

# ASTROLOGY WITHOUT TEARS – Back to Basics

This is the article that I probably should have written first – a basic ‘Astrology 101’ guide....

## What Is Astrology?

Astrology (which was first implemented by the Babylonians around 5,000 years ago) is the study of the planets, luminaries and other celestial objects in order to understand the psychological make-up of a person. A Natal Chart is a ‘map’ of the heavens at the time a person was born.

Nothing is predetermined, but we all have certain tendencies – Astrology is studied in order to work on the positive aspects of a person’s character, and minimise the negative. It can also be used to determine when is the best time for certain events – for example, Mercury retrograde would not be the best time for travelling or for important meetings!

## The Big Three – Sun, Ascendant and Moon

So many times people have asked me what my ‘star sign’ is – I look quizzically at them and say ‘which star?’, which usually throws them... The correct terminology is Sun Sign, so my Sun is in Libra. Also, you can’t be on the ‘cusp’ of two signs – since the Sun travels into each sign on a different day and time every year, it will either be in one sign or another. The placement of your Sun will determine where you ‘shine’ in life, who you really are.

All Astrologers have their own ideas as to what the most important part of a birth chart is. Personally, I think it’s fun guessing what a person’s Ascendant is. The Ascendant (also called the Rising Sign) is the sign that was on the horizon when you were born. It indicates your outer personality, the side of yourself that you show the world. Most people don’t suspect I have Sun in Libra, but they usually guess the Gemini Ascendant...

Aleister Crowley, in his book *Magick Without Tears* (yes, this series of articles is named in homage to this great Astrologer!) states that when studying Astrology, we should ‘run around like a demented rabbit’, trying to guess as many rising signs as possible, and then adds:

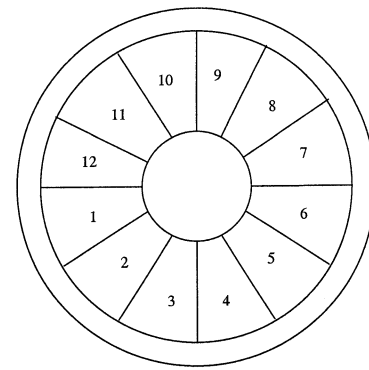
*‘...on the few occasions where I have erred there has been a good astrological reason for it. Eg, I might plump for Pisces rising when it was actually Capricornus; but in that case Saturn would have been afflicted by being in Cancer, with bad aspects from Venus and the Moon, thus taking away all his rugged, male, laborious qualities, and in the Ascendant might have been Jupiter, suggesting many of the qualities of Pisces and so forth.’*

Another important placement in the chart is where your Moon is placed. This indicates how you deal with emotional situations, and how you show compassion for others. Balancing these three points in your chart in a positive way can sometimes be a challenge, but will bring inner rewards, peace and harmony.

## The Houses

I have mentioned the Houses in a previous article, but perhaps did not fully explain what I meant by them. As there are 12 signs in the zodiac, there are 12 houses in a natal chart – the entire chart adding up to 360°. The size of each house depends on the longitude and latitude of where you born, but the illustration gives a basic overview.

- 1<sup>st</sup> House: How you are seen, your outward personality and appearance.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> House: Gifts, skills and talents, how you earn money, your value systems, self confidence and self esteem.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> House: Communication with others, siblings, local travel.
- 4<sup>th</sup> House: Home and family, the mother, nurturing and caring.
- 5<sup>th</sup> House: Creativity, small groups, romance, children.
- 6<sup>th</sup> House: Daily work routine, co-workers, health, fitness.



7<sup>th</sup> House: Relationships and partnerships, open enemies.

8<sup>th</sup> House: Shared resources, wills, inheritances, birth, death and rebirth, transformation, intimate sexual relationships.

9<sup>th</sup> House: Higher education and learning, foreign lands, long distance travel, philosophy and wisdom.

10<sup>th</sup> House: Career, ambition, prestige, social standing in the community.

11<sup>th</sup> House: Friends, large groups or clubs, fighting for a cause, the ‘underdog’, future dreams and goals.

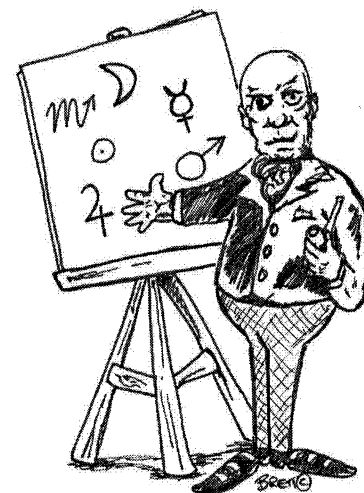
12<sup>th</sup> House: Spirituality, psychic ability, victimisation, escapism, the martyr, what you are afraid of, what is hidden and repressed.

Depending on the time you were born, a particular sign will end up on the cusp of each house. So you may have a Sagittarius Ascendant (which is the same as having Sagittarius on the first house cusp), so you would be likely to have Capricorn on the second, Aquarius on the third, etc. (unless you have interceptions and duplications ... but that’s another story!). This gives a different interpretation of each house, mixing the energies of the sign on the cusp and the house itself.

## Important Transits

A ‘transit’ occurs when a planet’s motion in the sky coincides with a planet or point in your natal chart, either in the same place or in ‘aspect’ (within a set number of degrees). Important transits occur around the age of 29 (Saturn Return – the ‘crossroads’), 42 (Uranus Opposition – also known as the ‘mid-life crisis’), 58 (second Saturn Return) and every 18.6 years with the return of the North Node. All these transits will be discussed in future articles.

I hope this brief article has given beginners an overview of the art/science/craft of Astrology ... and I don’t want to hear anyone saying ‘star sign’ ever again!!!



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thanks to Val Juncken and Uncle Crowley – brilliant Astrologers!  
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