



AN
INTRODUCTION TO
ASTROLOGY
FOR BEGINNERS

By Isabella Hilty

GETTING STARTED



Astrology and your birth chart is all about you. It helps you reflect on your strengths, your weaknesses, and really any character trait you could think of. It is a powerful tool that aids you in gaining a deeper understanding of yourself.

Some people say they dislike astrology because it's not a "real" science, but we as humans have been studying the stars for a long time now. Everything in the universe boils down to just some small particles of energy. We're all just some energy, the planets are all just some energy, and although energy is never created or destroyed, it does move around from place to place.

So, who are we to say that the energy of something as massive as a planet that's just chilling somewhere out there in the giant inexplicable thing we call space, isn't affecting us in some manner?



In this work I will introduce you to the basic concepts of astrology and how to interpret your natal chart. If you are skeptical, give it a try and see! After all, you know yourself best so you'll be able to see right away how it works in real life.

Now, you've probably already gotten a taste of astrology from reading your horoscope in a magazine or online. These are based on your Sun sign, which is determined by the month and day you were born. The Sun sign is the essence of you, and is usually pretty accurate, but did you know you have a sign for each one of the planets, and not just the Sun?

For example, my Sun is in Gemini, but my Moon is in Cancer. Finding out what your placements are in each of the other planets gives you a much more in-depth look at yourself than just your Sun sign gives.

Even so, no one has figured out how astrology works the way it does in the four thousand or so years its been around, not even the Babylonians who invented it! There is no explanation. The only proof lies in the results, which, as they are not tangible, tend to be arguable as to whether or not they are "real." But I digress, as that is not what we are here to discuss.

If you've made it this far, I assume you are at least curious enough to find out the answer for yourself. So let's dive in.

THE FOUR COMPONENTS

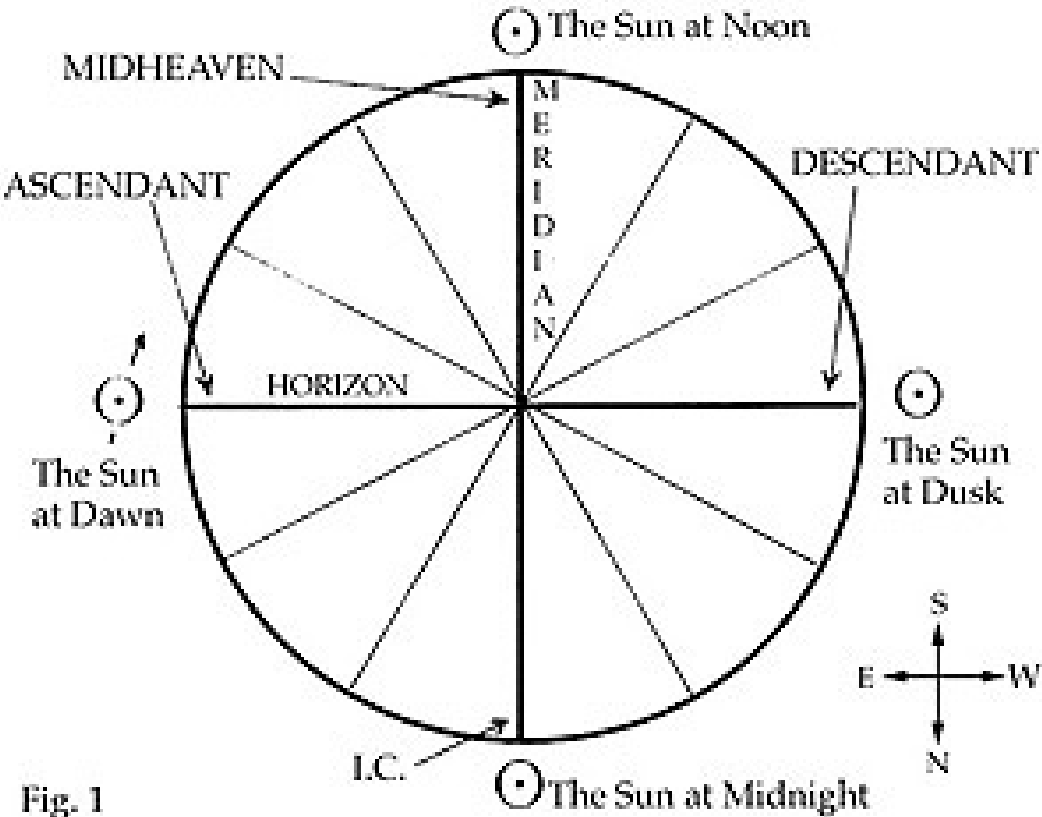


Fig. 1

The four essential components in a natal chart consist of the...

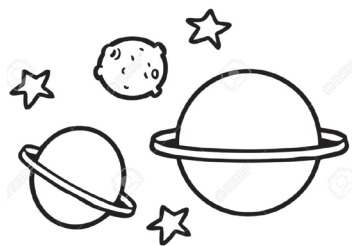
- 1. twelve signs of the zodiac
- 2. ten planets
- 3. twelve houses
- 4. aspects

Most are already familiar with the twelve signs of the zodiac, which are also the names of the constellations. Each sign is 30 degrees of a 360 degree circle. Also note in the chart that the directions are reversed, with the south above and the north below, east at the left and west at the right. This is simply

because the Sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and the chart depicts the Sun's path as it appears from Earth (seen as the center point of the chart). Each of the 30 degree segments are divided into 60 minutes (60') and 60 seconds (60"). So one sign is equal to 30 degrees, one degree is equal to 60 minutes, and one minute is equal to 60 seconds.

The annual equinox or solstice that signals the start of each season coincides with the Sun's entrance into one of four signs: Aries (spring equinox), Cancer (summer solstice), Libra (autumn equinox), and Capricorn (winter solstice).

THE TWELVE ZODIAC SIGNS



Each of the 12 signs are associated with certain characteristics that describe traits of someones personality. People who are born under the same sun sign, for example, share the same traits. The extent to which two people share these traits depends on the other influences in each of their own charts.

The nature of each sign is desccribed by their **element** and **modality**. The elements are water, earth, fire, and air. The modalities, or qualities, are cardinal, fixed, and mutable.

Water Signs

Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces
These signs are emotional and intuitive

Cardinal Signs

Aries, Cancer, Libra, Capricorn
These signs are self-starters

Air Signs

Gemini, Libra, Aquarius
These signs are intellectual and people-oriented

Fixed Signs

Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, Aquarius
These signs are determined

Earth Signs

Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn
These signs are practical and realistic

Mutable Signs

Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, Pisces
These signs are easygoing

Fire Signs

Aries, Leo, Sagittarius
These signs are outgoing and action-oriented



THE TEN PLANETS

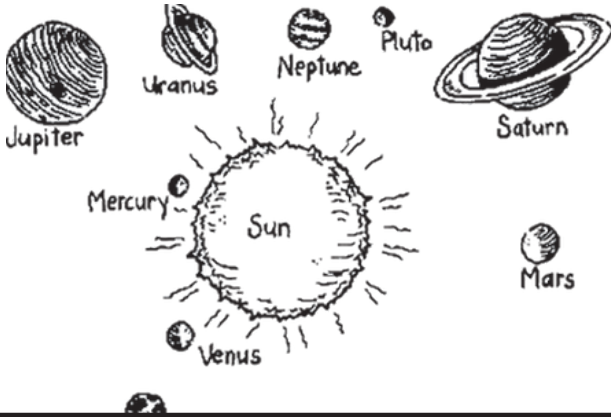


Each planet in your chart is in a sign, like your Sun is. The characteristic or energy of each planet is expressed according to the sign it's in.

For example, the planet of Mercury is associated with communication in any form. Someone with their Mercury in Leo would be likely to be more pf a dynamic speaker, while someone with their Mercury in Libra would be likely to have the ability to comfort others and put them at ease, and so on for each sign and planet combination.

Each of the planets also has a sign that the planet "rules," basically meaning the sign and planet are very compatible with each other and have similar meanings or characteristics. This is called **ruledship**.

Mercury and Venus each have 2 rulers, as there are 12 signs but only 10 planets. Before the outer planets were discovered, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn used to rule 2 signs as well, shown in parantheses. These are called their traditional rulers. Some astrologists use both traditional and modern rulers when reading charts, but it is up to you which you choose to use.



Planet	Rulership
☉ Sun	♌ Leo
☾ Moon	♋ Cancer
☿ Mercury	♊ Gemini ♍ Virgo
♀ Venus	♉ Taurus ♎ Libra
♂ Mars	♈ Aries (♏, Scorpio)
♃ Jupiter	♐ Sagittarius (♓ Pisces)
♄ Saturn	♑ Capricorn (♒ Aquarius)
♅ Uranus	♒ Aquarius
♆ Neptune	♓ Pisces
♇ Pluto	♏, Scorpio

THE TWELVE HOUSES



The 12 houses are the numbers listed 1-12 on the innermost circle of the chart shown on the right and on page 3. Each house is associated with a specific area or areas of life, such as career, travel, money, and so on. Also shown on page 3 are each of the four angular house cusps, known as **the angles**. The angles symbolize important areas of life that could be a major focus for people.

These include:

- 1. the Ascendant (first house cusp)
- 2. the Descendant (seventh house cusp)
- 3. the Midheaven, or MC (tenth house cusp)
- 4. the *Imum Coeli*, or IC (fourth house cusp)

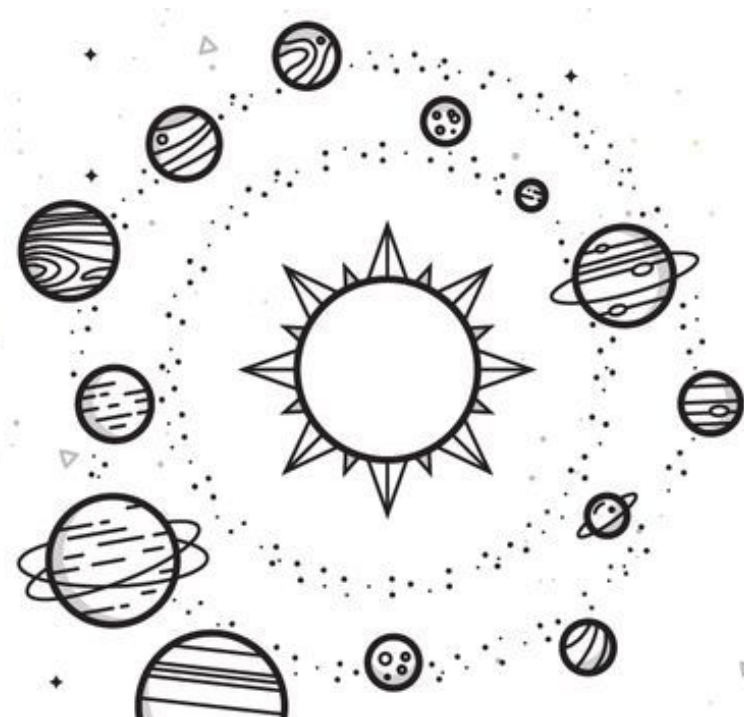
The Ascendant represents you as an individual, and is often the first impression you make on others, or the face you show

the world. It may sound similar to what the Sun represents, but the Sun is more internal whereas the Ascendant is the external, outward manifestation of your personality.

The Descendant, the point opposite the Ascendant, represents close relationships. This could be romantic partners, business partners, or long term friends. It's how you interact with others, and the qualities you look for in people.

The Midheaven or MC signifies everything having to do with your career. It can tell you about what you want to be known for, what makes you feel important, etc.

The *Imum Coeli* or IC, the point opposite the MC, has to do with home and family, your physical home environment, and your roots.



(The 12 houses and the areas they represent are shown above)

ASPECTS



Aspects are where things can get a little complicated, but are pretty straightforward once you get the hang of it. Aspects are just angles, like 90 degrees or 120 degrees. They connect the energy of two or more planets, and are vital to getting the most accurate readings from charts as they inform you on how the planets are all interacting together.

So, for example if two of your placements have conflicting traits associated with them, you can look at the aspects to see which one might overpower the other. The more exact the degree is, the stronger that aspect is, but it still counts as one if two planets are within a couple degrees of forming that aspect.

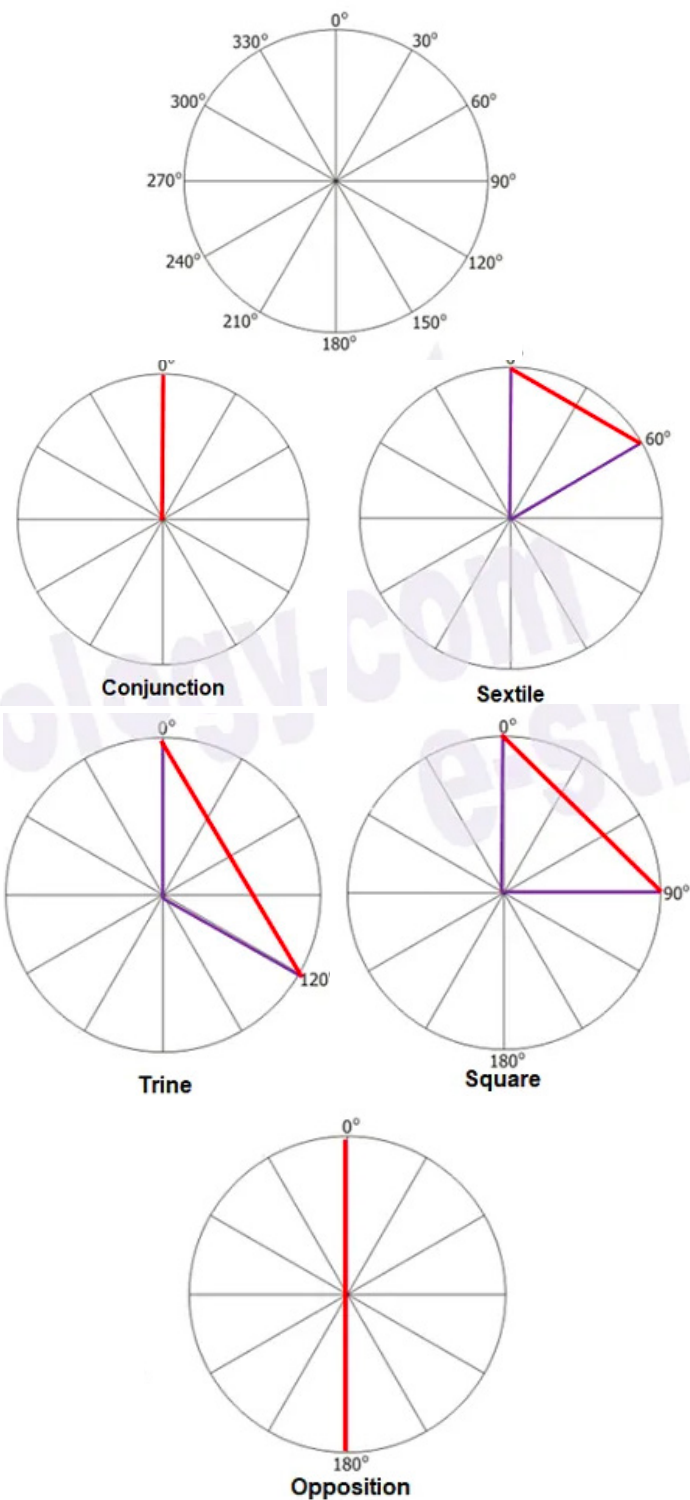
The first is a **conjunction**. If two planets are conjunct they are separated by ~0 degrees. This represents intensity and focus.

The **sextile** aspect is when two planets are ~60 degrees from one another. This represents opportunity.

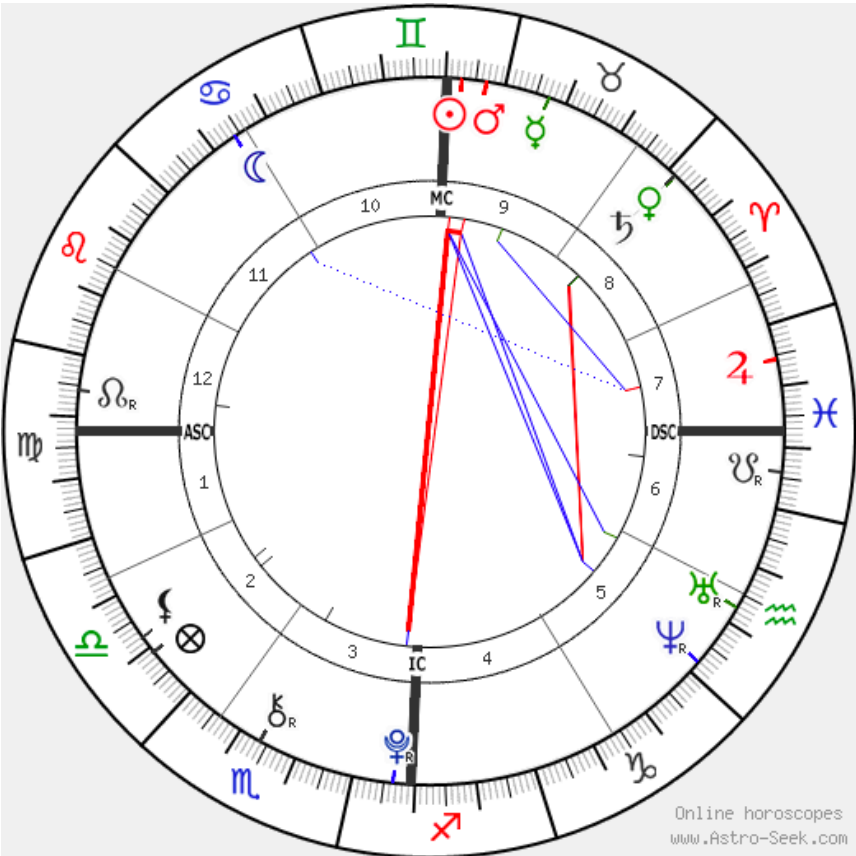
A **trine** aspect is when two planets are ~120 degrees from one another and represents luck or ease.

If two planets are **square** one another, they are ~90 degrees apart, and this signifies some obstacle or action.

Lastly, an **opposition** is when two planets are opposite each other, or ~180 degrees apart. This represents separation or polarity.



INTERPRETING YOUR CHART



Sun	7°11' 9
Moon	15°56' 11
Mercury	22°50' 9
Venus	28°32' 8
Mars	3°14' 9
Jupiter	24°14' 7
Saturn	28°48' 8
Uranus	12°41' 5 R
Neptune	2°00' 5 R
Pluto	6°40' 3 R

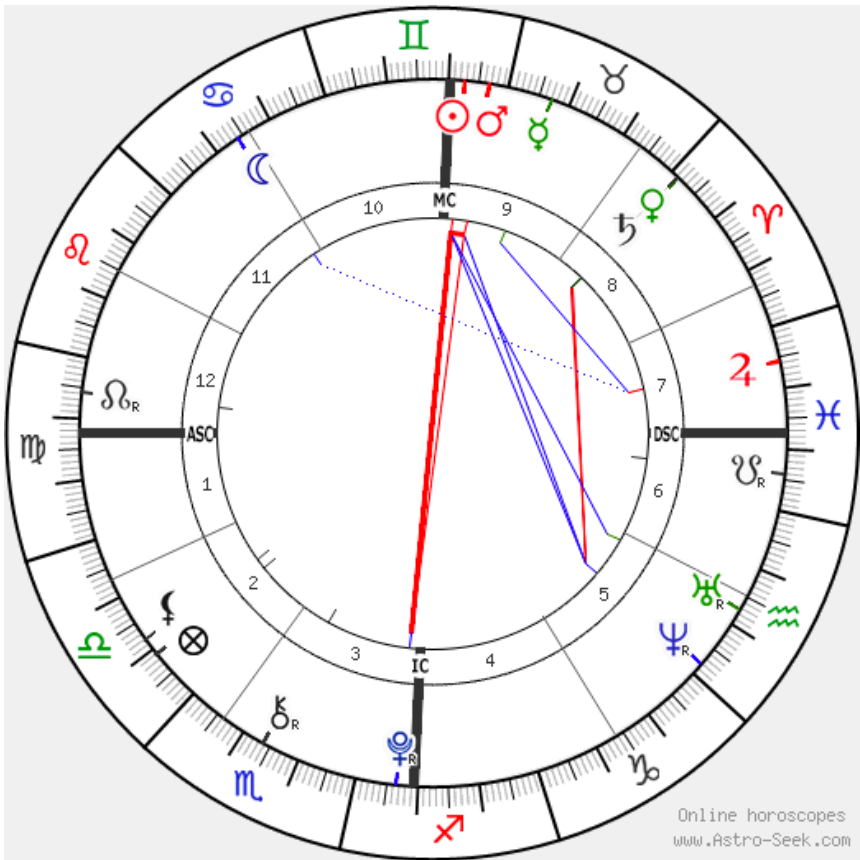
Lastly let us finally practice actually interpreting a natal chart, using mine as an example, as seen above. While it is possible to make them by hand, it is extremely tedious and so it is recommended to let a computer generate yours from one of the many resources available online. The computer can do it much faster, and much more accurately. The site I used for mine is found at astro-seek.com.

To get an accurate chart, you must know your date of birth, the place you were born, and the time you were born as well. This is very important as placements such as your Ascendant change around every ~2 hours.

You will also need these sites or a book to look up the specific meanings for the placements of each of your planets, as it would take many pages of text to be able to put them all in here.

Assuming you are now looking at your chart as I look at mine, we can begin to interpret our birth charts. You can see I was born around midday in May, as my Sun sign is at the middle top in the Gemini segment of the chart. The chart to the right tells you the planet and what sign it is in, the degree placement of it, and what house it is situated in. The four house cusps are shown in the graph as well with the thick lines.

INTERPRETING YOUR CHART



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Saturn	28°48'	8	
Uranus	12°41'	5	R
Neptune	2°00'	5	R
Pluto	6°40'	3	R

The **R** symbol next to a planet means that that planet was in **retrograde** at the time of your birth. Retrograde means backwards motion - the planets are not actually moving backwards but it appears that way when viewing them from Earth. After the retrograde period is done planets will remain stationary and then continue moving forward. The energy from retrograde planets are lack some of their outward expression and are instead more internalized.

In my chart you can see I have an affinity for air signs. This signifies that I'm more likely to be a people-person, and excel at

things having to do with thought or communication. I also have a good deal of mutable signs meaning I'm probably more easy-going than most.

As I said, I won't be adding what every placement for every sign means since they are pretty much a set definition anyways, that you will want to research for yourself. Instead I will walk you through interpreting the current transit of planets with your chart so you can learn to forecast your own horoscopes. The aspects within your own chart have important meanings too, but these are much easier to find than it is to

INTERPRETING YOUR CHART



find out how to connect your own chart with the current transits. In fact, most of the chart generators will tell you the meaning of your chart's aspects when you create your chart.

To find the current positions of the planets, you can use the same website I gave for generating the chart, or simply look up on the internet, "current planet transits." On the right is a chart of the positions of the planets as of me writing this right now.

There is a trick to finding aspects using the positions along with the element, modality, and gender of the signs. Looking at the chart, every sign beside each other is a different gender meaning it goes back and forth. I like to start with Aries since it begins with A, so Aries is masculine and both signs on either side of it are feminine, and the signs beside both of those are masculine, and so on.

The goal is to look for planets whose current position is similar to one of the planet's in your natal chart, within 1-2 degrees. For example, say your Sun was placed in Leo at 9 degrees, and transiting Mars is at 9 degrees in Aquarius.

The trick is to look at both signs. If they are the *same sign*, then it's a *conjunction*. If they have the *same element* then they're forming a *trine*. If they're the *same gender but with different elements* they are *sextile*. If they are the *same modality and same gender* they are in *opposition*. If they are the *same modality but different genders* they are forming a

Sun :	14°16'	Tau
Moon :	29°48'	Vir
Mercury :	13°32'	Tau
Venus :	20°20'	Gem
Mars :	23°53'	Aqu
Jupiter :	27°04'	Cap
Saturn :	1°55'	Aqu
Uranus :	7°02'	Tau
Neptune :	20°18'	Pis
Pluto :	24°58'	Cap R

square with one another. And finally, if they have nothing in common, there is probably no aspect. There are a few uncommon possibilities it could be but we will not cover those in this introduction.

Leo is masculine, fixed, and a fire type sign and Aquarius is masculine, fixed, and and air sign. They have the same gender and the same modality, so transiting Mars is forming an opposition aspect to your Sun. You then can look up the meaning of transiting Mars opposite natal Sun. In this case, this aspect generally predicts some test of strength, meaning this will either be a time of triumph or a time of defeat depending on your actions.

You can see how this enables you to give yourself a much more in-depth horoscope than if you simply tried going off of your Sun sign like most websites or magazines do.

