**Astrology**

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*Not to be confused with* [*astronomy*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astronomy)*, the scientific study of celestial objects.*

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**Astrology** is the study of the movements and relative positions of [celestial objects](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celestial_objects) as a means for [divining](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divination) information about human affairs and terrestrial events.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-1)[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-2)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-3) Astrology has been dated to at least the [2nd millennium BCE](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2nd_millennium_BCE), and has its roots in [calendrical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendrical_calculation) systems used to predict seasonal shifts and to interpret celestial cycles as signs of divine communications.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Koch-Westenholz_1995_Foreword.2C_11-4) Many cultures have attached importance to astronomical events, and some – such as the [Indians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_astrology), [Chinese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_astrology), and [Maya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya_civilization) – developed elaborate systems for predicting terrestrial events from celestial observations. [Western astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_astrology), one of the oldest astrological systems still in use, can trace its roots to 19th–17th century [BCE](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Era) [Mesopotamia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia), from which it spread to [Ancient Greece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece), [Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome), the [Arab world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_world) and eventually [Central](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Europe) and [Western Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Europe). Contemporary Western astrology is often associated with systems of [horoscopes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscope) that purport to explain aspects of a person's [personality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personality) and predict significant events in their lives based on the positions of celestial objects; the majority of professional astrologers rely on such systems.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cosmic-5):83

Throughout most of its history astrology was considered a scholarly tradition and was common in academic circles, often in close relation with [astronomy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astronomy), [alchemy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alchemy), [meteorology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meteorology), and medicine.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kassell-6) It was present in political circles, and is mentioned in various works of literature, from [Dante Alighieri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Alighieri) and [Geoffrey Chaucer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Chaucer) to [William Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare), [Lope de Vega](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lope_de_Vega) and [Calderón de la Barca](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calder%C3%B3n_de_la_Barca).

During the 20th century and following the wide-scale adoption of the [scientific method](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_method), astrology has been challenged successfully on both [theoretical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_theory)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Vishveshwara-7):249;[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-AsquithNSF-8) and [experimental](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experiment)[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carlson-9)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Zarka-10) grounds, and has been shown to have no [scientific](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science) validity[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cosmic-5) or [explanatory power](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Explanatory_power). Astrology thus lost its academic and theoretical standing, and common belief in it has largely declined.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Brit-11) While polling studies have demonstrated that approximately 25% of Americans, Canadians, and Britons say they continue to believe that star and planet positions affect their lives,[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-12) astrology is now recognized as [pseudoscience](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pseudoscience).[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Thagard-13)[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-14)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-SandPSandAstroSoc-15)[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-astrosociety.org-16)[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Hartmann-17)

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[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Marcantonio_Raimondi_-_Two_Women_with_the_Signs_of_Libra_and_Scorpio.jpg)

Marcantonio Raimondi engraving, 15th century

The word [*astrology*](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/astrology) comes from the early [Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) word [*astrologia*](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/astrologia),[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-18) which derives from the [Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek) [ἀστρολογία](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CF%83%CF%84%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%AF%CE%B1)—from [ἄστρον](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%84%CF%83%CF%84%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%BD#Ancient_Greek) *astron* ("star") and [-λογία](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/-%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%AF%CE%B1#Ancient_Greek) *-logia*, ("study of"—"account of the stars"). *Astrologia* later passed into meaning 'star-divination' with [*astronomia*](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/astronomia) used for the scientific term.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-19)

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*Main article:* [*History of astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_astrology)

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*The Zodiac Man* a diagram of a human body and astrological symbols with instructions explaining the importance of astrology from a medical perspective. From a 15th-century Welsh manuscript

Many cultures have attached importance to astronomical events, and the [Indians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_astrology), [Chinese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_astrology), and [Maya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya_civilization) developed elaborate systems for predicting terrestrial events from celestial observations. In the West, astrology most often consists of a system of [horoscopes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscope) purporting to explain aspects of a person's [personality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personality) and predict future events in their life based on the positions of the sun, moon, and other celestial objects at the time of their birth. The majority of professional astrologers rely on such systems.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cosmic-5):83

Astrology has been dated to at least the 2nd millennium [BCE](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BCE), with roots in [calendrical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendrical_calculation) systems used to predict seasonal shifts and to interpret celestial cycles as signs of divine communications.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Koch-Westenholz_1995_Foreword.2C_11-4) A form of astrology was practised in the first dynasty of [Mesopotamia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia) (1950–1651 BCE). Chinese astrology was elaborated in the [Zhou dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhou_dynasty) (1046–256 BCE). [Hellenistic astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_astrology) after 332 BCE mixed [Babylonian astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_astrology) with Egyptian [Decanic astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decans) in [Alexandria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandria), creating [horoscopic astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscopic_astrology). [Alexander the Great's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great) conquest of [Asia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia) allowed astrology to spread to [Ancient Greece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece) and [Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome). In Rome, astrology was associated with '[Chaldean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaldea) wisdom'. After the conquest of Alexandria in the 7th century, astrology was taken up by Islamic scholars, and Hellenistic texts were translated into Arabic and Persian. In the 12th century, Arabic texts were imported to Europe and [translated into Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_translations_of_the_12th_century). Major astronomers including [Tycho Brahe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tycho_Brahe), [Johannes Kepler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Kepler) and [Galileo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galileo) practised as court astrologers. Astrological references appear in literature in the works of poets such as [Dante Alighieri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Alighieri) and [Geoffrey Chaucer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Chaucer), and of playwrights such as [Christopher Marlowe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Marlowe) and [William Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare).

Throughout most of its history, astrology was considered a scholarly tradition. It was accepted in political and academic contexts, and was connected with other studies, such as [astronomy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astronomy), [alchemy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alchemy), [meteorology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meteorology), and medicine.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kassell-6) At the end of the 17th century, new scientific concepts in astronomy and physics (such as [heliocentrism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliocentrism) and [Newtonian mechanics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_mechanics)) called astrology into question. Astrology thus lost its academic and theoretical standing, and common belief in astrology has largely declined.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Brit-11)

**Ancient world[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=3" \o "Edit section: Ancient world)]**

*See also:* [*Babylonian astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_astrology)

Astrology, in its broadest sense, is the search for meaning in the sky.[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-20):2,3 Early evidence for humans making conscious attempts to measure, record, and predict seasonal changes by reference to astronomical cycles, appears as markings on bones and cave walls, which show that [lunar cycles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lunar_cycle) were being noted as early as 25,000 years ago.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Marshack-21):81ff This was a first step towards recording the Moon's influence upon tides and rivers, and towards organising a communal calendar.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Marshack-21) Farmers addressed agricultural needs with increasing knowledge of the [constellations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constellations) that appear in the different seasons—and used the rising of particular star-groups to herald annual floods or seasonal activities.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-22) By the 3rd millennium BCE, civilisations had sophisticated awareness of celestial cycles, and may have oriented temples in alignment with [heliacal risings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliacal_rising) of the stars.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-23)

Scattered evidence suggests that the oldest known astrological references are copies of texts made in the ancient world. The [Venus tablet of Ammisaduqa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_tablet_of_Ammisaduqa) thought to be compiled in [Babylon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon) around 1700 BCE.[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-24) A scroll documenting an early use of [electional astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electional_astrology) is doubtfully ascribed to the reign of the [Sumerian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumer) ruler [Gudea of Lagash](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gudea_of_Lagash) (c. 2144 – 2124 BCE). This describes how the gods revealed to him in a dream the constellations that would be most favourable for the planned construction of a temple.[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-25) However, there is controversy about whether these were genuinely recorded at the time or merely ascribed to ancient rulers by posterity. The oldest undisputed evidence of the use of astrology as an integrated system of knowledge is therefore attributed to the records of the first dynasty of [Mesopotamia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia) (1950–1651 BCE). This astrology had some parallels with [Hellenistic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic) Greek (western) astrology, including the zodiac, a norming point near 9 degrees in Aries, the trine aspect, planetary exaltations, and the dodekatemoria (the twelve divisions of 30 degrees each).[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Rochberg-Halton-26) The Babylonians viewed celestial events as possible signs rather than as causes of physical events.[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Rochberg-Halton-26)

The system of [Chinese astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_astrology) was elaborated during the [Zhou dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhou_dynasty) (1046–256 BCE) and flourished during the [Han Dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Han_Dynasty) (2nd century BCE to 2nd century CE), during which all the familiar elements of traditional Chinese culture – the Yin-Yang philosophy, theory of the five elements, Heaven and Earth, Confucian morality – were brought together to formalise the philosophical principles of Chinese medicine and divination, astrology and alchemy.[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kistemaker-27):3,4

**Ancient objections[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=4" \o "Edit section: Ancient objections)]**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cicero_-_Musei_Capitolini.JPG)

The Roman orator [Cicero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero) objected to astrology

[Cicero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero) stated the twins objection (that with close birth times, personal outcomes can be very different), later developed by [Saint Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Augustine).[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-28) He argued that since the other planets are much more distant from the earth than the moon, they could have only very tiny influence compared to the moon's.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-29) He also argued that if astrology explains everything about a person's fate, then it wrongly ignores the visible effect of inherited ability and parenting, changes in health worked by medicine, or the effects of the weather on people.[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-30)

[Plotinus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plotinus) argued that since the fixed stars are much more distant than the planets, it is laughable to imagine the planets' effect on mankind should depend on their position with respect to the zodiac. He also argues that the interpretation of the moon's conjunction with a planet as good when the moon is full, but bad when the moon is waning, is clearly wrong, as from the moon's point of view, half of her surface is always in sunlight; and from the planet's point of view, waning should be better, as then the planet sees some light from the moon, but when the moon is full to us, it is dark, and therefore bad, on the side facing the planet.[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-31)

[Favorinus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Favorinus) argued that it was absurd to imagine that stars and planets would affect human bodies in the same way as they affect the tides,[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-32) and equally absurd that small motions in the heavens cause large changes in people's fates. [Sextus Empiricus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sextus_Empiricus) argued that it was absurd to link human attributes with myths about the signs of the zodiac.[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-33) [Carneades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carneades) argued that belief in fate denies [free will](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_will) and [morality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morality); that people born at different times can all die in the same accident or battle; and that contrary to uniform influences from the stars, tribes and cultures are all different.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-34)

**Hellenistic Egypt[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=5" \o "Edit section: Hellenistic Egypt)]**

*Main article:* [*Hellenistic astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_astrology)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Quadritpartitum.jpg)

1484 copy of first page of [Ptolemy's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy) *Tetrabiblos*, translated into Latin by [Plato of Tivoli](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato_of_Tivoli)

In 525 BCE, Egypt was conquered by the Persians. The 1st century BCE Egyptian [Dendera Zodiac](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dendera_Zodiac) shares two signs – the Balance and the Scorpion – with Mesopotamian astrology.[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-35)

With the occupation by [Alexander the Great](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great) in 332 BCE, Egypt became [Hellenistic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic). The city of [Alexandria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandria) was founded by Alexander after the conquest, becoming the place where [Babylonian astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_astrology) was mixed with Egyptian [Decanic astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decans) to create [Horoscopic astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscopic_astrology). This contained the Babylonian zodiac with its system of planetary [exaltations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exaltation_(astrology)), the triplicities of the signs and the importance of eclipses. It used the Egyptian concept of dividing the zodiac into thirty-six decans of ten degrees each, with an emphasis on the rising decan, and the Greek system of planetary Gods, sign rulership and [four elements](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_elements).[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-36) 2nd century BCE texts predict positions of planets in zodiac signs at the time of the rising of certain decans, particularly Sothis.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-37) The [astrologer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrologer) and astronomer [Ptolemy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy#Astrology) lived in Alexandria. Ptolemy's work the [*Tetrabiblos*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetrabiblos) formed the basis of Western astrology, and, "...enjoyed almost the authority of a Bible among the astrological writers of a thousand years or more."[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-38)

**Greece and Rome[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=6" \o "Edit section: Greece and Rome)]**

The conquest of [Asia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia) by [Alexander the Great](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great) exposed the Greeks to ideas from [Syria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syria), Babylon, Persia and central Asia.[[39]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-39) Around 280 BCE, [Berossus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berossus), a priest of [Bel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marduk) from Babylon, moved to the Greek island of [Kos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kos), teaching astrology and Babylonian culture.[[40]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-40) By the 1st century BCE, there were two varieties of astrology, one using [horoscopes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscope) to describe the past, present and future; the other, [theurgic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theurgic), emphasising the [soul's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul) ascent to the stars.[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-41) Greek influence played a crucial role in the transmission of astrological theory to [Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome).[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-B32-42)

The first definite reference to astrology in Rome comes from the orator [Cato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cato_the_Elder), who in 160 BCE warned farm overseers against consulting with Chaldeans,[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-43) who were described as Babylonian 'star-gazers'.[[44]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion227-44) Among both Greeks and [Romans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome), Babylonia (also known as [Chaldea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaldea)) became so identified with astrology that 'Chaldean wisdom' became [synonymous](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synonym) with [divination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divination) using planets and stars.[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-45) The 2nd-century Roman poet and satirist [Juvenal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juvenal) complains about the pervasive influence of Chaldeans, saying, "Still more trusted are the Chaldaeans; every word uttered by the astrologer they will believe has come from [Hammon's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jupiter_(mythology)) fountain."[[46]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-46)

One of the first astrologers to bring [Hermetic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermeticism) astrology to Rome was [Thrasyllus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thrasyllus_of_Mendes), astrologer to the [emperor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emperor) [Tiberius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiberius),[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-B32-42) the first emperor to have had a court astrologer,[[47]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-47) though his predecessor [Augustus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus) had used astrology to help legitimise his [Imperial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperialism) rights.[[48]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-48)

**Medieval world[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=7" \o "Edit section: Medieval world)]**

**Hindu[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=8" \o "Edit section: Hindu)]**

The main texts upon which classical Indian astrology is based are early medieval compilations, notably the [*Bṛhat Parāśara Horāśāstra*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%E1%B9%9Bhat_Par%C4%81%C5%9Bara_Hor%C4%81%C5%9B%C4%81stra), and [*Sārāvalī*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C4%81r%C4%81val%C4%AB) by Kalyāṇavarma. The *Horāshastra* is a composite work of 71 chapters, of which the first part (chapters 1–51) dates to the 7th to early 8th centuries and the second part (chapters 52–71) to the later 8th century. The *Sārāvalī* likewise dates to around 800 CE.[[49]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-49) English translations of these texts were published by N.N. Krishna Rau and V.B. Choudhari in 1963 and 1961, respectively.

**Islamic[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=9" \o "Edit section: Islamic)]**

*Main article:* [*Astrology in medieval Islam*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology_in_medieval_Islam)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Translation_of_Albumasar_Venice_1515_De_Magnis_Coniunctionibus.jpg)

[Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) translation of [Abū Maʿshar's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albumasar) *De Magnis Coniunctionibus* ('Of the great [conjunctions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conjunction_(astronomy_and_astrology))'), [Venice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venice), 1515

Astrology was taken up by Islamic scholars[[50]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-50) following the collapse of [Alexandria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandria) to the Arabs in the 7th century, and the founding of the [Abbasid empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbasid_Caliphate) in the 8th. The second Abbasid [caliph](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caliph), [Al Mansur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Mansur) (754–775) founded the city of [Baghdad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baghdad) to act as a centre of learning, and included in its design a library-translation centre known as *Bayt al-Hikma* 'House of Wisdom', which continued to receive development from his heirs and was to provide a major impetus for Arabic-Persian translations of Hellenistic astrological texts. The early translators included [Mashallah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mashallah_ibn_Athari), who helped to elect the time for the foundation of Baghdad,[[51]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Biruni-51) and [Sahl ibn Bishr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sahl_ibn_Bishr), (*a.k.a.* *Zael*), whose texts were directly influential upon later European astrologers such as [Guido Bonatti](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido_Bonatti) in the 13th century, and [William Lilly](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Lilly) in the 17th century.[[52]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-52) Knowledge of Arabic texts started to become imported into Europe during the [Latin translations of the 12th century](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_translations_of_the_12th_century).

**Europe[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=10" \o "Edit section: Europe)]**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_von_San_Vitale_in_Ravenna.jpg)

[Dante Alighieri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Alighieri) meets the Emperor [Justinian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justinian_I) in the Sphere of [Mercury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercury_(planet)), in Canto 5 of the [*Paradiso*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradiso_(Dante))

*See also:* [*Christian views on astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_views_on_astrology)

The first astrological book published in Europe was the *Liber Planetis et Mundi Climatibus* ("Book of the Planets and Regions of the World"), which appeared between 1010 and 1027 AD, and may have been authored by [Gerbert of Aurillac](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerbert_of_Aurillac).[[53]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion44-53) [Ptolemy's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy) second century AD [*Tetrabiblos*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetrabiblos) was translated into Latin by [Plato of Tivoli](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato_Tiburtinus) in 1138.[[53]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion44-53) The [Dominican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominican_order) theologian [Thomas Aquinas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas) followed [Aristotle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle) in proposing that the stars ruled the imperfect 'sublunary' body, while attempting to reconcile astrology with Christianity by stating that God ruled the soul.[[54]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion45-54) The thirteenth century mathematician [Campanus of Novara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campanus_of_Novara) is said to have devised a system of astrological houses that divides the [prime vertical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_vertical) into 'houses' of equal 30° arcs,[[55]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion46-55) though the system was used earlier in the East.[[56]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-56) The thirteenth century [astronomer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astronomer) [Guido Bonatti](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido_Bonatti) wrote a textbook, the *Liber Astronomicus*, a copy of which King [Henry VII of England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_VII_of_England) owned at the end of the fifteenth century.[[55]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion46-55)

In [*Paradiso*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradiso_(Dante)), the final part of the [*Divine Comedy*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_Comedy), the Italian poet [Dante Alighieri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Alighieri) referred "in countless details"[[57]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Durling-57) to the astrological planets, though he adapted traditional astrology to suit his Christian viewpoint,[[57]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Durling-57) for example using astrological thinking in his prophecies of the reform of Christendom.[[58]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-58)

**Medieval objections[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=11" \o "Edit section: Medieval objections)]**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Isidor_von_Sevilla.jpeg)

The medieval theologian [Isidore of Seville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isidore_of_Seville) criticised the predictive part of astrology

In the seventh century, [Isidore of Seville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isidore_of_Seville) argued in his [*Etymologiae*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymologiae) that astronomy described the movements of the heavens, while astrology had two parts: one was scientific, describing the movements of the sun, the moon and the stars, while the other, making predictions, was theologically erroneous.[[59]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wood5-59)[[60]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Isidore-60) In contrast, [John Gower](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Gower) in the fourteenth century defined astrology as essentially limited to the making of predictions.[[59]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wood5-59)[[61]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-61) The influence of the stars was in turn divided into natural astrology, with for example effects on tides and the growth of plants, and judicial astrology, with supposedly predictable effects on people.[[62]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wood6-62)[[63]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Allen148-63) The fourteenth century sceptic [Nicole Oresme](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicole_Oresme) however included astronomy as a part of astrology in his *Livre de divinacions*.[[64]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wood8-64) Oresme argued that current approaches to prediction of events such as plagues, wars, and weather were inappropriate, but that such prediction was a valid field of inquiry. However, he attacked the use of astrology to choose the timing of actions (so-called interrogation and election) as wholly false, and rejected the determination of human action by the stars on grounds of free will.[[64]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wood8-64)[[65]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Coopland-65) The friar Laurens Pignon (c. 1368–1449)[[66]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-66) similarly rejected all forms of divination and determinism, including by the stars, in his 1411 *Contre les Devineurs*.[[67]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-67) This was in opposition to the tradition carried by the Arab astronomer [Albumasar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albumasar) (787-886) whose *Introductorium in Astronomiam* and *De Magnis Coniunctionibus* argued the view that both individual actions and larger scale history are determined by the stars.[[68]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-68)

**Renaissance and Early Modern[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=12" \o "Edit section: Renaissance and Early Modern)]**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Robert_Fludd%27s_An_Astrologer_Casting_a_Horoscope_1617.jpg)

'An Astrologer Casting a Horoscope' from [Robert Fludd's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Fludd) *Utriusque Cosmi Historia*, 1617

[Renaissance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance) scholars commonly practised astrology. [Gerolamo Cardano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerolamo_Cardano) cast the horoscope of king [Edward VI of England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_VI_of_England), while [John Dee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Dee) was the personal astrologer to queen [Elizabeth I of England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_I_of_England). [Catherine de Medici](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherine_de_Medici) paid [Michael Nostradamus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Nostradamus) in 1566 to verify the prediction of the death of her husband, king [Henry II of France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_II_of_France) made by her astrologer Lucus Gauricus. Major astronomers who practised as court astrologers included [Tycho Brahe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tycho_Brahe) in the royal court of Denmark, [Johannes Kepler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Kepler) to the [Habsburgs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habsburgs), [Galileo Galilei](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galileo_Galilei) to the [Medici](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medici), and [Giordano Bruno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giordano_Bruno) who was burnt at the stake for heresy in Rome in 1600.[[69]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion47-69) The distinction between astrology and astronomy was not entirely clear. Advances in astronomy were often motivated by the desire to improve the accuracy of astrology.[[70]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-70)

[Ephemerides](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ephemeris) with complex astrological calculations, and [almanacs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Almanac) interpreting celestial events for use in medicine and for choosing times to plant crops, were popular in Elizabethan England.[[71]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Harkness105-71) In 1597, the English [mathematician](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathematician) and [physician](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physician) [Thomas Hood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Hood_(mathematician)) made a set of paper instruments that used revolving overlays to help students work out relationships between fixed stars or constellations, the midheaven, and the twelve [astrological houses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_(astrology)).[[72]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Harkness133-72) Hood's instruments also illustrated, for pedagogical purposes, the supposed relationships between the signs of the zodiac, the planets, and the parts of the human body adherents believed were governed by the planets and signs.[[72]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Harkness133-72)[[73]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-73) While Hood's presentation was innovative, his astrological information was largely standard and was taken from [Gerard Mercator's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerard_Mercator) astrological disc made in 1551, or a source used by Mercator.[[74]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-74)[[75]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-75)

English astrology had reached its zenith by the 17th century.[[76]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-76) Astrologers were theorists, researchers, and social engineers, as well as providing individual advice to everyone from monarchs downwards. Among other things, astrologers could advise on the best time to take a journey or harvest a crop, diagnose and prescribe for physical or mental illnesses, and predict natural disasters. This underpinned a system in which everything—people, the world, the universe—was understood to be interconnected, and astrology co-existed happily with [religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion), [magic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic_(paranormal)) and [science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science).[[77]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-77)

**Enlightenment period and onwards[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=13" \o "Edit section: Enlightenment period and onwards)]**

During [the Enlightenment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Enlightenment), intellectual sympathy for astrology fell away, leaving only a popular following supported by cheap almanacs.[[78]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Porter-78) One English almanac compiler, Richard Saunders, followed the spirit of the age by printing a derisive *Discourse on the Invalidity of Astrology*, while in France [Pierre Bayle's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Bayle) *Dictionnaire* of 1697 stated that the subject was puerile.[[78]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Porter-78) The [Anglo-Irish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Irish) [satirist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satire) [Jonathan Swift](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Swift) ridiculed the [Whig](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whiggism) political astrologer [John Partridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Partridge_(astrologer)).[[78]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Porter-78)

Astrology saw a popular revival starting in the 19th century, as part of a general revival of [spiritualism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritualism) and—later, [New Age](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Age) philosophy,[[79]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion-2009-79):239–249 and through the influence of mass media such as newspaper horoscopes.[[79]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion-2009-79):259–263 Early in the 20th century the psychiatrist [Carl Jung](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Jung) developed some concepts concerning astrology,[[80]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-80) which led to the development of [psychological astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_astrology).[[79]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Campion-2009-79):251–256;[[81]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-81)[[82]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-82)

**Principles and practice[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=14" \o "Edit section: Principles and practice)]**

Advocates have defined astrology as a symbolic language, an [art](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art) form, a [science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science), and a method of divination.[[83]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-83)[[84]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-84) Though most cultural astrology systems share common roots in ancient philosophies that influenced each other, many use methods that differ from those in the West. These include Hindu astrology (also known as "Indian astrology" and in modern times referred to as "Vedic astrology") and Chinese astrology, both of which have influenced the world's cultural history.

**Western[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=15" \o "Edit section: Western)]**

*For more details on this topic, see* [*Western astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_astrology)*.*

[Western astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_astrology) is a form of [divination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divination) based on the construction of a [horoscope](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscope) for an exact moment, such as a person's birth.[[85]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-85) It uses the tropical zodiac, which is aligned to the [equinoctial points](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equinox).[[86]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-86)

Western astrology is founded on the movements and relative positions of celestial bodies such as the Sun, Moon and planets, which are analysed by their movement through [signs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrological_sign) of the [zodiac](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zodiac) (twelve spatial divisions of the [ecliptic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecliptic)) and by their [aspects](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrological_aspect) (based on geometric angles) relative to one another. They are also considered by their placement in [houses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_(astrology)) (twelve spatial divisions of the sky).[[87]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-87) Astrology's modern representation in western popular media is usually reduced to [sun sign astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_sign_astrology), which considers only the zodiac sign of the Sun at an individual's date of birth, and represents only 1/12 of the total chart.[[88]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-88)

The horoscope visually expresses the set of relationships for the time and place of the chosen event. These relationships are between the seven 'planets', signifying tendencies such as war and love; the twelve signs of the zodiac; and the twelve houses. Each planet is in a particular sign and a particular house at the chosen time, when observed from the chosen place, creating two kinds of relationship.[[89]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kremer-89) A third kind is the aspect of each planet to every other planet, where for example two planets 120° apart (in 'trine') are in a harmonious relationship, but two planets 90° apart ('square') are in a conflicted relationship.[[90]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-90)[[91]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-91) Together these relationships and their interpretations supposedly form "...the language of the heavens speaking to learned men."[[89]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kremer-89)

Along with [tarot divination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarot_divination), astrology is one of the core studies of [Western esotericism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_esotericism), and as such has influenced systems of [magical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic_(paranormal)) belief not only among Western esotericists and [Hermeticists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermeticism), but also belief systems such as [Wicca](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicca) that have borrowed from or been influenced by the Western esoteric tradition. [Tanya Luhrmann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanya_Luhrmann) has said that "all magicians know something about astrology," and refers to a [table of correspondences](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table_of_correspondences) in [Starhawk's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starhawk) [*The Spiral Dance*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Spiral_Dance), organised by [planet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planets_in_astrology), as an example of the astrological lore studied by magicians.[[92]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Luhrmann-92)

**Hindu[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=16" \o "Edit section: Hindu)]**

*Main article:* [*Hindu astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_astrology)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_Page_from_an_Astrological_Treatise.jpg)

Page from an Indian astrological treatise, c. 1750

The earliest [Vedic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veda) text on astronomy is the [*Vedanga Jyotisha*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedanga_Jyotisha); Vedic thought later came to include astrology as well.[[93]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Subbarayappa-93)

Hindu natal astrology originated with Hellenistic astrology by the 3rd century BCE,[[94]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-Pingree1978-94):361[[95]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Pingree2001-95) though incorporating the Hindu lunar mansions.[[96]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-96) The names of the signs (e.g. Greek 'Krios' for Aries, Hindi 'Kriya'), the planets (e.g. Greek 'Helios' for Sun, astrological Hindi 'Heli'), and astrological terms (e.g. Greek 'apoklima' and 'sunaphe' for declination and planetary conjunction, Hindi 'apoklima' and 'sunapha' respectively) in Varaha Mihira's texts are considered conclusive evidence of a Greek origin for Hindu astrology.[[97]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-97) The Indian techniques may also have been augmented with some of the Babylonian techniques.[[98]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Pingree1963-98):231

**Chinese and East-Asian[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=17" \o "Edit section: Chinese and East-Asian)]**

*For more details on this topic, see* [*Chinese astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_astrology) *and* [*Chinese zodiac*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_zodiac)*.*

Chinese astrology has a close relation with [Chinese philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_philosophy) (theory of the three harmonies: heaven, earth and man) and uses concepts such as [yin and yang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yin_and_yang), the [Five phases](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wu_xing), the 10 [Celestial stems](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celestial_stems), the 12 [Earthly Branches](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earthly_Branches), and [shichen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shichen) (時辰 a form of timekeeping used for religious purposes). The early use of Chinese astrology was mainly confined to [political astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_astrology), the observation of unusual phenomena, identification of [portents](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portent_(divination)) and the selection of auspicious days for events and decisions.[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kistemaker-27):22,85,176

The constellations of the Zodiac of western Asia and Europe were not used; instead the sky is divided into [Three Enclosures](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Enclosures) (三垣 sān yuán), and [Twenty-eight Mansions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-eight_Mansions) (二十八宿 èrshíbā xiù) in twelve Ci ([十二次](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%88%86%E9%87%8E)).[[99]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-99) The Chinese zodiac of twelve [animal signs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrological_sign#Chinese_zodiac_signs) is said to represent twelve different types of [personality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personality). It is based on cycles of years, lunar months, and two-hour periods of the day (the shichen). The zodiac traditionally begins with the sign of the [Rat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rat_(zodiac)), and the cycle proceeds through 11 other animals signs: the [Ox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ox_(zodiac)), [Tiger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiger_(zodiac)), [Rabbit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabbit_(zodiac)), [Dragon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dragon_(zodiac)), [Snake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snake_(zodiac)), [Horse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse_(zodiac)), [Goat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goat_(zodiac)), [Monkey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monkey_(zodiac)), [Rooster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rooster_(zodiac)), [Dog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_(zodiac)), and [Pig](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pig_(zodiac)).[[100]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-100) Complex systems of predicting [fate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fate) and destiny based on one's birthday, birth season, and birth hours, such as *ziping* and [Zi Wei Dou Shu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zi_wei_dou_shu) ([simplified Chinese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simplified_Chinese_characters): 紫微斗数; [traditional Chinese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_Chinese_characters): 紫微斗數; [pinyin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinyin): *zǐwēidǒushù*) are still used regularly in modern-day Chinese astrology. They do not rely on direct observations of the stars.[[101]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-101)

The Korean zodiac is identical to the Chinese one. The Vietnamese zodiac is almost identical to Chinese zodiac except the second animal is the [*Water Buffalo*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_buffalo_(zodiac)) instead of the [*Ox*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ox_(zodiac)), and the fourth animal is the [*Cat*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cat_(zodiac)) instead of the [*Rabbit*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabbit_(zodiac)). The Japanese have since 1873 celebrated the beginning of the new year on 1 January as per the [Gregorian Calendar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregorian_Calendar). The Thai zodiac begins, not at [Chinese New Year](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_New_Year), but either on the first day of fifth month in the [Thai lunar calendar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thai_lunar_calendar), or during the [Songkran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Songkran_(Thailand)) festival (now celebrated every 13–15 April), depending on the purpose of the use.[[102]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-102)

**Theological viewpoints[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=18" \o "Edit section: Theological viewpoints)]**

*See also:* [*Christian views on astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_views_on_astrology)*,* [*Jewish views on astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_views_on_astrology)*, and* [*Muslim views on astrology*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_views_on_astrology)

**Ancient[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=19" \o "Edit section: Ancient)]**

[St. Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine) (354–430) believed that the determinism of astrology conflicted with the Christian doctrines of man's free will and responsibility, and God not being the cause of evil,[[103]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-103) but he also grounded his opposition philosophically, citing the failure of astrology to explain twins who behave differently although conceived at the same moment and born at approximately the same time.[[104]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Hess-104)

**Medieval[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=20" \o "Edit section: Medieval)]**

Some of the practices of astrology were contested on theological grounds by medieval Muslim astronomers such as [Al-Farabi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Farabi) (Alpharabius), [Ibn al-Haytham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibn_al-Haytham) (Alhazen) and [Avicenna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avicenna). They said that the methods of astrologers conflicted with orthodox religious views of [Islamic scholars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulema), by suggesting that the Will of God can be known and predicted in advance.[[105]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-105) For example, Avicenna's 'Refutation against astrology', *Risāla fī ibṭāl aḥkām al-nojūm*, argues against the practice of astrology while supporting the principle that planets may act as agents of divine causation. Avicenna considered that the movement of the planets influenced life on earth in a deterministic way, but argued against the possibility of determining the exact influence of the stars.[[106]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-106) Essentially, Avicenna did not deny the core dogma of astrology, but denied our ability to understand it to the extent that precise and fatalistic predictions could be made from it.[[107]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-107) [Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibn_Qayyim_Al-Jawziyya) (1292–1350), in his *Miftah Dar al-SaCadah*, also used [physical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physics) arguments in astronomy to question the practice of judicial astrology.[[108]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Livingston-108) He recognised that the [stars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star) are much larger than the [planets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planet), and argued:

And if you astrologers answer that it is precisely because of this distance and smallness that their influences are negligible, then why is it that you claim a great influence for the smallest heavenly body, Mercury? Why is it that you have given an influence to al-Ra's and [al-Dhanab](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Dhanab), which are two imaginary points [ascending and descending nodes]?

— *Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya*[[108]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-Livingston-108)

**Modern[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=21" \o "Edit section: Modern)]**

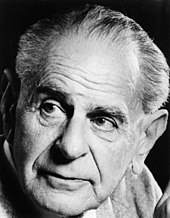
The [Catechism of the Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechism_of_the_Catholic_Church) maintains that divination, including predictive astrology, is incompatible with modern [Catholic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholicism) beliefs[[109]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-109) such as free will:[[104]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Hess-104)

All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone.[[110]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-110)

— *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**Scientific analysis and criticism[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=22" \o "Edit section: Scientific analysis and criticism)]**

*Main article:* [*Astrology and science*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology_and_science)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Karl_Popper.jpg)

Popper proposed falsifiability as something that distinguishes science from non-science, using astrology as the example of an idea that has not dealt with falsification during experiment

The scientific community rejects astrology as having no explanatory power for describing the universe, and considers it a [pseudoscience](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pseudoscience).[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-SandPSandAstroSoc-15)[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-astrosociety.org-16)[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Hartmann-17):1350 Scientific testing of astrology has been conducted, and no evidence has been found to support any of the premises or purported effects outlined in astrological traditions.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Zarka-10):424;[[111]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-111)[[112]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-112) There is no proposed [mechanism of action](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_modelling) by which the positions and motions of stars and planets could affect people and events on Earth that does not contradict well understood, basic aspects of biology and physics.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Vishveshwara-7):249;[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-AsquithNSF-8) Those who continue to have faith in astrology have been characterised as doing so "...in spite of the fact that there is no verified scientific basis for their beliefs, and indeed that there is strong evidence to the contrary."[[113]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Humanist-113)

[Confirmation bias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_bias) is a form of [cognitive bias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_bias), a [psychological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology) factor that contributes to belief in astrology.[[114]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Allum-114):344;[[115]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Raymond-115):180–181;[[116]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Eysenck1982-116):42–48 [[a]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-117)[[117]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Gonzalez-118):553 Astrology believers tend to selectively remember predictions that turn out to be true, and do not remember those that turn out false. Another, separate, form of confirmation bias also plays a role, where believers often fail to distinguish between messages that demonstrate special ability and those that do not.[[115]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Raymond-115):180–181 Thus there are two distinct forms of confirmation bias that are under study with respect to astrological belief.[[115]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Raymond-115):180–181

**Demarcation[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=23" \o "Edit section: Demarcation)]**

Under the criterion of [falsifiability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falsifiability), first proposed by [philosopher of science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosopher_of_science) [Karl Popper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Popper), astrology is a pseudoscience.[[118]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-PopperStanford-119) Popper regarded astrology as "pseudo-empirical" in that "it appeals to observation and experiment," but "nevertheless does not come up to scientific standards."[[119]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Popper-120):44 In contrast to scientific disciplines, astrology has not responded to falsification through experiment.[[120]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cogan-121):206

In contrast to Popper, the philosopher [Thomas Kuhn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Kuhn) argued that it was not lack of falsifiability that makes astrology unscientific, but rather that the process and concepts of astrology are non-empirical.[[121]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wright-122):401 Kuhn thought that, though astrologers had, historically, made predictions that categorically failed, this in itself does not make it unscientific, nor do attempts by astrologers to explain away failures by claiming that creating a horoscope is very difficult. Rather, in Kuhn's eyes, astrology is not science because it was always more akin to [medieval medicine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval_medicine); they followed a sequence of rules and guidelines for a seemingly necessary field with known shortcomings, but they did no research because the fields are not amenable to research,[[122]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kuhn-123):8 and so "they had no puzzles to solve and therefore no science to practise."[[121]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wright-122):401;[[122]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-Kuhn-123):8 While an astronomer could correct for failure, an astrologer could not. An astrologer could only explain away failure but could not revise the astrological [hypothesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypothesis) in a meaningful way. As such, to Kuhn, even if the stars could influence the path of humans through life astrology is not scientific.[[122]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Kuhn-123):8

The philosopher [Paul Thagard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Thagard) asserts that astrology cannot be regarded as falsified in this sense until it has been replaced with a successor. In the case of predicting behaviour, psychology is the alternative.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Thagard-13):228 To Thagard a further criterion of demarcation of science from pseudoscience is that the state-of-the-art must progress and that the community of researchers should be attempting to compare the current theory to alternatives, and not be "selective in considering confirmations and disconfirmations."[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Thagard-13):227–228 Progress is defined here as explaining new phenomena and solving existing problems, yet astrology has failed to progress having only changed little in nearly 2000 years.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Thagard-13):228[[123]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Hurley-124):549 To Thagard, astrologers are acting as though engaged in [normal science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Normal_science) believing that the foundations of astrology were well established despite the "many unsolved problems," and in the face of better alternative theories (psychology). For these reasons Thagard views astrology as pseudoscience.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Thagard-13)[[123]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Hurley-124):228

For the philosopher Edward W. James, astrology is irrational not because of the numerous problems with mechanisms and falsification due to experiments, but because an analysis of the astrological literature shows that it is infused with fallacious logic and poor reasoning.[[124]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-EdwardJ-125):34

What if throughout astrological writings we meet little appreciation of coherence, blatant insensitivity to evidence, no sense of a hierarchy of reasons, slight command over the contextual force of critieria, stubborn unwillingness to pursue an argument where it leads, stark naivete concerning the effiacacy of explanation and so on? In that case, I think, we are perfectly justified in rejecting astrology as irrational. ... Astrology simply fails to meet the multifarious demands of legitimate reasoning."

— *Edward W. James*[[124]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-EdwardJ-125):34

**Effectiveness[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=24" \o "Edit section: Effectiveness)]**

Astrology has not demonstrated its effectiveness in [controlled studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experiment) and has no scientific validity.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cosmic-5):85;[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-Zarka-10) Where it has made [falsifiable](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falsifiable) predictions under [controlled conditions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_control), they have been falsified.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Zarka-10):424 One famous experiment included 28 astrologers who were asked to match over a hundred natal charts to psychological profiles generated by the [California Psychological Inventory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Psychological_Inventory) (CPI) questionnaire.[[125]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Muller-126)[[126]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-CritThink-127) The [double-blind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blind_experiment#Double-blind_trials) experimental protocol used in this study was agreed upon by a group of physicists and a group of astrologers[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Zarka-10) nominated by the [National Council for Geocosmic Research](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Council_for_Geocosmic_Research), who advised the experimenters, helped ensure that the test was fair[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carlson-9):420;[[126]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-CritThink-127):117 and helped draw the central proposition of [natal astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natal_astrology) to be tested.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carlson-9):419 They also chose 26 out of the 28 astrologers for the tests (two more volunteered afterwards).[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carlson-9):420 The study, published in [*Nature*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nature_(journal)) in 1985, found that predictions based on natal astrology were no better than chance, and that the testing "...clearly refutes the astrological hypothesis."[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carlson-9)

In 1955, the astrologer and psychologist Michel Gauquelin stated that though he had failed to find evidence that supported indicators like [zodiacal signs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrological_signs) and [planetary aspects](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrological_aspects) in astrology, he did find positive correlations between the [diurnal positions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diurnal_motion) of some [planets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planets_in_astrology) and success in professions that astrology traditionally associates with those planets.[[127]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Pont-128)[[128]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Gauquelin-1955-129) The best-known of Gauquelin's findings is based on the positions of Mars in the [natal charts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natal_chart) of successful athletes and became known as the [*Mars effect*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mars_effect).[[129]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carroll-130):213 A study conducted by seven French scientists attempted to replicate the claim, but found no statistical evidence.[[129]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Carroll-130):213–214 They attributed the effect to selective bias on Gauquelin's part, accusing him of attempting to persuade them to add or delete names from their study.[[130]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Benski-131)

Geoffrey Dean has suggested that the effect may be caused by self-reporting of birth dates by parents rather than any issue with the study by Gauquelin. The suggestion is that a small subset of the parents may have had changed birth times to be consistent with better astrological charts for a related profession. The number of births under astrologically undesirable conditions was also lower, indicating that parents choose dates and times to suit their beliefs. The sample group was taken from a time where belief in astrology was more common. Gauquelin had failed to find the Mars effect in more recent populations, where a nurse or doctor recorded the birth information.[[126]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-CritThink-127):116

Dean, a scientist and former astrologer, and psychologist Ivan Kelly conducted a large scale scientific test that involved more than one hundred [cognitive](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive), [behavioural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Behavioural), [physical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physiological), and other variables—but found no support for astrology.[[131]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-FailToPredict-132)[[132]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Geoffrey-133) Furthermore, a [meta-analysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meta-analysis) pooled 40 studies that involved 700 astrologers and over 1,000 birth charts. Ten of the tests—which involved 300 participants—had the astrologers pick the correct chart interpretation out of a number of others that were not the astrologically correct chart interpretation (usually three to five others). When date and other obvious clues were removed, no significant results suggested there was any preferred chart.[[132]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Geoffrey-133):190

**Lack of mechanisms and consistency[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=25" \o "Edit section: Lack of mechanisms and consistency)]**

Testing the validity of astrology can be difficult, because there is no consensus amongst astrologers as to what astrology is or what it can predict.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cosmic-5):83 Most professional astrologers are paid to predict the future or describe a person's personality and life, but most horoscopes only make vague untestable statements that can apply to almost anyone.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Cosmic-5)[[116]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Eysenck1982-116):83

Many astrologers claim that astrology is scientific,[[133]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-ChrisFrench-134) while some have proposed conventional [causal agents](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Causality) such as [electromagnetism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electromagnetism) and [gravity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gravity).[[133]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-ChrisFrench-134) Scientists reject these mechanisms as implausible[[133]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-ChrisFrench-134) since, for example, the magnetic field, when measured from earth, of a large but distant planet such as Jupiter is far smaller than that produced by ordinary household appliances.[[134]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Shermer-135)

Western astrology has taken the earth's [axial precession (also called precession of the equinoxes)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Precession#Axial_precession_.28precession_of_the_equinoxes.29) into account since Ptolemy's [*Almagest*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Almagest), so the 'first point of Aries', the start of the astrological year, continually moves against the background of the stars.[[135]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-136) The tropical zodiac has no connection to the stars, and as long as no claims are made that the constellations themselves are in the associated [sign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrological_sign), astrologers avoid the concept that precession seemingly moves the constellations.[[136]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Charpak-137) Charpak and Broch, noting this, referred to astrology based on the tropical zodiac as being "...empty boxes that have nothing to do with anything and are devoid of any consistency or correspondence with the stars."[[136]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Charpak-137) Sole use of the tropical zodiac is inconsistent with references made, by the same astrologers, to the [Age of Aquarius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Aquarius), which depends on when the vernal point enters the constellation of Aquarius.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Zarka-10)

Astrologers usually have only a small knowledge of astronomy, and often do not take into account basic principles—such as the precession of the equinoxes, which changes the position of the sun with time. They commented on the example of [Élizabeth Teissier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89lizabeth_Teissier), who claimed that, "The sun ends up in the same place in the sky on the same date each year," as the basis for claims that two people with the same birthday, but a number of years apart, should be under the same planetary influence. Charpak and Broch noted that, "There is a difference of about twenty-two thousand miles between Earth's location on any specific date in two successive years," and that thus they should not be under the same influence according to astrology. Over a 40 years period there would be a difference greater than 780,000 miles.[[136]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Charpak-137)

**Cultural impact[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=26" \o "Edit section: Cultural impact)]**

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| https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/87/Gnome-mime-sound-openclipart.svg/50px-Gnome-mime-sound-openclipart.svg.png | [Mars, the Bringer of War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holst-_mars.ogg)  Mars, performed by [the US Air Force Band](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_United_States_Air_Force_Band)  [Venus, the Bringer of Peace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holst-_venus.ogg)  Venus, performed by [the US Air Force Band](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_United_States_Air_Force_Band)  [Mercury, the Winged Messenger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holst_The_Planets_Mercury.ogg)  Mercury, performed by [the US Air Force Band](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_United_States_Air_Force_Band)  [Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holst_The_Planets_Jupiter.ogg)  Jupiter, performed by [the US Air Force Band](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_United_States_Air_Force_Band)  [Uranus, the Magician](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Holst-_uranus.ogg)  Uranus, performed by [the US Air Force Band](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_United_States_Air_Force_Band) |
| *Problems playing these files? See* [*media help*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Media_help)*.* | |

**Western politics and society[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=27" \o "Edit section: Western politics and society)]**

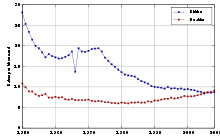
In the West, political leaders have sometimes consulted astrologers. For example, the British intelligence agency [MI5](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MI5) employed [Louis de Wohl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_de_Wohl) as an astrologer after claims surfaced that [Adolf Hitler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) used astrology to time his actions. The War Office was "...interested to know what Hitler's own astrologers would be telling him from week to week."[[137]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-138) In fact, de Wohl's predictions were so inaccurate that he was soon labelled a "complete charlatan," and later evidence showed that Hitler considered astrology "complete nonsense."[[138]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-139) After [John Hinckley's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hinckley) [attempted assassination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attempted_assassination_of_Ronald_Reagan) of US President [Ronald Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan), first lady [Nancy Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_Reagan) commissioned astrologer [Joan Quigley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Quigley) to act as the secret White House astrologer. However, Quigley's role ended in 1988 when it became public through the memoirs of former chief of staff, [Donald Regan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Regan).[[139]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-140)

There was a boom in interest in astrology in the late 1960s. The sociologist [Marcello Truzzi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcello_Truzzi) described three levels of involvement of "Astrology-believers" to account for its revived popularity in the face of scientific discrediting. He found that most astrology-believers did not claim it was a scientific explanation with predictive power. Instead, those superficially involved, knowing "next to nothing" about astrology's 'mechanics', read newspaper astrology columns, and could benefit from "tension-management of anxieties" and "a cognitive belief-system that transcends science."[[140]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Truzzi-141) Those at the second level usually had their horoscopes cast and sought advice and predictions. They were much younger than those at the first level, and could benefit from knowledge of the language of astrology and the resulting ability to belong to a coherent and exclusive group. Those at the third level were highly involved and usually cast horoscopes for themselves. Astrology provided this small minority of astrology-believers with a "*meaningful* view of their universe and [gave] them an *understanding* of their place in it."[[b]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-142) This third group took astrology seriously, possibly as a *sacred canopy*, whereas the other two groups took it playfully and irreverently.[[140]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Truzzi-141)

In 1953, the sociologist [Theodor W. Adorno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodor_W._Adorno) conducted a study of the astrology column of a Los Angeles newspaper as part of a project examining mass culture in capitalist society.[[141]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Nederman-143):326 Adorno believed that popular astrology, as a device, invariably leads to statements that encouraged conformity—and that astrologers who go against conformity, by discouraging performance at work etc., risk losing their jobs.[[141]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Nederman-143):327 Adorno concluded that astrology is a large-scale manifestation of systematic [irrationalism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irrationalism), where individuals are subtly led—through flattery and vague generalisations—to believe that the author of the column is addressing them directly.[[142]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Adorno-144) Adorno drew a parallel with the phrase [opium of the people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opium_of_the_people), by Karl Marx, by commenting, "occultism is the metaphysic of the dopes."[[141]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Nederman-143):329

A 2005 [Gallup](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallup_(company)) poll and a 2009 survey by the [Pew Research Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew_Research_Center) reported that 25% of US adults believe in astrology.[[143]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-145)[[144]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-146) According to data released in the [National Science Foundation's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Science_Foundation) 2014 *Science and Engineering Indicators* study, "Fewer Americans rejected astrology in 2012 than in recent years."[[145]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-NSF-147) The NSF study noted that in 2012, "slightly more than half of Americans said that astrology was 'not at all scientific,' whereas nearly two-thirds gave this response in 2010. The comparable percentage has not been this low since 1983."[[145]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-NSF-147)

**India and Japan[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=28" \o "Edit section: India and Japan)]**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bdrates_of_Japan_since_1950.svg)

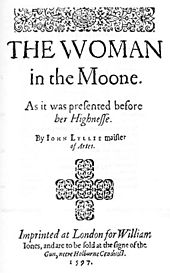
Birth (in blue) and death (in red) rates of Japan since 1950, with the sudden drop in births during hinoeuma year (1966)

In India, there is a long-established and widespread belief in astrology. It is commonly used for daily life, particularly in matters concerning marriage and career, and makes extensive use of [electional](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electional_astrology), [horary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horary_astrology) and [karmic astrology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karmic_astrology).[[146]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-wideind-148)[[147]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-fof-149) Indian politics have also been influenced by astrology.[[148]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-150) It is still considered a branch of the [Vedanga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedanga).[[149]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-151)[[150]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-152) In 2001, Indian scientists and politicians debated and critiqued a proposal to use state money to fund research into astrology,[[151]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-BBC_India-153) resulting in permission for [Indian universities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_India) to offer courses in Vedic astrology.[[152]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-UGC-154)

On February 2011, the [Bombay High Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombay_High_Court) reaffirmed astrology's standing in India when it dismissed a case that challenged its status as a science.[[153]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-155)

In [Japan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan), strong belief in astrology has led to dramatic changes in the fertility rate and the number of abortions in the years of *Fire Horse*. Adherents believe that women born in *hinoeuma* years are unmarriageable and bring bad luck to their father or husband. In 1966, the number of babies born in Japan dropped by over 25% as parents tried to avoid the stigma of having a daughter born in the hinoeuma year.[[154]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-156)[[155]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-157)

**Literature and music[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Astrology&action=edit&section=29" \o "Edit section: Literature and music)]**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Woman_in_the_Moon.jpg)

Title page of [John Lyly's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lyly) astrological play, *The Woman in the Moon*, 1597

The fourteenth-century English poets [John Gower](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Gower) and [Geoffrey Chaucer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Chaucer) both referred to astrology in their works, including Gower's [*Confessio Amantis*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confessio_Amantis) and Chaucer's [*The Canterbury Tales*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Canterbury_Tales).[[156]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wedel-158) Chaucer commented explicitly on astrology in his *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, demonstrating personal knowledge of one area, judicial astrology, with an account of how to find the ascendant or rising sign.[[157]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-WoodAstrolabe-159)

In the fifteenth century, references to astrology, such as with [similes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simile), became "a matter of course" in English literature.[[156]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Wedel-158)

In the sixteenth century, John Lyly's 1597 play, *The Woman in the Moon*, is wholly motivated by astrology,[[158]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-DeLacy-160) while [Christopher Marlowe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Marlowe) makes astrological references in his plays [*Doctor Faustus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_Faustus_(play)) and [*Tamburlaine*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamburlaine) (both c. 1590),[[158]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-DeLacy-160) and [Sir Philip Sidney](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Philip_Sidney) refers to astrology at least four times in his [romance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance_(heroic_literature)) [*The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Countess_of_Pembroke%27s_Arcadia) (c. 1580).[[158]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-DeLacy-160) [Edmund Spenser](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Spenser) uses astrology both decoratively and causally in his poetry, revealing "...unmistakably an abiding interest in the art, an interest shared by a large number of his contemporaries."[[158]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-DeLacy-160) [George Chapman's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Chapman) play, [*Byron's Conspiracy*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Conspiracy_and_Tragedy_of_Charles,_Duke_of_Byron) (1608), similarly uses astrology as a causal mechanism in the drama.[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Camden-161) [William Shakespeare's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare) attitude towards astrology is unclear, with contradictory references in plays including [*King Lear*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Lear), [*Antony and Cleopatra*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antony_and_Cleopatra), and [*Richard II*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_II_(play)).[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Camden-161) Shakespeare was familiar with astrology and made use of his knowledge of astrology in nearly every play he wrote,[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-Camden-161) assuming a basic familiarity with the subject in his commercial audience.[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Camden-161) Outside theatre, the physician and mystic [Robert Fludd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Fludd) practised astrology, as did the quack doctor Simon Forman.[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-Camden-161) In Elizabethan England, "The usual feeling about astrology ... [was] that it is the most useful of the sciences."[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology" \l "cite_note-Camden-161)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Astrologo_Fingido_Calderon_de_la_Barca_title_page_1641.jpg)

Title page of [Calderón de la Barca's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calder%C3%B3n_de_la_Barca) *Astrologo Fingido*, Madrid, 1641

In seventeenth century Spain, [Lope de Vega](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lope_de_Vega), with a detailed knowledge of astronomy, wrote plays that ridicule astrology. In his pastoral romance *La Arcadia* (1598), it leads to absurdity; in his novela *Guzman el Bravo* (1624), he concludes that the stars were made for man, not man for the stars.[[160]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-162) [Calderón de la Barca](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calder%C3%B3n_de_la_Barca) wrote the 1641 comedy *Astrologo Fingido* (The Pretended Astrologer); the plot was borrowed by the French playwright [Thomas Corneille](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Corneille) for his 1651 comedy *Feint Astrologue*.[[161]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-163)

The most famous piece of music influenced by astrology is the orchestral suite [*The Planets*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Planets). Written by the British composer [Gustav Holst](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Holst) (1874–1934), and first performed in 1918, the framework of *The Planets* is based upon the astrological symbolism of the planets.[[162]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-164) Each of the seven movements of the suite is based upon a different planet, though the movements are not in the order of the planets from the Sun. The composer [Colin Matthews](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Matthews) wrote an eighth movement entitled *Pluto, the Renewer*, first performed in 2000.[[163]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-165) In 1937, another British composer, [Constant Lambert](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constant_Lambert), wrote a ballet on astrological themes, called [*Horoscope*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horoscope_(ballet)).[[164]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-166) In 1974, the New Zealand composer [Edwin Carr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edwin_Carr_(composer)) wrote *The Twelve Signs: An Astrological Entertainment* for orchestra without strings.[[165]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-167) [Camille Paglia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camille_Paglia) acknowledges astrology as an influence on her work of literary criticism [*Sexual Personae*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_Personae) (1990).[[166]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-168)

Astrology features strongly in [Eleanor Catton's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleanor_Catton) [*The Luminaries*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Luminaries), recipient of the [2013 Man Booker Prize](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013_Man_Booker_Prize).[[167]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrology#cite_note-169)