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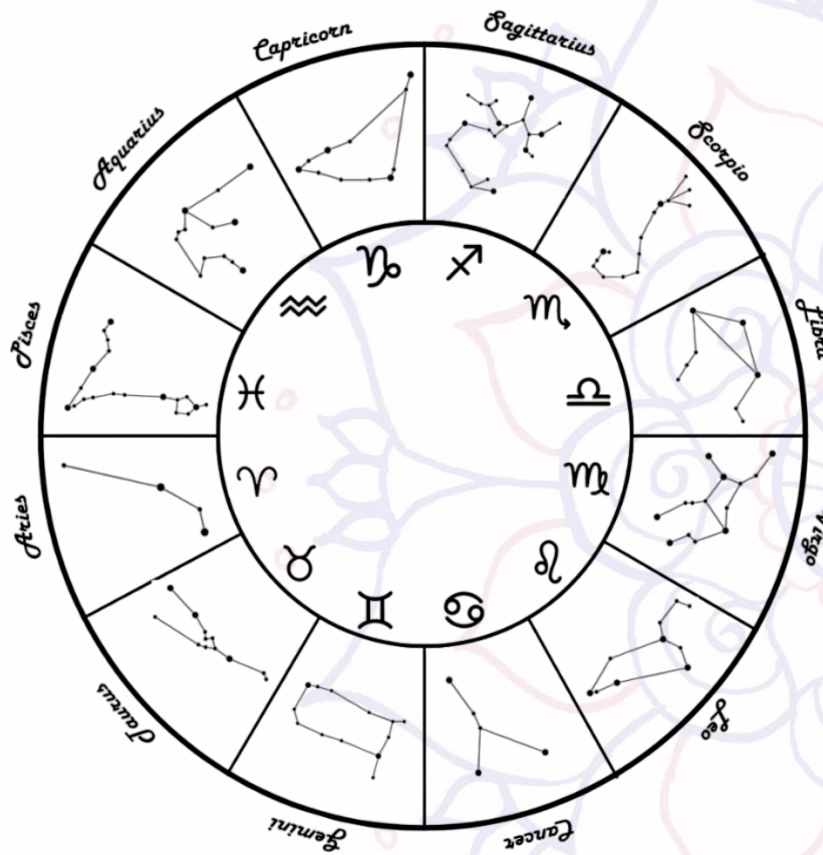


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BASIC ASTROLOGY HANDBOOK



INTRODUCTION

This handbook contains the very basics to help you navigate astrology.

It displays the fundamental building blocks of astrology in a practical a summarized way, providing simple keywords to allow you make easy associations. It also contains a basic introduction to Western astrology and simple instructions on how to interconnect all that information.

This handbook is not meant to instruct you into becoming a professional astrologer. It most certainly does not contain sufficient information for that purpose. We encourage you deepen your knowledge! This is just a starting point.

This material is offered free of charge at www.sophiarctus.com. Do not pay any amount for it!

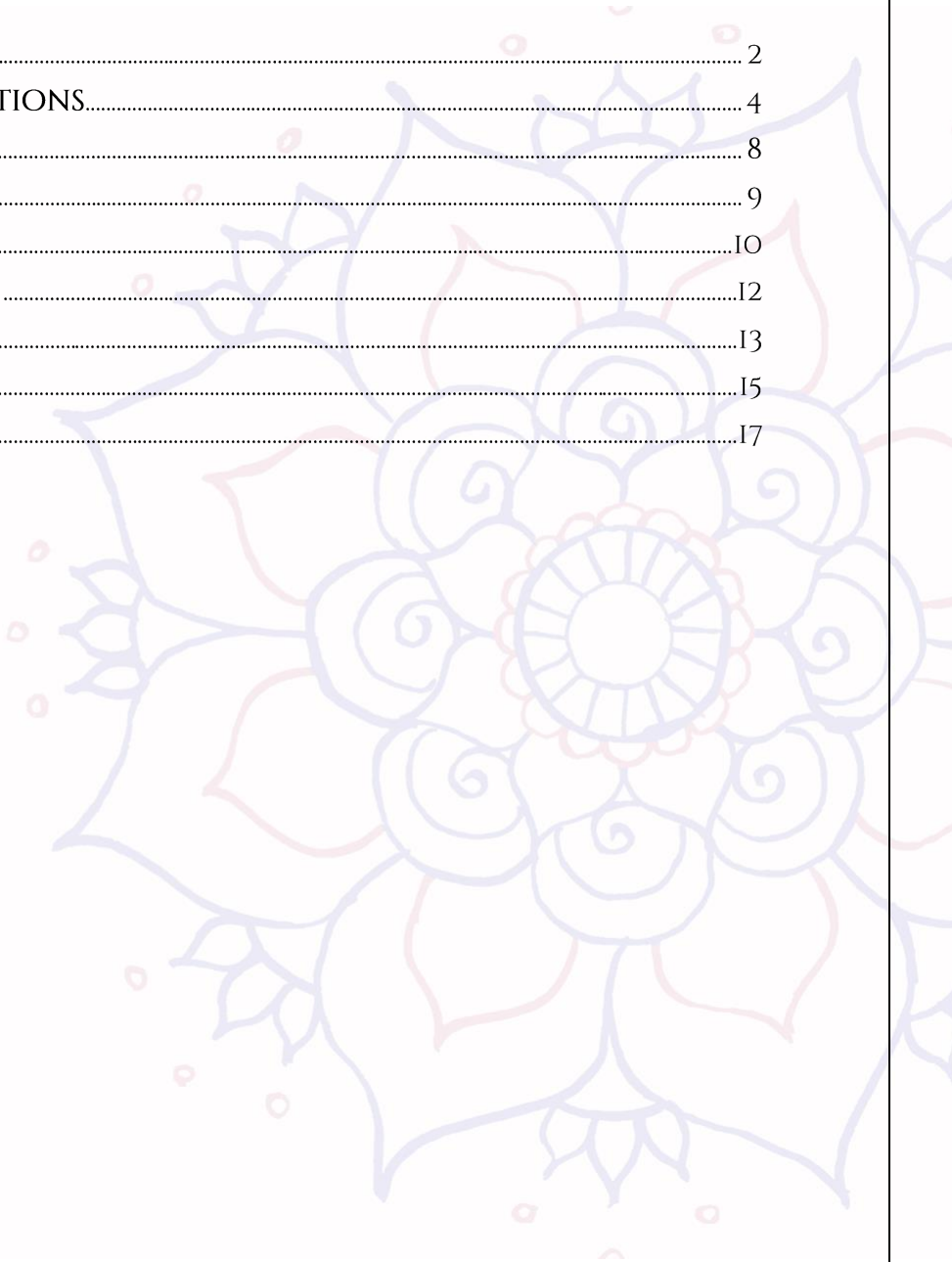
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We hope you have fun learning about astrology and about yourself!



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INTERPRETATION INSTRUCTIONS

This handbook contains the very basics to help you navigate astrology. You can use it to learn about yourself through your birth chart, and to follow the transits as they happen in the sky and in relation to your chart.

The **birth chart** is a 2D representation of where the planets were in the sky (signs) at the moment of your birth, and their interaction (aspects) from the point of view of the specific location where you were born. It depicts the complex patterning of your unique energy signature, which informs how you tend to respond to situations, your likes and dislikes, where you feel safe and unsafe, where your deeper wounds are, what are your inner callings, and many other aspects of the human experience.

Transits show where the planets are in the current sky (signs), how they interact (aspects) with each other and with the position they were at the moment of your birth.

There are several astrology systems, which we're not going to elaborate here. Just for your reference, we're using the Western system as opposed to the Vedic, Chinese and Mayan systems.

The building blocks of Western astrology are the elements, modes, planets, signs, houses, and aspects.

The **elements** are the background energy that color all layers of experience. All nature is composed by the four elements, so they also inform our human experience. The excess, lack or balance of elements in your chart will significantly impact how your experience life. The elements are: fire, air, earth, and water.

The **modes** are a grouping of signs which further inform how each sign expresses their energy and reacts to circumstances. Each mode is composed by one sign of each element. The modes are: cardinal, fixed, and mutable.

The **planets** represent inner dimensions of experience. This means that each planet's energy signature is associated to certain aspects of our experience. For example, simply put, Mars ♂ is related to our ability to take action whereas Venus ♀ relates to our ability to give and receive love.

When we say "planets," we're actually referring to all celestial bodies of the solar system. The Sun ☉ and the Moon ☾ are obviously not actual planets, but we refer to them like this



for simplification purposes. The main planets are: Sun ☉, Moon ☾, Mercury ☿, Venus ♀, Mars ♂, Jupiter ♃, Saturn ♄, Chiron ⅈ, Uranus ♅, Neptune ♆, and Pluto ♇ or ♇.

The longer a planet takes to revolve around another celestial body (orbit), mainly the Sun ☉, the more powerful it is. Naturally, the Moon's orbit is around Earth, and what is depicted as the Sun's orbit is the time *Earth* takes to revolve around the Sun.

When a planet appears to run backwards from our perspective on Earth, it's in a **retrograde** ♁ motion.



Image credit: www.starwalk.space

If you remember, the slower the planet the stronger is its energy. So, when the planets appear to stop in the sky either to move back or forward they're **stationary** ♁, and they're the strongest bodies in the sky. This can cause some discomfort because its energy is so strong that it can be too much.

A common example is when Mercury ☿ goes retrograde that we're advised to pay more attention to any contracts we want to sign because our mind can be scattered with the excessive energy, and to care for our electronics as the energy can be too much and they can break down.

A retrograde planet is inviting revisitation, revision and restructuring the area of life (house) where they're placed. In your natal chart, it means this kind of mindset is easier for you, whereas in transits it means the retrograde period is a window of opportunity when this is encouraged.

As important as the planets, there are **calculated points**, which are vortexes of energy that significantly inform our inner and outer experiences. The main calculated points are: Ascendant AC, Midheaven MC, North Node ♁, and South Node ♁. Each planet has a North and South Node but in this handbook we're referring to the Nodes of the Moon ☾.

In this handbook we present only the main planets and calculated points. The interrelation between all these elements is complex enough, so we don't want to overwhelm you



with excessive information. However, know that there are also asteroids and dwarf planets that are part of our solar system's ecosystem, and there are other calculated points that interact with the elements of the birth chart. The same goes for the aspects.

The **signs** are primary energy patterns that inform specific qualities of experience. This means that depending on the planets' placement in a certain sign you'll experience life in different ways. For example, simply put, Mars ♂ placed in Aquarius ♒ brings out a lot of impulsivity and rebelliousness, whereas the same Mars ♂ in Libra ♎ brings forth calculated action or indecisiveness. The signs are: Aries ♈, Taurus ♉, Gemini ♊, Cancer ♋, Leo ♌, Virgo ♍, Libra ♎, Scorpio ♏, Sagittarius ♐, Capricorn ♑ or ♒, Aquarius ♒, and Pisces ♓.

Each sign is ruled by one or more planet, which also influence how we experience life and how each astrological building block interacts with the others.

The **houses** represent the fields of experience where the inner energies will be most easily and directly expressed. For example, simply put, with Capricorn ♑ in the Second House you may be very conservative with how you make and spend your money, whereas with Sagittarius ♐ in the Second House you may be willing to take a lot of risk and even be inclined to gambling. The houses are ruled by signs, which adds another dimension to their interpretation. There are twelve houses in our birth chart.

The **aspects** represent the dynamics of experience and how the energies within the individual interact; that is, how easy-flowing or difficult are these interactions. In simple terms, they show how the planets and calculated points interact through the angle they make between each other within the 360 degrees of the chart wheel. The main aspects are: conjunction ☌, opposition ☍, square ☐, trine ☌, and sextile ✳.

Now, to explain **how to interconnect all that information** we'll count on the wisdom of the master astrologer Stephen Arroyo:

A certain dimension of experience, indicated by a *planet*, will be colored by the *sign* where it is placed in the chart.

This combination results in a specific urge towards self-expression and in a particular need that requires fulfillment.

This dimension of life will be confronted in the field of experience indicated by the *house* position of said planet-sign combination.



Any *aspects* to that planet reveal how easy or difficult it is for the person to express that urge or fulfill that need.

All those interactions are further colored by the background energy of the *elements*.

For example, simply put, a person with the Sun ☉ in Gemini ♊ will tend to easily express themselves verbally, have a quick mind, and easy sociability. If the Sun ☉ is in the Tenth House, they may as well be drawn to work with communication or acting. However, if the Sun ☉ is square ☐ to Saturn ♄ they may feel judged when speaking and thus refrain entirely from doing so, and it may take longer to experience success in their professional life. Gemini ♊ is ruled by Mercury ☿, so we also look at Mercury's placement and interactions to reach a 'conclusion' on how the person tends to experience this dimension of life.

Everything is interconnected in our birth chart, so as a starting point we'd suggest that you play with the interactions between the Sun ☉, the Moon ☾ and the Ascendant AC. Remember to look at their respective rulers as well.

For transits, the planets' placement (signs) and interactions (aspects) are the only information you need. However, when looking at transits in relation to your natal chart, you'll want to include all the building blocks in your interpretation.

If you're interested in going deeper, you can start studying the classic "Chart Interpretation Handbook Guidelines for Understanding the Essentials of the Birth Chart" by Stephen Arroyo, which is where we based these instructions. Take your time and go as deep as you like.

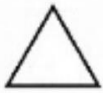
From here on, we'll present the meaning of each of the mentioned building blocks with simple keywords and phrases to help you get acquainted with them. Have fun!



THE ELEMENTS

FIRE action, aggression, creativity masculine - yang ☰

Signs: Aries ♈, Leo ♌, Sagittarius ♐



Expression: intense, enthusiastic, daring, competitive, dramatic, impulsive, brave, aggressive, motivated, spontaneous, self-confident, independent, energetic, idealistic, optimistic

Missing fire: pessimistic, apathetic, uninvolved, unmotivated

AIR thought, movement, agility masculine - yang ☴

Signs: Gemini ♊, Libra ♎, Aquarius ♒

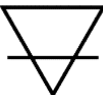


Expression: intellectual, analytic, detached, sociable, questioning, observant, inventive, cooperative, witty, objective, agile, engaging

Missing air: subjective, unaware of bias, unsociable, uncommunicative

EARTH embodiment, stability, structure feminine - yin ☷

Signs: Taurus ♉, Virgo ♍, Capricorn ♑ or ♎

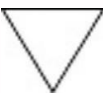


Expression: efficient, realistic, organized, judgmental, resourceful, pragmatic, security-minded, loyal, persistent, resilient, rigid, self-sufficient

Missing earth: impractical, unproductive, ungrounded, disorganized

WATER emotions, adaptability, intuition feminine - yin ☵

Signs: Cancer ♋, Scorpio ♏, Pisces ♓



Expression: sensitive, empathic, passive, protective, sentimental, intuitive, receptive, secretive, romantic, imaginative, responsive, mysterious, nurturing, personal

Missing water: controlling, impersonal, closed, sober



THE MODES



CARDINAL Aries ♈, Cancer ♋, Libra ♎, Capricorn ♑ or ♐ begins season

Expression: initiating, energetic, ambitious, active, opportunistic, forward, restless, driven, intrepid

Missing cardinal: lack of initiative, lack of leadership, timidity



FIXED Taurus ♉, Leo ♌, Scorpio ♏, Aquarius ♒ mid-season

Expression: stabilizing, stubborn, strong-willed, purposeful, inflexible, certain, persistent, powerful, achiever

Missing fixed: inconsistent, unreliable, capricious



MUTABLE Gemini ♊, Virgo ♍, Sagittarius ♐, Pisces ♓ ends season

Expression: changeable, versatile, wandering, adaptable, agile, go-with-the-flow, agreeable, indecisive

Missing mutable: rigid, unadaptable, inflexible



MAIN PLANETS



SUN

Orbit: 365 days

Expression: entry point of the divine consciousness into the body, sense of self, where one shines and best expresses their creativity, life force animating the body and soul

Keyword: self

Rules: Leo ♌



MOON

Orbit: 28 days

Expression: emotions, how one feels safe, how one feels nurtured, receptivity, conditioning, projection on others, memory

Keyword: emotions

Rules: Cancer ♋



MERCURY

Orbit: 88 days

Expression: linear and analytic thinking, ability to reason, communication, verbalization, relationship to learning processes

Keyword: communication

Rules: Gemini ♊ and Virgo ♍



VENUS

Orbit: 225 days

Expression: how one gives and receives love, ability to relate to others, ability to receive, appreciation of beauty, feminine aspect of self

Keywords: love and money

Rules: Taurus ♉ and Libra ♎



MARS

Orbit: 1.9 years

Expression: ability to act, ability to assert oneself, physical vitality, sexuality, will, drive, aggression, masculine aspect of self

Keyword: action

Rules: Aries ♈ and Scorpio ♏



JUPITER

Orbit: 11.9 years

Expression: expansion, higher ideals, spirituality, sense of justice, search for meaning and purpose, faith, luck

Keyword: expansion

Rules: Sagittarius ♐ and Pisces ♓



MAIN PLANETS

(continued)



SATURN

Orbit: 29.5 years

Expression: crystallizer of reality, form and discipline, judgment, endurance, outer expression of acquired inner power, relationship with authority and limits, fear

Keyword: consistent effort

Rules: Capricorn ♄ or ♅ and Aquarius ♒



CHIRON

Orbit: 50.7 years

Expression: our deepest wounds, transformation of pain and suffering into healing and growth, where we feel 'not whole'

Keyword: healing

Rules: -



URANUS

Orbit: 84 years

Expression: authenticity, non-linear intelligence, intuition, freedom, sudden change, unpredictability, rebellion, radicalism

Keyword: revolution

Rules: Aquarius ♒



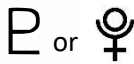
NEPTUNE

Orbit: 165 years

Expression: boundlessness, connection to Source, compassion, empathy, humanitarianism, dreams, visions, imagination, intuition, escapism, victimhood, manipulation, illusion, delusion, confusion

Keyword: transcendence

Rules: Pisces ♃



PLUTO

Orbit: 248 years

Expression: transformation, transmutation, deep fear and trauma arising to be addressed, shadows, debt and taxes, unrevealed potentials, sexuality, exercise of power, magic

Keyword: power

Rules: Scorpio ♏



MAIN CALCULATED POINTS

AC_{or} ASC

ASCENDANT

One's ego, outer personality, how one is perceived by others, what motivates the person

MC

MIDHEAVEN

Social standing, reputation, career abilities or tendencies, goals, what one stands for



NORTH NODE

The higher spiritual calling, which requires you to get out of the comfort zone



SOUTH NODE

What is comfortable and comes naturally to you, past-life achievements and unresolved energy



THE SIGNS



ARIES

Expression: self-focused, high vitality, energetic, starter, leader, direct, impulsive, willful, competitive, impatient, quick to anger, demanding, combative

Ruler: Mars ♂



TAURUS

Expression: stable, productive, reliable, sensual, fertile, embodied, possessive, stubborn, passive, pleasure-seeker, values security

Ruler: Venus ♀



GEMINI

Expression: communicative, quick-minded, changeable, curious, likes to learn, indecisive, unfocused, prone to gossip

Ruler: Mercury ♿



CANCER

Expression: nurturing, emphatic, emotional, good memory, caring, sentimental, sensitive, maternal, insecure, fearful, moody, attached to the past

Ruler: Moon ☾



LEO

Expression: creative, likes the spotlight, leader, generous, proud, brave, self-love, approval-seeker, insensitive to others

Ruler: Sun ☼



VIRGO

Expression: practical, problem-solver, clear mind, systematic, attuned to the body, perfectionist, in service, overly critical, narrow-minded

Ruler: Mercury ♿



THE SIGNS

(continued)



LIBRA

Expression: diplomatic, seeks balance, sense of beauty, sense of justice, indecisive, co-dependent

Ruler: Venus ♀



SCORPIO

Expression: passionate, deep feelings, secretive, vindictive, manipulative, controlling

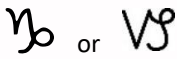
Rulers: Pluto ♇ or ♆ and Mars ♂



SAGITTARIUS

Expression: idealistic, cheerful, optimist, generous, free-spirited, explorer, seeks wisdom, impatient, self-righteous

Ruler: Jupiter ♃



CAPRICORN

Expression: leader, responsible, proud, ambitious, achiever, rigid, cautious, depressive, controlling, conservative

Ruler: Saturn ♄



AQUARIUS

Expression: intelligent, non-linear, innovative, authentic, humanitarian, fraternal, progressive, rebellious, radical, emotionally detached

Rulers: Uranus ♅ and Saturn ♄



PISCES

Expression: sensitive, intuitive, adaptable, compassionate, nebulous, martyrdom, victimhood, emotionally manipulative

Ruler: Neptune ♆ and Jupiter ♃



THE HOUSES

I Self/identity, how others see us, shape of the physical body, health and vitality, how we assert ourselves, how we take action
Keywords: the individual personality **Ruled by:** Aries ♈

2 Personal values, how we produce income, how we receive, relationship to one's own body
Keywords: values and possessions **Ruled by:** Taurus ♉

3 Communication, how we think and process information, early learning, short trips, siblings
Keywords: communication and siblings **Ruled by:** Gemini ♊

4 Home, family dynamics, roots, ancestry, conditioning, early childhood imprints
Keywords: roots and origins **Ruled by:** Cancer ♋

5 Creative and erotic expression, experiences of pleasure, romance, our children and relationship with children in general, our creations
Keywords: pleasure and creativity **Ruled by:** Leo ♌

6 Physical health, self-care, being in service, daily work, coworkers, pets
Keywords: routine and pets **Ruled by:** Virgo ♍



THE HOUSES

(continued)

7 Significant one-on-one relationships, open enemies, marriage, business partnerships, our projections in others
Keywords: major relationships **Ruled by:** Libra ♎

8 Personal transformation process, psychic experiences, shadow, deepest intimacy, sexuality, taboo, shared resources, material loss, taxes
Keywords: taboos, sexuality and shared resources **Ruled by:** Scorpio ♏

9 Expansion of consciousness, higher education, spirituality, broadening the world view, long-distance travel
Keywords: higher education and far countries **Ruled by:** Sagittarius ♐


10 Social position, career, public role, reputation, relationship with authority figures
Keywords: occupation and status in society **Ruled by:** Capricorn ♑ or ♒


11 Close friends, groups and networks, being in service to the community, revolutionary ideas, relationship with technology
Keywords: Friends, community and technology **Ruled by:** Aquarius ♒


12 What we don't see in ourselves that is evident to others, hospitals, prison, retreats, energy from past lives
Keywords: blind spot **Ruled by:** Pisces ♓





MAIN ASPECTS

	The planets walk hand-in-hand, their energy blends favorably, propensity to act
CONJUNCTION	Degree: 0° Nature: -

	Tension between the planets requiring balance, projection, lack of objectivity
OPPOSITION	Degree: 180° Nature: Saturn ♄

	Open conflict between the planets, release of energy through action
SQUARE	Degree: 90° Nature: Mars ♂

	Expansion and easy flow of energy between the planets
TRINE	Degree: 120° Nature: Jupiter ♃

	Cooperative action between the planets, compromise
SEXTILE	Degree: 60° Nature: Venus ♀
