or directional strength - 7th house
- Upachaya houses: 3, 6, 10, 11th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 8, 12th houses

The Nodes of the Moon - Rahu and Ketu in Sanskrit

General Description & Nature - The nodes of the Moon are not actual planets but mathematical points in space that cause eclipses. For this reason they are called shadowy planets and are always exactly opposite each other. They are very significant in Vedic astrology and have been given the full status of planets because they are considered the "karmic axis" of the native. Rahu, or the North node, represents our future karma while Ketu, the South node, represents our past karma. Rahu represents unexplored karma, uncharted territory, strong compulsions and desires that we are driven to pursue in this life. Ketu represents our past karma that we have already explored and perhaps developed mastery of in the past. Rahu is an extrovert and driven toward materialistic pursuits, while Ketu is the introvert and driven toward spiritual pursuits. Rahu is the force of materialistic desire that brought us into incarnation and Ketu is the force of spiritual desire that frees and liberates us. Rahu's placement in the chart represents where we have strong desires, ambitions and are vulnerable to change and going out of control. Ketu's placement in the chart represents where we have spiritual tendencies, psychic sensitivity and reveals our path of liberation. Rahu is likened to Saturn, while Ketu is likened to Mars.

Rahu, the North node of the Moon

Main Indications - Extroversion, unorthodoxy, non-conformists, rebellion, new technology, magic, mass communication, mass trends, delusion (Maya) sudden changes, inconsistency, changeability, ups and downs, compulsive desires, instinctual drives, deviant behavior, corruption, foreigners and foreign places, traveling, materialistic power, difficult to diagnose diseases, snakes

Planetary Cabinet - Army personnel

Relates to - Saturn, Aquarius and 11th house

Relations/People - Grandparents, foreigners

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Courageous, adventurous, ambitious, strong willed, pioneering, original, inventive, clever, cunning, imaginative, spontaneous, independent, curious, assertive, prophetic

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Restless, changeable, emotional fluctuations, repressed emotions, clouded perception, fear, deluded logic, confused, neurotic, volatile, insensitive, deceptive, antisocial, overly ambitious, corrupt, self-destructive, out of control, excessive uncontrollable desire, materialistic, psychological deranged, hallucinative, insane, hysterical, psychotic, possession by ghosts

Actions - Materialistic pursuits, pioneering new territory, immigrating to foreign country, traveling, going on adventures, hunting, invasions, addictions (alcoholism, drug abuse), illegal actions (terrorism, murder, stealing, cheating, gambling etc.), cruel actions (rioting, assault, litigation, punishment, harsh speech, lying etc.), separative actions (abandonment, exile, divorce), changing religions/spiritual paths, hallucinations

Objects/Substances - Poisons, toxic substances, lead, chemicals, technology of mass communication (computers, internet, radio etc.)

Professions - Computer engineering, scientists, inventors, explorers, magicians, travel industry, foreign service, foreign languages, politicians, secret occupations (spies, undercover agents, thieves, terrorists)

Parts of the Body - Difficult to diagnose diseases, chronic ailments

Ayurvedic Constitution - Vata (Air)

Places - Space, cremation grounds, barren places, underground places (graveyards, tombs, tunnels)

Color - Smokey appearance

Gems - Hessonite garnet, agate

Gender - Female

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign every 1½ years

Aspects - 1st and 7th houses from itself (some say 5th and 9th houses also)

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - Taurus (some say)
- Moolatrikona - Gemini (some say)
- Own sign - Aquarius (some say)

Weakest sign placements:

- Debilitated - Scorpio (some say)

Strongest house placements:

- Upachaya houses: 3, 6, 10, 11th houses

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana houses: 8, 12th houses

Ketu, the South node of the Moon

Main Indications - Introversion, occult knowledge (astrology, psychology, mysticism), mystical experience, liberation (moksha), silence, isolation, monasticism, renunciation, detachment, self negation, austerities, psychic sensitivity, deep perception, intuition

Significator for - 12th house (liberation) (some say)

Relates to - Mars, Scorpio and 8th house

Relations/People - Grandparents

Positive/Strong psychological traits - Detached, intelligent, discriminative, perceptive, compassionate, mystical, deep intuitive understanding, broad universal awareness

Negative/Weak psychological traits - Dissatisfied with life, disillusioned, doubting, negative, suspicious, breaks, inconsistency, escapism, foolish, eccentric, self-destructive behaviors, critical, negative, constrictive, hypersensitive, deceit, alienated, narrow minded, vague, mentally unstable, fanatical, violent, insane, low self esteem

Actions - Spiritual pursuits, meditation, introspection, austere purifying actions (tapas, penance, pilgrimages, fasting, observing silence, dips in holy rivers etc), renunciation, escapism, immoral, cruel, deceptive actions (treachery, swindling, lying, quarrels, cheating, intrigues, witchcraft), impulsive, violent actions (murder, slaughter)

Objects/Substances - Mystical objects (amulets, talismans, shamanistic tools etc.)

Professions - Monks, nuns, scholars, linguists, foreign languages, philosophers, doctors especially of alternative medicine, healers, priests, shamans, magicians, software programmer, religious/occult jewelers, astrologers, secret occupations - spies, thieves, terrorists

Parts of the Body - Pineal gland, pituitary gland

Ayurvedic Constitution - Pitta (Fire)

Places - Isolated places (monasteries, caves, ashrams)

Color - Dark, smoky colored

Gems - Cat's eye, chrysoberyl, turquoise

Gender - Male

Rate of Transit - Approximately one sign every 1½ years

Aspects - 1st and 7th houses from itself (some say 5th and 9th houses also)

Strongest sign placements:

- Exalted - Scorpio (some say)
- Moolatrikona - Sagittarius (some say)
- Own sign - Scorpio (some say)

Weakest sign placements: · Debilitated - Taurus (some say)

Strongest house placements:

- Upachaya houses: 3, 6, 10, 11th houses,
- 12th house (liberation)

Weakest house placements:

- Dusthana house: 8th house

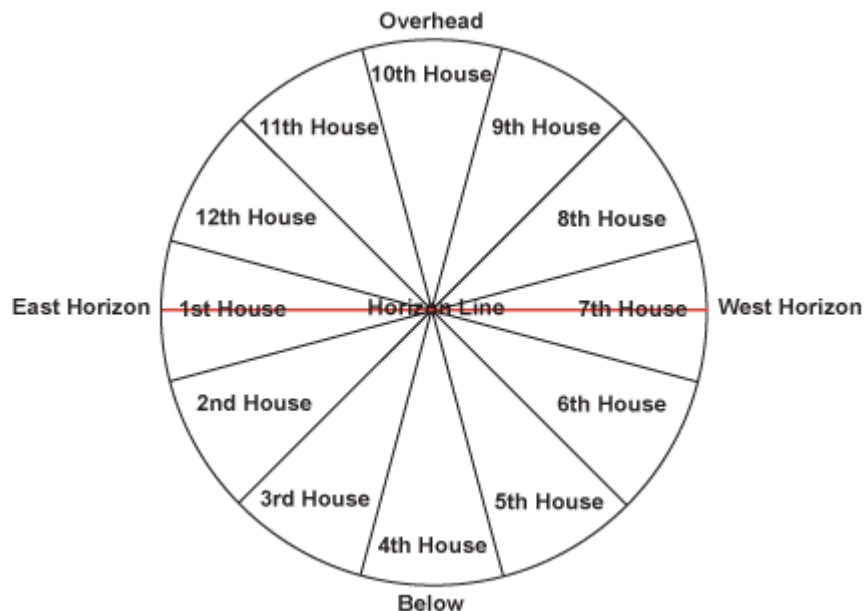
Lesson 6: The Essential Meaning of the Houses (Bhavas)



In the previous two lessons we learned about the essential meaning of the planets and their key indications. We also learned some basic first glance skills for interpreting the planets in a horoscope. We are now ready to discuss the locations that the planets are placed in the chart - the houses.

The Houses - The Twelve Locations in the Sky

A house is a place of residence. In astrology, the houses, also called the "Bhavas" in Sanskrit, are the locations in the sky where the planets reside. The sky is divided into 12 houses consisting of 30 degrees each, like pieces in a pie, that encircle the earth: 30 degrees x 12 houses = 360 degrees. In the Vedic system each house is equivalent to one sign as discussed in [Lesson 3](#).



The 1st house is located at the Eastern horizon and the rest of the twelve houses follow counter clockwise as shown. The 1st house is also called the "Ascendant" or "Rising Sign" because just as the Sun ascends or rises on the eastern horizon so do all the planets and signs as they follow their path in the sky along the zodiac belt. Please see [Lesson 2](#) to review these concepts.

Each house represents a different domain of activity in our lives as we shall see in this lesson. A planets' placement in a house will therefore energize that house with the qualities of that planet.

The Powerful Angles (Kendras)

The Angular houses, also called the "Kendras" in Sanskrit, are the houses 1, 4, 7, 10 in the chart. They take up the prominent regions in the sky – the eastern and western horizons, overhead, and down below. If you understand these 4 houses then it will be much easier to understand the other 8 houses.

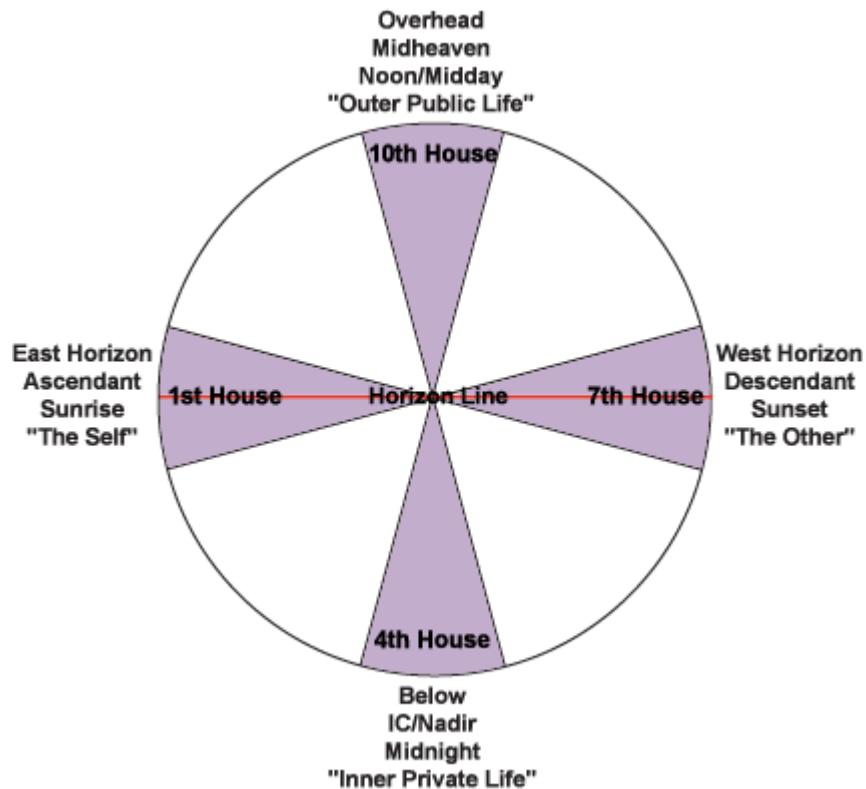
The first principle that will help you to understand the Angular houses is that they are the four "Pillars" of the chart. They give strength, protection, and power, for better or for worse, depending on whether there are benefic or malefic planets located there. If a chart has natural benefic planets in the Angular houses, like Jupiter or Venus, then it will give overall protection to the chart. This alone will help to minimize the negative effects that may be indicated in the chart, while maximizing the positive effects. The person will generally be protected against ill health, have positive character traits, progress well in his or her lives, be influential etc. For instance, Mahatma Gandhi had 4 benefic planets in Angular houses. Of course, there are other planetary positions that can reveal these qualities but benefics on angles is a primary way.

	Jup R		
☾	♃	♄	♅
	Mahatma Gandhi		Moon Rahu
♁	Example: 4 Benefics in Angular Houses		♃
Ketu			
♁			♄
	Sat	Mer Ven Mar	Sun
♁	♄	♅	♃
	Ven R Mer Sun Mar		Rahu
☾	♃	♄	♅
	Adolf Hitler		Sat
♁	Example: 3 Malefics in Angular Houses		♃
♁			♄
Ketu Jup Moon			
♁	♄	♅	♃

If there are malefics on angles then the person will generally experience ill health, have negative character traits, misuse his or her power by dominating others, thereby provoking conflict and opposition. For instance, Adolf Hitler had 3 malefic planets on angles. Again, there are other planetary positions that can reveal these qualities but we should look for malefics on angles as sources of potential difficulty and conflict.

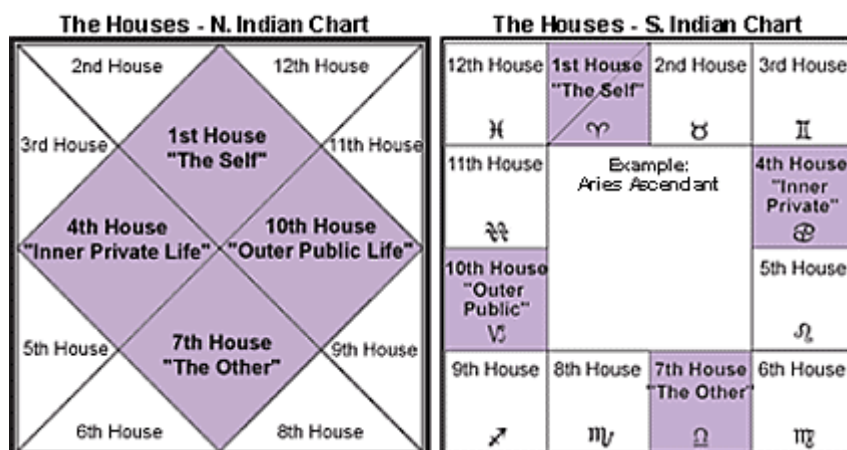
How can the power of Angular houses be explained? First of all, the 1st house (also called the lagna in Sanskrit) represents "The Self" or "You" in your natal chart. From the 1st house, the 4th house and the 10th house form 90-degree angles and are squared to "You." Think of a karate master who can break a board in two with his bare hand when he hits the board at a perfect 90-degree angle. He's able to be that powerful because he's hitting the board precisely at a 90-degree angle. If the angular position is off then the board will not break. Likewise, the houses that form a precise 90-degree angle to "You," the 4th and the 10th houses, represent power in relation to "You." That power can either be used to protect or harm.

The 7th house also becomes powerful in relation to the 1st house or "the self" because it's exactly 180 degrees in opposition. Think of two magnets held exactly opposite one another. They are either attracted or repelled when they are in exact alignment. This forms a very powerful polarity of opposites.



Consider also how the angular houses form a cross, which is a universal symbol of protection and power that pre-dates Christianity. You will find the cross symbol employed by firefighters and other organizations like the Red Cross that protect the people. The diagram above resembles a Maltese cross, used by the military order of the Knights of Malta. This further illustrates the concept that the Angular houses are places of power and protection.

The North Indian chart style displays the Angular houses clearly with large squares in the center of the chart as shown in the diagram below.



The Two Sets of Polarities

The Angular houses represent two sets of polarities:

1st house "**The Self**" - 7th house "**The Other**"

10th house "**Outer Public Life**" - 4th house "**Inner Private Life**"

We can learn a lot about the Angular houses and their polarities by considering the movement of the Sun throughout the day. Here are some descriptions of the Angular houses and their polarities based on this concept:

1st house: When the Sun enters the 1st house at sunrise it's the beginning of the day. We generally take personal time and attend to our physical body needs. The 1st house therefore represents the beginning of life for "The Self," our physical bodies, appearance, and character traits. It sets the tone for our entire lifetime.

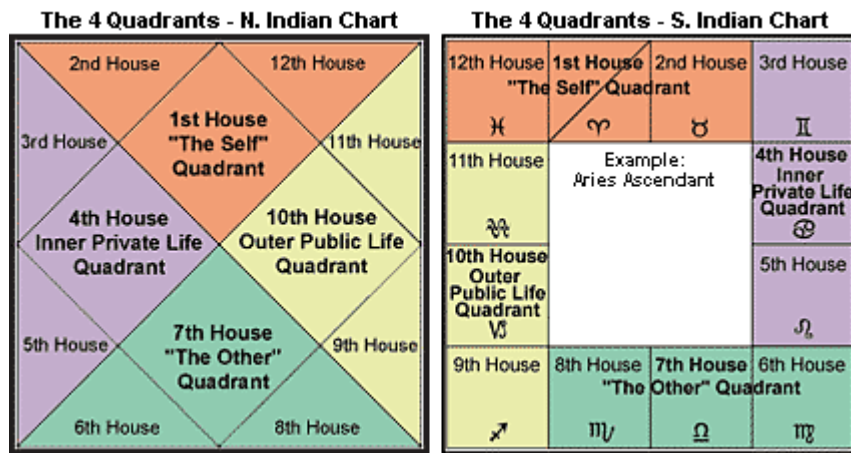
7th house: When the Sun enters the 7th houses at sunset it represents a social or romantic time with "The Other." Watching a sunset is generally considered a time to be with friends or your romantic partner. The 7th house is therefore a social house that represents relationships and particularly intimate relationships and marriage.

10th house: When the Sun enters the 10th house it is directly overhead at midday. It's a time when most people are in full swing with their active lives. The 10th house therefore represents our "Outer Public Life," and is an active, career oriented house.

4th house: When the Sun enters the 4th house it is below the horizon at midnight and represents our "Inner Private Life." It's generally the time when we're the least active and the most internal. Most people are at home sleeping or doing quiet activities that connect them to their thoughts or feelings. The 4th house therefore represents our home, domestic life, mother, the mind (not intellect) and emotions.

The Four Quadrants

The four Angular houses generally represent four quadrants, with each quadrant consisting of three houses. The "Self" quadrant, or rising hemisphere, consists of the 12th, 1st, and 2nd houses. The "Other" quadrant, or setting hemisphere, consists of the 6th, 7th, and 8th houses. The "Outer Public Life" quadrant, or upper hemisphere, consists of the 9th, 10th, and 11th houses. Lastly the "Inner Private Life" quadrant, or lower hemisphere, consists of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th houses.



When first analyzing a chart it is helpful to look for clusters of planets in the quadrants. Since the locations of the planets represent "focalized" energy, this first glance method allows us to quickly see in what quadrant a person is likely to be focused. This will immediately tell us something about the person.

Here are descriptions of the four quadrants:

The "Self" Quadrant (12, 1, 2) - When there are clusters of planets in the "self" quadrant these planets were rising on the eastern horizon at the time of birth. This quadrant represents the dawn of personal inspiration, new beginnings, initiating new directions. The person will tend to be self-focused, driven, independent, and self-motivated. He or she may also tend to be selfish and self-centered.

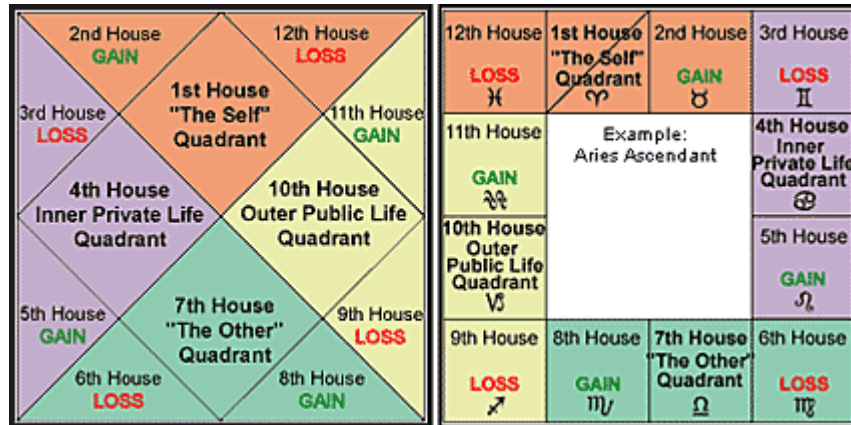
The "Other" Quadrant (6, 7, 8) - If there are clusters of planets in the "Other" quadrant these planets were setting in the western horizon at the time of birth. This quadrant represents the end of day, when our work is finished, and we are able to be social. The person will tend to be focused on others, sociable, and relationship-oriented. He or she may also tend to lack personal motivation, and be needy or "co-dependent" in their relationships.

The "Outer Public Life" Quadrant (9, 10, 11) - If there are clusters of planets in the "Outer Public Life" quadrant these planets were visible overhead at the time of birth. This quadrant represents midday when we are the most active, and focused on our public, professional lives. The person will tend to be career driven, active, influential, and extroverted. He or she may also tend to be workaholic, overly active and ambitious.

The "Inner Private Life" Quadrant (3, 4, 5) - If there are clusters of planets in the "Inner Private Life" quadrant these planets were not visible at the time of birth. This quadrant represents midnight when we are the most inactive, and focused on our private, domestic lives. The person will tend to be domestically oriented, private, quiet, emotionally sensitive, and reflective. He or she may also tend to lack career motivation, be inactive, and moody.

The 2nd and 12th Houses - Bhavat Bhavam

The 2nd house or the next house from any given house represents the gains, accumulations, or further fulfillment of the indications of that house. Likewise, the 12th house or the previous house from any given house represents the losses, endings, or undoings of the indications of that house. With this principle we can understand the adjacent houses to each of the 4 Angular houses.



For instance, the 2nd house represents money, earning, wealth, assets, accumulation of resources because it represents the "gains" of the self (1st house). Likewise, the 11th house represents the gains of the career (10th house), and the 8th house represents the gains of the spouse (7th house), etc.

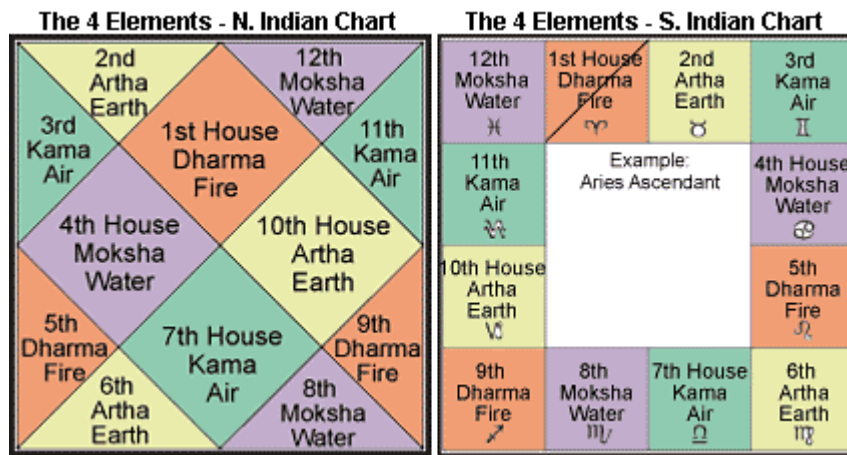
The 12th house represents debts, expenses, isolation, illnesses because it represents the "losses" of the self (1st house). Likewise, the 6th house represents conflicts and loss of relationship (7th house), and the 3rd house represents communication and networking with others or the loss of one's private inner life (4th house).

By understanding this fundamental logic, we can see how many of the common indications of the houses are derived. This method is called "Bhavat Bhavam" which literally means from "house to house." By reflecting on this principle, we can continually deepen our understanding of the houses.

Another use of Bhavat Bhavam is to take the same house number and add it to itself. For instance, the 3rd from the 3rd is the 5th house (always count from the house itself as 1). The 5th house shares similar indications to the 3rd house, like writing and the fine arts, because it is the 3rd from the 3rd. Likewise, the 9th house shares similar indications to the 11th house, like financial gains, because it is the 11th from the 11th. This house-to-house principle can be extended to every house and reveals that there is a harmonic relationship between such houses.

The Four Elements and The Four Aims of Life

The next principle that will help us understand the houses is that each house is related to one of the four elements: Fire, Earth, Air, Water. These also correspond to one of the four aims of life, or purusharthas in Sanskrit: Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha. There are 3 houses for each element/aim of life as shown in the following diagram:



When first analyzing a chart it's very helpful to see which of the four house groupings or triads that the planets are clustered in. This is another important first glance method that will immediately tell us something about the person.

Here are descriptions for each of the four triads:

The Fire or Dharma Houses (1, 5, 9) - Keywords: Spiritual and Inspiration. These are houses of purpose and meaning. They relate to the signs Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius respectively. Dharma is translated as "duty" or "purpose," and if there are clusters of planets in these houses then the person will generally make the most progress if they have a sense of meaning or purpose. This person will value personal growth, inspiration, creative expression, and ethics. He or she could also be self-righteous, idealistic and dogmatic.

The Earth or Artha Houses (2, 6, 10) - Keywords: Physical and Resources. These are houses of material work and manifesting what you value. They relate to the signs Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn. Artha is translated as "resources," and if there are clusters of planets in these houses then the person will generally be practical, productive, and work-oriented. This person will value material security, accumulating resources and generating wealth. He or she could also be materialistic, superficial, and "fussy."

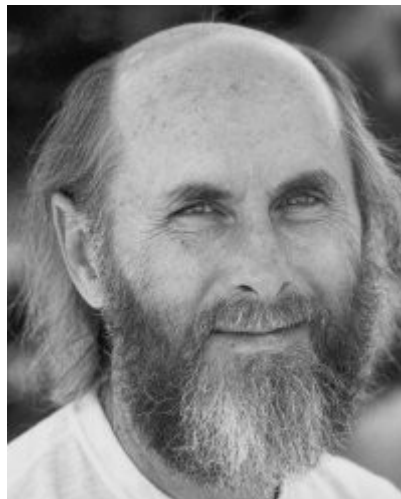
The Air or Kama Houses (3, 7, 11) - Keywords: Social and Desire. These are houses of relationship, communication, and networking. They relate to the signs Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius. Kama is translated as "desire," and if there are clusters of planets in these houses then the person will generally have strong desires for relationship, social involvement, and to be well connected. This person will value sharing information and ideas. He or she could also be scattered, unfocused and pulled by many desires.

The Water or Moksha Houses (4, 8, 12) - Keywords: Emotional and Mystical. These are houses of the mind, feelings, and perceptions and are the most subtle, deep, and hidden houses. They relate to the signs Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces. Moksha is translated as "liberation" and if there are clusters of planets in these houses then the person will generally be interested in psychological transformation, deep thinking, and the path of liberation. This person will value psychology, altered states of awareness, occult studies, metaphysics and mysticism. He or she could also be dreamy, impractical, and unproductive.

The sequence of the houses through the zodiac represent a developmental pattern. In other words, the highest house number in each triad represents the fullest and most powerful expression of that triad. For instance, the 9th house is the fullest expression of the Fire/Dharma houses (1, 5, **9**); the 10th house is the fullest expression of the Earth/Artha houses (2, 6, **10**); the 11th house is the fullest expression of the Air/Kama houses (3, 7, **11**); and the 12th house is the fullest expression of the Water/Moksha houses (4, 8, **12**).

The Balance of Polarities

You'll notice by the above list of descriptions that every house is balanced by and is a mirror reflection of its opposing house. The Fire/Dharma houses balance the qualities of the Air/Kama houses and the Earth/Artha houses balance the qualities of the Water/Moksha houses. This was pointed out at the beginning of this lesson with the descriptions of the angular houses and their polarities.



Dr. David Frawley

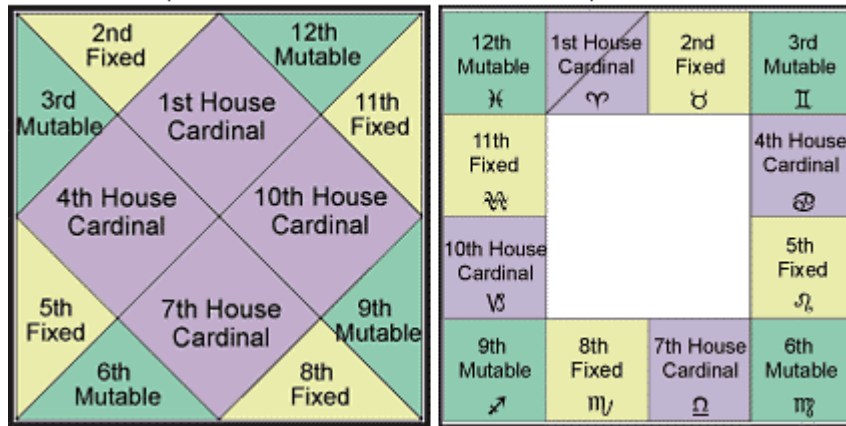
I was taught this principle in 1994 while tutoring with Dr. David Frawley, author of *The Astrology of the Seers*. He pointed out that the Kama houses (3, 7, 11) represent what we "want to do" while the Dharma houses (1, 5, 9) represent what we "should do" in order to fulfill our life purpose. Likewise, the Moksha houses (4, 8, 12) represent mystical, altered, or otherworldly experiences that need to be balanced by the practical and grounding influences of the Earth houses (2, 6, 10).

We can learn a great deal about the houses by reflecting on their qualities and their polar opposites within the varied contexts of our everyday lives.

The Three Qualities of the Houses

The last principle that will help us understand the houses is that each house is related to one of the three qualities or modes: Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable. These are also called the Angular, Succedent, and Cadent houses. Each quality has 4 houses each which form 2 sets of polarities as shown in the diagram below.

The 3 House Qualities - N. Indian Chart The 3 House Qualities - S. Indian Chart



The Cardinal or Angular houses are the houses 1, 4, 7, 10. They are equivalent to the powerful Angular or Kendra houses that we've already discussed.

The Fixed or Succedent houses are the houses 2, 5, 8, 11, and are also called Panapara in Sanskrit. They are the 2nd houses from the Cardinal houses so they represent the "gains" of the Cardinal houses.

The Mutable or Cadent houses are the houses 3, 6, 9, 12, and are also called Apoklima in Sanskrit. They are the 12th houses from the Cardinal houses so they represent the "losses" of the Cardinal houses. Cadent literally means to "fall away."

When first analyzing a chart it's also very helpful to see which of the three house groupings are the planets clustered. This is another important first glance method that will immediately tell us something about the person.

Here are descriptions for each of the three house groupings:

The Cardinal, Angular or Kendra Houses (1, 4, 7, 10) - Keywords: Initiating Power. When planets are clustered in these houses they are in an active, dynamic, creative phase and are able to manifest power. The person will be outgoing, strong, assertive and good at initiating projects. He or she could also be aggressive, impulsive, and insensitive. These are the strongest house placements and relate to the Cardinal signs of Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn. The 4th house is the weakest in this group because it's also a moksha house. The 10th house is the strongest.

The Fixed, Succedent or Panapara Houses (2, 5, 8, 11) - Keywords: Stabilizing Resources. When planets are clustered in these houses they are in an accumulating, consolidating, sustaining phase and are able to establish security. The person will be stable, able to persevere, earn money and maintain a project. He or she could also be possessive, rigid, and conservative. These are moderately strong house placements and relate to the Fixed signs of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. The 8th house is the weakest and most malefic house in this group because it's also a moksha and dusthana house. The 11th house is the strongest.

The Mutable, Cadent or Apoklima Houses (3, 6, 9, 12) - Keywords: Adapting to Change. When planets are clustered in these houses they are in dispersive, unstable, dissolution phase and are able to manage change. This person will be flexible, adaptable, introspective, sensitive, and good at assessing and modifying a project. He or she could also be unreliable, impressionable, insecure, and indecisive. These are the weakest house placements and relate to the Mutable signs of Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces. The 12th house is the weakest and most malefic in this group because it's also a moksha and dusthana house. The 9th house is the strongest.

1st House	Fire	Cardinal	Aries
2nd House	Earth	Fixed	Taurus
3rd House	Air	Mutable	Gemini
4th House	Water	Cardinal	Cancer
5th House	Fire	Fixed	Leo
6th House	Earth	Mutable	Virgo
7th House	Air	Cardinal	Libra
8th House	Water	Fixed	Scorpio
9th House	Fire	Mutable	Sagittarius
10th House	Earth	Cardinal	Capricorn
11th House	Air	Fixed	Aquarius
12th House	Water	Mutable	Pisces

Summary of House Categories

Here is a list of all the house categories we've covered thus far in this course. Also included is a description of their basic rules for chart interpretation:

Angular Houses (kendras) - 1, 4, 7, 10

Trinal Houses (trikonas) - 1, 5, 9

The angular and trinal houses are the most beneficial house placements for natural benefic planets. If the natural malefic planets are placed in these houses it could indicate areas of challenge and difficulty. The angular houses also represent the four quadrants that are used for basic chart interpretation as discussed in this lesson.

Upachaya Houses - 3, 6, 10, 11

The upachaya houses are the best house placements for the natural malefic planets. These are also considered "increasing" or "growing" houses because they get better with time as the person gets older.

Dusthana Houses - 6, 8, 12

The dusthana houses are the three most malefic houses. Both natural benefic planets and natural malefic planets are harmed when located in these houses (except the 6th house for malefic planets since it's also an upachaya house).

Fire (Dharma) Houses - 1, 5, 9

Earth (Artha) Houses - 2, 6, 10

Air (Kama) Houses - 3, 7, 11

Water (Moksha) Houses - 4, 8, 12

These four house groupings are used for basic chart interpretation as discussed in this lesson. The fire (Dharma) houses 1, 5, 9 are also called the trinal houses.

Cardinal (Kendra) Houses - 1, 4, 7, 10

Fixed (Panapara) Houses - 2, 5, 8, 11

Mutable (Apoklima) Houses - 3, 6, 9, 12

These three house groupings are used for basic chart interpretation as discussed in this lesson. The fire (Dharma) houses 1, 5, 9 are also called the trinal houses.

Lesson 6 Exercise – 1st Glance House Interpretation Skills

We will now review the key chart interpretation methods covered in this lesson. These constitute the first glance house interpretation skills that should ideally become second nature whenever you study a chart.

Materials needed:

- 1) Your South Indian chart
- 2) **Green** and **Red** Pen and Paper

Identifying The Clusters of Planets in the 4 Quadrants

Begin by locating the angular houses in your chart - 1, 4, 7, 10. Review the quadrants that the angular houses represent:

12th, 1st, 2nd houses - "The Self" Quadrant

6th, 7th, 8th houses - "The Other" Quadrant

9th, 10th, 11th houses - "The Outer Public Life" Quadrant

3rd, 4th, 5th houses - "The Inner Public Life" Quadrant

Next, identify which quadrant has the largest cluster of planets in your chart. Put a circle around these planets in your chart as shown in the example chart. What does this tell you about where you tend to be focused in your life?

	Mer 6°	Sun 9° Ven 21°	Mar 17°
♈	♉	♊ 10th House	♋
Ketu 29° 7th House ♊			Sat 14° ♌
♍			Rahu 29° 13° 1st House ♌
Jup 10°	4th House ♏	Moon 22° ♏	♐
♎			

In this example, the 1st house is Leo, the 4th house is Scorpio, the 7th house is Aquarius, and the 10th house is Taurus. The 10th house quadrant of the "Outer Public Life," consisting of the 9th, 10th, and 11th houses have the largest number of planets clustered. There are 4 planets - Mercury, Sun, Venus, and Mars, therefore, these planets are circled.

Identifying The Clusters of Planets in the 4 Elements

Identify the Fire or Dharma houses (1, 5, 9), the Earth or Artha houses (2, 6, 10), the Air or Kama houses (3, 7, 11), and the Water or Moksha houses (4, 8, 12) in your chart.

Next, create your own table by listing the 9 planets vertically and the 4 house elements horizontally above them as shown in the table below.

Place an **X** in the column of the element that each planet is placed in. Count the totals for each column and circle the highest number(s) as shown.

What does this tell you about yourself? Make a list of qualities.

In this example, both the Fire (Dharma) houses and the Air (Kama) houses have the most number of planets with 3 each, and therefore are circled.

	Fire (1,5,9) <i>Dharma</i>	Earth (2,6,10) <i>Artha</i>	Air (3,7,11) <i>Kama</i>	Water (4,8,12) <i>Moksha</i>
Sun		X		
Moon			X	
Mercury	X			
Venus		X		
Mars			X	
Jupiter	X			
Saturn				X
Rahu	X			
Ketu			X	
Totals	3	2	3	1

Identifying The Clusters of Planets in the 3 Qualities

Now, identify the Cardinal, or Kendra houses (1, 4, 7, 10), the Fixed, or Panapara houses (2, 5, 8, 11), and the Mutable, or Apoklima houses (3, 6, 9, 12) in your chart.

Using the same table add 3 more columns for these qualities. Place an X in the column of the quality that each planet is placed in. Count the totals for each column and circle the highest number as shown in the table below.

What does this tell you about yourself? Make a list of qualities. How do these qualities compare with the qualities from the previous two exercises? Do you see any pattern(s) emerging?

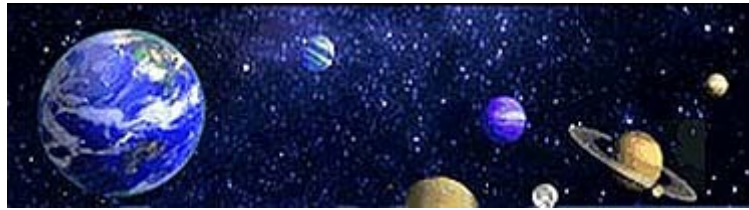
In this example, the Cardinal (Kendra) houses have the most number of planets (4), and therefore is circled.

	Cardinal (1,4,7,10) <i>Kendra</i>	Fixed (2,5,8,11) <i>Panapara</i>	Mutable (3,6,9,12) <i>Apoklima</i>
Sun	X		
Moon			X
Mercury			X
Venus	X		
Mars		X	
Jupiter		X	
Saturn			X
Rahu	X		
Ketu	X		
Totals	4	2	3

These exercises of identifying the quadrants, elements, and qualities of each planet will help train your mind to look for patterns in a chart. You will find that you get an initial, first glance feel for the chart which will assist you as you progress to more advanced interpretation skills.

In the following lesson we will be studying the key indications of the houses based on the fundamental logic that we've discussed in this lesson.

Lesson 7: The Essential Meaning of the Signs (Rashis)



In the previous lessons we've learned about the essential meaning of the planets and houses and their key indications. We also learned basic first glance skills for interpreting the planets and houses in a horoscope. We are now ready to discuss the signs, which called the "rashis" in Sanskrit.

The Signs in Vedic Astrology vs. Western Astrology

The signs have a much more subdued role in Vedic astrology than Western astrology. Vedic astrology generally relies more on the houses for interpretation whereas Western astrology generally relies more on the signs. The meanings of the signs are basically identical in both systems, however, the classical rulerships of the signs are used as shown in the following diagram. Also, since Vedic astrology uses an Equal House system, one sign always correlates entirely to one house as previously discussed.

While you'll find more emphasis on the qualities of the signs in Western astrology texts, it's interesting that Vedic astrology adheres more strictly to the actual sign constellations astronomically as mentioned in [Lesson 2](#).

The Signs: Adding Color to the Planets and Houses

PISCES Ruler: Jupiter ♋	ARIES Ruler: Mars ♈	TAURUS Ruler: Venus ♉	GEMINI Ruler: Mercury ♊
AQUARIUS Ruler: Saturn ♋	The Twelves Signs and their planetary rulers		CANCER Ruler: Moon ♋
CAPRICORN Ruler: Saturn ♋			LEO Ruler: Sun ♋
SAGITTARIUS Ruler: Jupiter ♋	SCORPIO Ruler: Mars ♋	LIBRA Ruler: Venus ♋	VIRGO Ruler: Mercury ♋

The best metaphor I've found for understanding the relationship between the signs, planets, and houses is to think of watching a play on a stage. The planets are the characters, while the houses are the stage set in which the planets are acting. The signs are the costumes that the planets are wearing, as well as the decor of the stage sets or houses. Therefore, the signs add color to the basic inherent qualities of the planets and the houses.

For instance, a character in the play may have inherently dominant and aggressive traits, like the planet Mars, but his costume and the stage set will modify his character. Maybe he's wearing a bathing suit and sipping lemonade by the poolside. This resembles how Mars behaves when placed in one of the water signs. Mars, being a fiery planet, will become much less dominant and aggressive because water extinguishes fire. This illustrates how the signs effect the characterization of the planets and houses. The deeper we can understand the signs, the more specific we can be in defining the qualities that the planets and the houses manifest.

I once gave a reading to a woman, in Spring 1996, who's house had burned down two months earlier in March. It was a very interesting study to see her chart in relation to that event.

Ma 29° Ke 29° Ju 14° Ve 0° ♃	Sat 3° ♈	♉	♊
	House Fire March 1996		
	Vimshottari Dasa Saturn - Saturn - Moon from 1/27/96 - 4/27/96		♋
Me 28° Su 23° Asc 2° Moon 3° ♈			♌
			Ra 29° ♍
♈	♉	♊	♋

She has Capricorn rising which puts her 4th house in the sign of Aries, a fire sign. In her chart, Saturn is located in the 4th house at 3 degrees Aries giving a very tight aspect to the Moon at 3 degrees in the ascendant. At the time of the fire she was in her Saturn - Saturn - Moon period in the Vimshottari planetary period system. This means that during this time period (1/27/96 - 4/27/96) the karma that these planets represent gets activated, and turned on like a light switch.

Saturn is the planet of hardship and the Moon represents the 4th house, emotions, and home. Also, Saturn is debilitated in Aries further reinforcing hardship. Saturn being placed in the 4th house from the Moon and aspecting the Moon indicated the grief she was experiencing with regards to her home. This could be expected to some extent no matter what sign Saturn was placed in. However, Saturn's placement in the fiery sign of Aries characterized Saturn to be fiery, violent, and reckless in the realm of the home (4th house). This is a good example of how an understanding of the signs can refine our interpretation of the chart.

The Fundamentals: The Basis for Brilliant Interpretations

I'm convinced that the best astrologers are not necessarily the ones that utilize the most advanced and complicated methods, but instead have the most profound understanding of the fundamentals of astrology. It's easy to skip over the basics just like a pianist would rather play a concerto instead of practicing scales all day. The best astrologers don't skip over any of the basics because they know that they are the building blocks for every advanced interpretation and prediction.

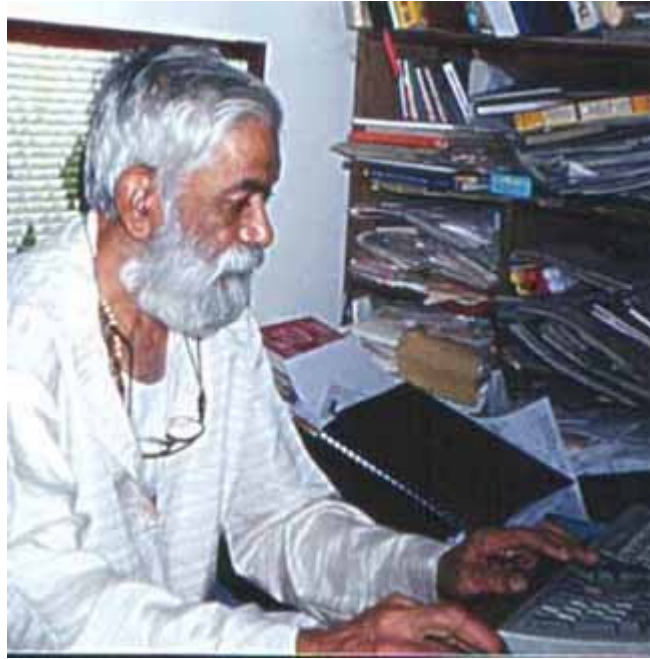


Deoki Nandan Shastri of Varanasi, India

In December 1992 I studied with Deoki Nandan Shastri, an astrologer in Varanasi. When I first arrived in Varanasi I asked around for the best astrologer and was promptly led through the winding, narrow streets of the ancient city to his home. Once inside his office, I immediately noticed a gold medal award in Vedic astrology on the wall, as well as a signed photograph of the movie actress, Goldie Hawn, who had come to him for a reading a few years back. Naturally, I was impressed.

However, he surprised me by how much he relied on the fundamentals. When it came time to studying a chart he announced that he looked only at the basic natal chart along with the navamsa chart and the vimshottari dasa planetary periods. He used no other divisional charts or advanced methods whatsoever. He explained that everything can actually be seen from the natal chart if you understand the fundamentals deeply enough, and his reputation proved it.

My jyotish guru, Sri K.N. Rao, also emphasizes the fundamentals. I've often heard him say, "If you miss the basic points then any advanced analysis will go wrong." At the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, his Vedic astrology school in New Delhi, he incorporates many advanced predictive methods along with a strong focus on the fundamentals. With his faculty and students, he has pioneered a large body of original and scientific research into advanced methods that are published in his quarterly journal, *the Journal of Astrology*.



Sri K.N. Rao of New Delhi, India

The Three Building Blocks of the Signs – Polarity, Quality, Element

There are three basic building blocks – polarity, quality, and element - that combine to form the fundamental logic from which the indications for the twelve signs are derived. Once these three building blocks are understood then not only will the common derivations of the signs make more sense, but you will also be able to develop many of your own creative meanings and insights.

The Two Polarities – Masculine (Odd) and Feminine (Even) Signs

– Feminine (Even) ♋	+ Masculine (Odd) ♈	– Feminine (Even) ♏	+ Masculine (Odd) ♎
+ Masculine (Odd) ♌			– Feminine (Even) ♍
– Feminine (Even) ♐			+ Masculine (Odd) ♏
+ Masculine (Odd) ♉	– Feminine (Even) ♊	+ Masculine (Odd) ♍	– Feminine (Even) ♌

Every sign is either masculine or feminine in gender. The masculine signs are the odd numbered signs beginning with Aries as sign number 1. The feminine signs are the even numbered sign beginning with Taurus as sign number 2. Mars, Venus, Mercury, Saturn and Jupiter each rule one masculine/positive sign and one feminine/negative sign. The masculine/positive signs are generally considered more favorable and planets placed there generally have more power of manifestation.

It's a good chart interpretation habit to analyze whether a person's overall character is more expressive and extroverted or receptive and introverted. This can be done by examining the gender of the signs in which the Ascendant, Sun, and Moon are placed in. Also, count how many planets are in masculine and feminine signs. The gender in which the most signs fall in will have a noticeable effect on the overall masculine or feminine nature of the person's character.

An interesting point is that the gender of unborn children can be determined by primarily examining the genders of the 5th house, the 5th lord, and Jupiter in the mother's chart.

Qualities of the Masculine (Odd) Signs

The masculine signs exhibit solar qualities and are therefore active, externalizing, yang, outward, extroverted, expressive, conscious, logical, forceful, and aggressive in nature.

Qualities of the Feminine (Even) Signs

The feminine signs exhibit lunar qualities and are therefore passive, internalizing, yin, inward, introverted, receptive, unconscious, intuitive, inertia causing, and gentle in nature.

The Four Elements – Fire, Earth, Air, Water

Just as the houses are related to the elements Fire, Earth, Air, Water, as discussed in Lesson 6, every sign relates to the elements. As previously mentioned, there are three signs for each of the four elements, one for each of the three qualities – Cardinal, Fixed, Mutable.

Water ♊	Fire ♈	Earth ♉	Air ♊
Air ♋			Water ♋
Earth ♌			Fire ♌
Fire ♍	Water ♍	Air ♍	Earth ♍

As with the polarities of the signs, it's a good chart interpretation habit to analyze the Ascendant, Sun, Moon, and the majority of planets in regards to the four elements as well.

Here are descriptions for each of the four elements that will augment what we learned in Lesson 6:

Fire – Identity

The Fire signs are Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius and represent the realm of personal identity – active radiant energy, and creative self-discovery. If there's a predominance of the fire element then it represents that this person will value creative self-expression in their life and be ambitious, driven, determined, enterprising, independent, and spontaneous. He or she may have natural leadership qualities, be inspirational, playful, vibrant, and exuberant. This person may also be self-centered, impatient, impulsive, overpowering, controlling, aggressive, competitive, proud, insensitive, and lack self-control.

Earth – Material

The Earth signs are Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn and represent the material realm – physical form, the body and senses, and material resources. If there's a predominance of the Earth element then it represents that this person will value a material focus in their life and be practical, productive, efficient, competent, and seek security. He or she may be hard working, down to earth, reliable, responsible, patient, and dependable. This person may also be narrow-minded, greedy, conservative, stubborn, cautious, reserved, and possessive.

Air – Intellectual

The Air signs are Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius and represent the intellectual realm – knowledge, social interaction, and communication. If there’s a predominance of the Air element then it represents that this person will value the sharing of ideas in their life and be sociable, communicative, intellectual, objective, curious, witty, intelligent, and gregarious. He or she may be well educated, love learning, and able to communicate abstract concepts. This person may also be idealistic, spacey, ungrounded, dreamy, aloof, flighty, superficial, and eccentric.

Water – Feeling

The Water signs are Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces and represent the emotional realm – the internal, intangible world of feelings and perceptions. If there’s a predominance of the Water element then it represents that this person will value a depth of feeling in their life, and be sensitive, receptive, intuitive, imaginative, empathetic, protective, affectionate, flexible, and devotional. He or she may be a caregiver - nurturing, helpful, and compassionate. This person may also be impressionable, moody, needy, manipulative, overly sensitive and emotional, greedy, sentimental, and dependent.

The Three Qualities – Cardinal, Fixed, Mutable

Just as the houses are related to the qualities or modes of expression, Cardinal, Fixed, and Mutable, as discussed in Lesson 6, every sign relates to these qualities. They represent the creative, preservative, and dissolutive phases as found in nature. A good example of this is the planting, maintaining, and composting phases of a vegetable garden.

Mutable (Dual) ♊	Cardinal (Movable) ♈	Fixed (Firm) ♉	Mutable (Dual) ♋
Fixed (Firm) ♌			Cardinal (Movable) ♍
Cardinal (Movable) ♎			Fixed (Firm) ♏
Mutable (Dual) ♐	Fixed (Firm) ♑	Cardinal (Movable) ♒	Mutable (Dual) ♓

Again, it’s a good chart interpretation habit to analyze the Ascendant, Sun, Moon, and the majority of planets in regards to these three qualities.

Here are descriptions for each of the three qualities that will augment what we learned in Lesson 6:

Cardinal (Movable) – Initiating Energy

The Cardinal signs are also called moveable or “Chara” in Sanskrit and are known for initiating action and getting projects started. The Cardinal signs are Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn. If there’s a predominance of the Cardinal quality in a chart then it represents that the person will be initiating, mobile, active, ambitious, enterprising, open to many ideas and opportunities, and like to travel. This person may also be changeable, indecisive, impatient, untrustworthy, and lack the ability to persist or follow through.

Fixed (Firm) – Stable Energy

The fixed signs are also called firm or “Sthira” in Sanskrit and are known for stabilizing and preserving what’s already been started in the cardinal phase. The fixed signs are Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. If there’s a predominance of the Fixed quality in a chart then it represents that the person will be stable, settled, determined, reliable, able to persevere and endure, and like to stay in one place. This person may also be rigid, close-minded, stubborn, resistant, and unyielding.

Mutable (Dual) – Adaptable Energy

The Mutable signs are also called Dual or “Dvisvabhava” in Sanskrit and have mixed qualities of both the Cardinal and Fixed signs. This gives them a transitional or dual nature that can go either way. The Mutable signs are Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces. If there’s a predominance of the Mutable quality in a chart then it represents that the person will be adaptable to change, flexible, adjustable, resourceful, capable of learning, and versatile. This person may also be unfocused, undirected, diffused, scattered, ungrounded, distracted, worried, and restless.

The Fundamental Logic of the Twelve Signs

Aries – Masculine, Cardinal, Fire

Active, externalizing, initiating, creative self-expression

Taurus – Feminine, Fixed, Earth

Passive, internalizing, stable, material focus

Gemini – Masculine, Mutable, Air

Active, externalizing, adaptable, sharing of ideas

Cancer – Feminine, Cardinal, Water

Passive, internalizing, initiating, depth of feeling

Leo – Masculine, Fixed, Fire

Active, externalizing, stable, creative self-expression>

Virgo – Feminine, Mutable, Earth

Passive, internalizing, adaptable, material focus

Libra – Masculine, Cardinal, Air

Active, externalizing, initiating, sharing of ideas

Scorpio – Feminine, Fixed, Water

Passive, internalizing, stable, depth of feeling

Sagittarius – Masculine, Mutable, Fire

Active, externalizing, adaptable, creative self-expression>

Capricorn – Feminine, Cardinal, Earth

Passive, internalizing, initiating, material focus

Aquarius – Masculine, Fixed, Air

Active, externalizing, stable, sharing of ideas

Pisces – Feminine, Mutable, Water

Passive, internalizing, adaptable, depth of feeling

Aries	Fire	Cardinal	1st House
Taurus	Earth	Fixed	2nd House
Gemini	Air	Mutable	3rd House
Cancer	Water	Cardinal	4th House
Leo	Fire	Fixed	5th House
Virgo	Earth	Mutable	6th House
Libra	Air	Cardinal	7th House
Scorpio	Water	Fixed	8th House
Sagittarius	Fire	Mutable	9th House
Capricorn	Earth	Cardinal	10th House
Aquarius	Air	Fixed	11th House
Pisces	Water	Mutable	12th House

Lesson 7 Exercise – 1st Glance Sign Interpretation Skills

We will now review the key chart interpretation methods covered in this lesson. These constitute the first glance sign interpretation skills that should ideally become second nature whenever you study a chart.

We should especially note the Ascendant, Moon, and Sun as these are the primary influences that represent one's personality traits as mentioned in Lesson 4. If you understand a person's personality then your interpretation of their chart will be much more accurate. For instance, you will see how he or she will tend to respond to various situations as indicated in their chart.

Materials needed:

- 1) Your South Indian chart
- 2) Green and Red Pen and Paper

Identifying the Polarities of the Signs - Masculine (Odd) and Feminine (Even) Signs

Begin by identifying the masculine/odd and feminine/even signs in your chart.

On a piece of paper create your own table as we did in the exercises in lesson 6 by listing the 9 planets vertically, this time with the addition of the ascendant. Next, write masculine and feminine horizontally creating two columns.

Place an **X** in the column of the gender that each planet is placed in. Count the totals for both columns and circle the highest number as shown in the table below.

What does this tell you about yourself? Make a list of qualities.

	Mer 6°	Sun 9° Ven 21°	Mar 17°
♈	♉	♊	♋
Ketu 29°			Sat 14°
♌			♍
			Rahu 29° 13°
♍			♎
Jup 10°		Moon 22°	
♎	♏	♐	♑

In this example, the masculine or odd signs have the most number of planets (7), and therefore is circled.

	Masculine, Odd (1,3,5,7,9,11)	Feminine, Even (2,4,6,8,10,12)
Ascendant	X	
Sun		X
Moon	X	
Mercury	X	
Venus		X
Mars	X	
Jupiter	X	
Saturn		X
Rahu	X	
Ketu	X	
Totals	7	3

Identifying the Elements of the Signs - Fire, Earth, Air, Water

Next, identify the signs of the elements of the signs in your chart - Fire, Earth, Air, Water.

Using the same table add four more columns for the elements. Place an **X** in the column of the element that each planet is placed in. Count the totals for each column and circle the highest number as shown in the table below.

What does this tell you about yourself? Make a list of qualities. How do these qualities compare with the polarities from the previous exercise? Do you see any pattern(s) emerging?

In this example, the Fire signs have the most number of planets (4), and therefore is circled.

	Fire (1,5,9)	Earth (2,6,10)	Air (3,7,11)	Water (4,8,12)
Ascendant	X			
Sun		X		
Moon			X	
Mercury	X			
Venus		X		
Mars			X	
Jupiter	X			
Saturn				X
Rahu	X			
Ketu			X	
Totals	4	2	3	1

Identifying Qualities of the Signs - Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable

Lastly, identify the qualities of the signs in your chart - Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable.

Using the same table add 3 more columns for these qualities. Place an **X** in the column of the quality that each planet is placed in. Count the totals for each column and circle the highest number as shown in the table below.

What does this tell you about yourself? Make a list of qualities. How do these qualities compare with the qualities of previous two exercises? How about if you consider all the exercises we've completed in the course thus far? Do you see any more pattern(s) emerging?

In this example, the Fixed signs have the most number of planets (5), and therefore is circled.

	Cardinal (1,4,7,10)	Fixed (2,5,8,11)	Mutable (3,6,9,12)
Ascendant		X	
Sun		X	
Moon	X		
Mercury	X		
Venus		X	
Mars			X
Jupiter			X
Saturn	X		
Rahu		X	
Ketu		X	
Totals	3	5	2

These exercises of identifying the polarities, elements, and qualities of each planet will help train your mind to look for patterns in a chart. You will find that you get an initial, first glance feel for the chart which will assist you as you progress to more advanced interpretation skills.

In the following lesson we will be studying the key indications of the signs based on the fundamental logic that we've discussed in this lesson.