

ASTROLOGY TOPICS



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Introduction: Astrology

What's your astrological sign. Everyone knows what his or her sign is. Even if you're not a believer that the position of the planets at the exact time of your birth is an indicator of your personality and can determine events that happen to you throughout your lifetime, you've certainly met someone who does believe. At the very least, it's harmless club conversation, a way to get to know someone. But is there something to it. Are horoscopes just hocus pocus. Or do they truly predict the course of events in your life.

Astrology is one of the earliest sciences known to human history. There are astrological records that originated in Babylon in 1645 BCE. Other cultures, such as Egyptian and Greek developed timekeeping and calendar methodologies. From the time man began to observe and track the world around him, he's also contemplated his own relationship to the earth, stars, planets and elements around him. Astrology may have one way that earliest civilizations helped define their place in the cosmos. They perceived it as being greater than themselves; not something to be conquered, but to be understood.

While in modern times astrology is seen as new age and not as credible as sciences like astrophysics or chemistry, at one time it was as credible a science as any other. Astronomers like Galileo and Copernicus were also practicing astrologers. With the evolution of more quantitative sciences, astrology's influence and position began to diminish. It enjoyed a resurgence in the 1930's with the birth of England's Princess Margaret. The London Sunday-Express ran her astrological profile, and that event was the origin of the modern daily horoscope in the newspapers.

Everyone who's read a really good astrological profile of himself has to admit there are some uncanny coincidences. Can we really pretend we're so knowledgeable of the universe that we can reject the discipline of astrology. Maybe Shakespeare had something there when he wrote in Hamlet, *There are more things on heaven and earth Horatio than are dreamt of in your philosophy.*

Aquarius

Were you born under the sign of Aquarius. What a compassionate and generous person you are. And did you know that there really is an Age of Aquarius. It wasn't just a songwriter's concept in the musical, Hair. Just as there are individual zodiac signs, so are the eras of human history divided into 2000-year segments of what's called the Great Year. We just left the age of Pisces, which began at the beginning of the Christian era until the year 2000. It was a time marked by fluid changes in politics and governments. Pisces, of course, is the sign of the Fish, the symbol of Christianity.

We are now in the age of Aquarius, but only just in the dawn of it, like the song said. All the wonderful, generous characteristics of the Water Bearer are not yet symbolic of humanity as a whole yet, as evidenced by the current turmoil in the Middle East. But there are signs. Remember the Random Acts of Kindness. Perhaps those were a harbinger of the Age of Aquarius.

If YOU are an Aquarian, then you were born between January 20 and February 18. You are a humanitarian and more intelligent than most and given to thoughts of how to make the world a better place. You can be inventive and original, and you're freedom-loving. You're generous with your thoughts, whether people are interested or not! You can be eccentric and idiosyncratic, and need a lot of space, but your heart is nearly always in the right place.

Who's the right partner for the highly intelligent and quirky Aquarian. Someone who can appreciate their generous qualities and share their beliefs. Someone who is willing to explore and grow with them. An Aquarian will be happiest with someone who is open-minded, who is warm and understanding and willing to be a helpmate. While that may be the ideal for just about anyone, it's especially important for an Aquarian to be able to have a partner who will share their passion for creating a better world and their generous nature.

Aries

Aries the Ram (March 21 to April 20) is called the first sign of the Zodiac. We think of the beginning of the year as January, because that's the start of the new calendar year. But this is the Zodiac year, remember, and is governed by matters more celestial than mundane! March 21 is the Spring equinox, which signifies the beginning of the Zodiac year. And when you think about it, this makes sense. Spring is the time of renewal and rebirth.

If you are born under this sign, you can tend to have the same traits as a young ram. Enthusiastic, adventurous, forthright and energetic. You're courageous and confident. You could be a little impulsive though, right. Maybe something of a daredevil. Where the world be though, without daredevils, willing to strike out and do something completely different. Leonardo da Vinci is one of the most famous Aries ever born. Think of some other famous Arians, such as Thomas Jefferson, Booker T. Washington, Francis Ford Coppola, Jane Goodall and Marlon Brando. None of them afraid to break new ground; all of them changed the world or their chosen fields in some way.

People born under the Aries sign are passionate lovers and intense friends. They risk driving people away with their intensity and need partners that can match them without fueling the fire and creating explosive situations.

Arians make good doctors, athletes and explorers. This isn't to say that people born under the sign of the Ram are all action, though. They have a softer, lamb-like side as well and if you're an Aries, make sure you draw on this side of yourself as well when dealing with other people. You may have difficulty in certain jobs, because you're an idea person and the person to get things started rather than finish them up. Surround yourself with people who can supplement these traits and you're sure to be a success.

Ascendant sign

Technically speaking, your rising sign, or ascendant, reflects the zodiac sign that was ascending on the Eastern horizon at the moment you took your first breath in this world. This is why an exact birth time is so vital to finding your accurate rising sign. Located on the cusp of the first house of your astrological chart -- or at the nine o'clock position -- the rising sign can exert an influence almost as powerful as your Sun and Moon signs.

If you were to think of your Sun sign as your soul -- your inner personality and potential -- and your Moon sign as your heart -- your emotional core -- then you could say that your rising sign is your physical self or the face you present to the world. For example, though your Sun sign might be Taurus, your rising sign could very well be Gemini. While you're feeling laid-back, others will tend to see you as a ball of nervous energy and cerebral wit.

At times, your rising sign may act as a mask, hiding some aspect of your inner self you don't feel like revealing. Your Ascendant sign describes your temperament, your outward mannerisms and behavior, the personality you put on public display. It is the part of yourself you are most willing for other people to see in casual, impersonal situations. Changes here will explain why even people born on the same day as you will have very different personalities, different strengths and interests, and different life experiences.

The Ascendant is also called the Rising Sign of a person's chart. Astrologers use the two terms interchangeably. It is literally the sign that was rising on the Eastern horizon of the sky at the time you were born in the place where you were born. This is why it is essential to have both a birthplace and a birth time in order to cast a completely valid Natal Chart.

Astrological predictions

Opinions about astrological prediction are generally divided. In fact, both views are based on a misunderstanding of the nature of how astrology really works.

Though it may come as a surprise to the true believer many astrologers believe that astrology cannot make precise predictions about your future although astrology can indeed reveal the tendencies of your future.

If an astrologer tells you that next Tuesday you will be walking down the street, and will accidentally trip and fall, breaking your left wrist as it cracks against a fire hydrant, that would be a pretty precise prediction, wouldn't it. But no astrologer ever makes predictions like that. More likely, an astrologer would say: There is some danger of having an accident next Tuesday; try to be more careful than usual. This is of course not a precise prediction, but rather a statement, based on certain astrological techniques, about an increased probability of a certain type of event occurring. This is the true strength of astrology: not to tell you what is going to happen (since that is beyond its capabilities), but rather, to inform you about the probabilities of certain types of events occurring.

Astrology isn't used to predict the future. It's used to help you gain insight and understanding into the patterns and directions your life takes. It's not an absolute, but it's an indicator. If you don't like what your astrological or natal charts tell you, it's certainly within your power to change it. Astrology can give you insight into one potential destiny, but there are too many variables, including the decisions you make for yourself, to predict with any degree of accuracy what will happen in the future.

Astrology, medicine, astronomy

There was a time when astrology was an accepted science and was a part of medical diagnoses, as much as were a patient's physical symptoms. It's hard to say whether we've e-volved or de-volved, as we no longer think about living in harmony with cosmos. We consider ourselves too advanced scientifically to think that movements in the stars and planets might have a serious impact on our daily lives and our health.

But are we right. Who is anyone to say that man, with his limited brain, can truly comprehend the workings of the universe, or how he fits within it. Western civilization is predicated on conquering, not understanding. But it wasn't always so.

Astrology is one of the most important historical contexts in which astronomy developed. The Babylonians carefully assembled tablets of the position of Venus, as it was believed to denote omens for weather, war, famine, diseases, rulers and kingdoms. Claudius Ptolemy composed the *Tetrabiblos*, believing that astrology could be placed on a rational footing, despite being a conjectural art like medicine. In practice, belief in astrology meant that horoscopes were cast for new-born children, prospective spouses and political enemies, public buildings were opened and marriage and other ceremonies conducted on auspicious days. Numerous records of astrological practice can be found from the Roman times and physicians routinely consulted astrological charts as part of the diagnostic process.

For instance, every sign of the zodiac was considered to rule a part of the human body: the Sagittarius ruled the thighs, Pisces the feet, and so on. When the moon was in the zodiac ruling a particular part of the body, bloodletting from that part was to be avoided, since the attraction of the moon might cause excessive bleeding. Numerous medical manuscripts and almanacs include the figure of the 'zodiac man' as a reminder of the specific influence of the moon. In addition, the power of the moon's pulling power varied by its phases, and thus almanacs usually showed the phases of the moon.

Cancer

The sign of Cancer (June 22 – July 22) has very little to do with that prickly crustacean, believe it or not. In fact, it's hard to pin down exactly what constitutes the Cancer personality. The ancient Egyptians perceived Cancer as the sacred scarab. It was a symbol of resurrection and immortality and they often placed a carving of a scarab in the body where the heart had been, as part of the mummification process.

Cancers are very imaginative and intuitive. They make great artists and musicians. They're not risk takers, and will take the time to contemplate all sorts of outcomes and probabilities before taking on a new venture. They're very sympathetic and protective of those around them. They will help out in whatever way they can, although not impulsively and will temper their generosity with calculating all the risks first. They're emotional and loving, and great family and pet people.

In the Zodiac Great Year, the Age of Cancer fell between 8600 and 6450 BCE. It was a time characterized by the worship of mother goddesses. During this period alcohol fermentation was discovered and people began to use copper.

Cancers make good journalists, writers or politicians because of their ability to think and judge independently what they're told. They're good in public service, perhaps in social service agencies. Cancers are good providers because they themselves love comfort and a good life. Cancers can procrastinate and can upset their families with this trait. They're not too good at taking orders, so positions where they're required to be submissive or subordinate may not suit them well.

Famous Cancers comprise an interesting mix of accomplishments. They include the Duke of Windsor and Bob Fosse, Sylvester Stallone, the Dalai Lama, Robin Williams and Ernest Hemingway.

The best partner for Cancer is Taurus, while the sign with the least potential for a harmonious relationship with Cancer is Aries.

Capricorn

If you are a Capricorn (December 22 to January 20), you are a personality to be reckoned with, but in a quiet, subtle way. These are people who will achieve whatever goal they set for themselves. They have the grit and determination to see out a project or an objective, no matter how long it takes. They are surprisingly witty, when they allow themselves to be, although they're not the fiery, flashy kind. A Capricorn will always be on time, will always have positions of responsibility. They make good psychologists because of their ability to listen to short-tempered people or people on a rant. They have an ability to stay calm and reasoned in a disagreement or conflict, even though the other side may be more passionate.

They are deep thinkers who have good memories and a never-ending intellectual curiosity. In their relationships, they can have a tendency towards unhappiness. Capricorns set very high standards for themselves, and can be easily disappointed if others don't set equally high standards.

Professionally, they are strongly attracted to music, although their logical side also makes them excellent bankers. Some famous Capricorns include Anwar Sadat and Martin Luther King. Paul Cezanne and Henri Matisse were also Capricorns. Other famous Capricorns include Richard Nixon, Simone de Beauvoir and Edgar Allen Poe.

After the Age of Aquarius in the zodiac Great Year (approximately 2000-4000 CE) will come the Age of Capricorn. It's hard to predict what the human condition will be by then. Will we have moved on to other planets and solar systems. If the Age of Aquarius is to be marked by humanitarianism and greater understanding among the people on Earth, (we hope!), what will define the Age of Capricorn. Will we achieve the goals of Aquarius. Many people look towards the new millennium and the beginning of a new era in the Great Year with hope that we will have learned from the mistakes of the past. Hopefully we will continue to learn and in the Age of Capricorn will have evolved to even greater human potential.

Chinese Astrology

According to Chinese legend, the twelve animals quarreled one day as to who was to head the cycle of years. The gods were asked to decide and they held a contest: whoever was to reach the opposite bank of the river would be first, and the rest of the animals would receive their years according to their finish.

All the twelve animals gathered at the river bank and jumped in. Unknown to the ox, the rat had jumped upon his back. As the ox was about to jump ashore, the rat jumped off the ox's back, and won the race. The pig, who was very lazy, ended up last. That is why the rat is the first year of the animal cycle, the ox second, and the pig last.

The Chinese animal signs are a 12-year cycle used for dating the years. They represent a cyclical concept of time, rather than the Western linear concept of time. In the Chinese calendar, the beginning of the year falls somewhere between late January and early February. The Chinese have adopted the Western calendar since 1911, but the lunar calendar is still used for festive occasions such as the Chinese New Year. Many Chinese calendars will print both the solar dates and the Chinese lunar dates. A cultural sidelight of the animal signs in Chinese folklore is that horoscopes have developed around the animal signs, much like monthly horoscopes in the West have been developed for the different moon signs, Pisces, Aries, etc. For example, a Chinese horoscope may predict that a person born in the Year of the Horse would be, cheerful, popular, and loves to compliment others. These horoscopes are amusing, but not regarded seriously by the Chinese people.

Chinese elements

Chinese Astrology is said by some scholars to be the oldest horoscope system in the world. However if you trace Western Astrology back to its Middle East roots, both types are likely to have been born in their current recognizable form around 3000 years BC, however they stem from entirely different beginnings as well as traditions and parts of the world.

The 12 animals are further flavored by the pervading element of that particular year (elements also revolve as a separate cycle). It is said that Buddha is responsible for the 12 animals as they were the only ones who came to bid him farewell into the next life.

Chinese Astrology is concerned with nature and its traits, the signs progress year by year, whereas Western Astrology cycles monthly. The consideration of Yin and Yang is a very great influence upon this subject, Yin being passive, female and receptive while Yang is aggressive, male and exploratory. The various permutations of these 2 essential forces in nature, places, organizations, events and humanity and the quest to achieve balance so that both operate together in harmony rather than opposing or canceling each other out are an essentially Oriental viewpoint and quest, they form the basis of many Far Eastern traditions and other influences in Chinese Society such as Feng Shui.

The 12 Animal Signs are : Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit (or Cat), Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat (or Sheep), Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. The animal ruling year in which you were born has a profound influence on your life.

As the Chinese say, This is the animal that hides in your heart.

There are 5 elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water, each adding a nuance of almost tactile character to the animal sign. Chinese Astrology is based on the Chinese calendar year of your birth or the year of an event. There are also many more nuances involving the month and day.

Chinese Lunar Calendar

Prior to adoption of the Western solar calendar system, China exclusively followed a lunar calendar in determining the times of planting, harvesting, and festival occasions. Though today people in China use the western calendar for most practical matters of daily life, the old system still serves as the basis for determining numerous seasonal holidays. This coexistence of two calendar systems has long been accepted by the people of China.

A lunar month is determined by the period required for the moon to complete its full cycle of 29 and a half days, a standard that makes the lunar year a full 11 days shorter than its solar counterpart. This difference is made up every 19 years by the addition of seven lunar months. The 12 lunar months are further divided into 24 solar divisions distinguished by the four seasons and times of heat and cold, all bearing close relationship to the yearly cycle of agricultural work.

The Chinese calendar - like the Hebrew - is a combined solar/lunar calendar in that it strives to have its years coincide with the tropical year and its months coincide with the synodic months. It is not surprising that a few similarities exist between the Chinese and the Hebrew calendar: An ordinary year has 12 months, a leap year has 13 months. An ordinary year has 353, 354, or 355 days, a leap year has 383, 384, or 385 days. When determining what a Chinese year looks like, one must make a number of astronomical calculations:

First, determine the dates for the new moons. Here, a new moon is the completely black moon (that is, when the moon is in conjunction with the sun), not the first visible crescent used in the Islamic and Hebrew calendars. The date of a new moon is the first day of a new month.

Claudius Ptolemy

The astronomer Claudius Ptolemy lived from approximately 100-170 CE. Very little is known of him, including where he was born. Claudius means citizen of Rome, while Ptolemy means resident of Egypt. Some sources indicate that he was a citizen of Rome, others that he lived in Alexandria, Egypt.

He was also a mathematician, geographer and astrologer. In a way, he was to his era what Leonardo da Vinci was to the Renaissance. While many of Claudius Ptolemy's work has been refuted, his treatises on astronomy, astrology, geography and music were the foundations from which subsequent scientists built their theories.

The Ptolemaic system of the universe became the dominant cosmological model for centuries thereafter, and was not displaced until the seventeenth century by Kepler and Copernicus.

Modern astrologers consider Ptolemy as the author of one of the oldest complete manuals of astrology, - the Tetrabiblos (Greek) meaning Four Books. Although we know Ptolemy did not invent his methods of astrology we recognize his contribution as being one of orchestrating the mass of Eastern star lore into an organized and reasoned exposition. The Tetrabiblos offered a detailed explanation of the philosophical framework of astrology, enabling its practitioners to answer critics on scientific as well as religious grounds.

As a leading intellectual of his day, Ptolemy's patronage and approval of astrology added to its academic respectability. By preserving its credibility as a science as well as an art, he safeguarded its practice during the medieval period when many other occult studies were persecuted on religious grounds. He spoke of astrology with authority and lucidity, establishing the Tetrabiblos as the definitive reference for astrological students. It was used extensively by Arabic scholars, who regarded Ptolemy as the final word on the subject, and later by European ones when it was translated back into Latin in the 12th century.

Cosmos & Psyche

According to Richard Tarnas, who also wrote of *The Passion of the Western Mind*, history is on the verge of a major shift, comparable to the one wrought by Copernicus and Galileo, but a seemingly antiscientific one: an astrological turn that can only be understood through chronicling planetary alignments as they correlate to the rise of the modern mind over the last 500 years. Understanding planetary alignments, for Tarnas, is crucial to the world's future and requires a genuine dialogue with the cosmos, by opening ourselves more fully to the other, to ancient and indigenous epistemologies, even to other forms of life, other modes of the universe's self-disclosure.

The book is filled with philosophical, religious, literary and scientific thinking ranging from Luther and Kepler through Hemingway and even Hitchcock and Dylan. Reading it will require a strong background in the history of modern thought, an advanced knowledge of astrology, a willingness to withhold skepticism about the role of planetary alignments of the past in understanding life today and the avoidance of imminent world catastrophe. Tarnas's call to redefine what we consider as legitimate knowledge will resonate in some sectors, but it will be a tough sell with the more scientifically hardheaded.

In terms of planetary cycles, our present condition in history is most comparable to the period five hundred years ago—that era of extraordinary turbulence and creativity, the High Renaissance. Not since Copernicus conceived the heliocentric theory has the human community faced such a profound realignment of the way we think.

Perhaps it's time for us to move back to the philosophy that man is part of the universe, not placed here to conquer it. Just as we're finding some older medical procedures, such as the use of leeches, to have value today, perhaps we should open our minds to the distinct possibility that astrological forces can be a powerful influence on our lives.

Curiosity

Where did the practice of astrology originate. Did it evolve in one part of the world and then become adopted by other civilizations.

When you study the ancient civilizations in the Middle East, Central America and in Asia, there are remarkable similarities in how they adapted their lives to be in harmony with the rhythms of earth and the cosmos. Consider that there are pyramids in Mayan and Aztec cultures, as well as Egyptian ones. And that many pyramids are constructed around and point to key events in the solar system, such as equinoxes and solstices.

Similarly, astrology is thought to have developed independently in Babylon and Central America. The astrology systems in India and China most likely were derived from those in Babylon.

It's curious that many fundamentalist religions reject the principles of astrology, because it was, in fact, an integral component of the religions of Babylon. It was part of the calling of priests in Babylon to predict the future and part of their methodology for doing so was to interpret events in the sky. Nothing was considered pure chance and any natural occurrence, no matter how mundane or mysterious, could be an omen of either good fortune or bad.

The part of Mesopotamia that is now Iraq once comprised Babylonia in the South and Assyria in the North. Before Alexander the Great conquered the area in 330 BC, the Assyrians were a military and administrative power, and Babylon was the center of culture. The underlying belief system in both cultures was that there was a spiritual force behind every act of nature. Heaven and Earth were complementary systems, with neither one having dominion over the other. But by the 4th century BCE, this belief system was influenced by the Greek view that the heavens, and its resident gods, determined events on earth.

Dog

Dogs in both the East and West are loyal, faithful and honest and always stick to their firm codes of ethics. It's generally quite trustworthy itself -- except for the occasional little white lies the Dog tells in order to make things go more smoothly. The Dog makes a wonderful, discreet and loyal friend and is an excellent listener. This Sign tends to root for the underdog and its keen sense of right and wrong makes it duty-bound to the core. The Dog's motto seems to be, Live right, look out for the little people and fight injustice whenever possible.

Dogs can also be rather dogmatic, too. They don't go in for light social banter; instead, they go straight for home, discoursing on the topics that are most important to them. At these times the Dog's narrow-minded or stubborn side can become apparent; this Sign has trouble staying light and calm when an important issue is at stake. This Sign can also be very temperamental; mood swings characterize its emotional life and often the Dog needs to run off to be alone in order to recuperate. Part of the problem is the result of this Sign's load of irrational fears that turn into niggling anxieties that turn into hurt feelings and occasional grouchiness. This sensitive Sign needs to warm up to others over time and gradually learn to trust them. Without that trust as a foundation, Dogs can be judgmental and coarse.

The Dog's discerning nature does make it an excellent business person, one who can turn that picky, guarded nature into a keen sense of the truth of another's motives. Where love is concerned, Dogs often have a tough time finding the right match. Dogs need to work on controlling their irrational worries and would also be well-served to relax their mile-high standards, which can sometimes wind up alienating the ones they love.

The most compatible match for a Dog is the Tiger or the Horse.

Dragon

The Dragon is one of the most powerful and lucky Signs of the Chinese Zodiac. Its warm heart tempers its fiery and rambunctious nature. This is a giving, intelligent and tenacious Sign that knows exactly what it wants and is determined to get it. Dragons possess a certain natural charm that ensures they can always influence their peers and often find themselves the center of attention in social situations. This Sign is truly blessed, too. Dragons are considered to be very lucky in love. The Dragon's friends are always keen to hear what this firebrand has to say and when it comes to dispensing advice, the Dragon has the floor.

Its ego can get in the way, but even so, this larger-than-life creature has a knack for creativity and leadership. According to Dragons, it's their natural born right to lead the way -- because who else could do it so surely and so well. As lucky as they are, Dragons have a good chance of achieving considerable material wealth during their lifetimes, although it isn't mere money that's this Sign's main motivation. Power is what the Dragon wants and truly believes it deserves. Dragons are quite the opportunists, forever searching for ways in which to consolidate their considerable power. Contrary to all this strength and fire, a weakened Dragon is a sad sack, a creature that refuses to take defeat with even a modicum of grace.

The leadership role is the only one for the Dragon, the better from which to give orders and be king of the hill. They make solid leaders, too, knowing instinctively what needs to be done to stay on top. Crossing the Dragon is never a good idea -- this beast can singe. A valuable life lesson for this clever creature would be to absorb the principles of flexibility, compassion and tolerance. Being high and mighty can serve to inspire others, but it also keeps Dragons from living their lives to the fullest. If Dragons can learn to balance their quest for success with an appreciation for the little things, their life will be more than worthwhile.

The most compatible match for a Dragon is the Monkey or the Rat.

Elements in astrology

Groups of signs in astrology share certain characteristics that are classified according to four earthly elements – fire, air, water and earth. It helps explain why some signs are more compatible than others.

The Fire signs are Aries (March 21 to April 19), Leo (July 23 to August 22) and Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21). Fire people are leaders, dynamic. They light up everything around them. Because Fire needs Air to exist, Fire signs are most compatible with the Air signs. Water is anathema to Fire and a Water person could try to dampen the dynamism and enthusiasm that defines Fire.

The Air signs are Aquarius (January 20 to February 18), Gemini (May 21 to June 21) and Libra (September 23 – October 22). These are the idea signs, the air that breathes a spark into a flame. They can't be tied down. They require freedom of movement and thought.

The water signs of Cancer (June 22 to July 22), Scorpio (October 23 to November 21) and Pisces (February 19 to March 20) are characterized by the phrase still waters run deep. They're emotional and sensitive, given to deep thoughts and conversations. Just as water can blur an image or hide secrets within its depths, so do Water signs have secretive emotions and abilities. The Water signs are most compatible with Earth signs.

The Earth signs are Taurus (April 20 – May 20), Virgo (August 23 to September 22) and Capricorn (December 22 to January 19). They are stable and consistent. While not as compassionate as the water signs, they are nonetheless nurturing. They can be rigid (stick in the mud) and easily stuck in routines. They are most compatible with Water signs, as Water is necessary for the Earth to properly nurture growing things. Earth helps Water contain itself, which is often necessary for survival on the planet.

Gemini

Know any Twins. Then imagine they're one person and you'll have an idea of what makes up the personality of a person born under the sign of Gemini (May 22 – June 21). Geminis can be contradictory, people with dualities to their nature that can perplex their friends, families and lovers. They love versatility and change, but can be flighty and mutable to create interest in their lives. They don't like routine. Decision making can be difficult for them and they can often change their minds.

In the Zodiac Great Year, the Age of Gemini occurred from about 6450-4300 BCE. It was a time when writing and accounting systems were developed and humans were beginning to trade with one another.

Geminis are kind, affectionate and generous, so long as this doesn't impact their own lives and comfort systems too much. They have a strong intellect and love mental challenges. They catch on to new ideas quickly. They have an analytical side and can see both sides to an issue.

If you're a Gemini, you have some interesting company in your birth sign. Some of the famous Geminis include President John F. Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe, Henry Kissinger, Joe Namath and Paul McCartney. Many members of royal families were born under the sign of Gemini, too. Queen Victoria, King George V and Prince William, all of England, were or are Geminis.

Boredom is a big issue for Geminis and they can get into trouble looking for some excitement. But they're very creative and active and should have outlets for all this energy like artistic projects or exercise or vigorous sports like racquetball. Because they're always looking for new and interesting experiences, they can tend to overindulge in food or drink or night life and club-hopping. Geminis need to remember to pace themselves or they could risk burning themselves out too early in life.

Goat

If you were born in the year 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991 or 2003 then you are a Goat. You're elegant and creative, somewhat timid and prefer anonymity. You are most compatible with Pigs and Rabbits, but don't mix it up with the Ox.

Goats tend to have a hard time with romance; anyone who couples up with a Goat must know, this Sign has a sensitive streak a mile wide and can be subject to bouts of anxiety over seemingly inconsequential things. Goats need plenty of love, support and open reassurance from their lovers. If a relationship is marked by conflict, the Goat will often pull away -- either physically or simply by retreating into the safe haven of its imagination.

If the romance is going well, however, Goats won't hesitate to tell their partner what they need -- and they can be quite insistent about it. This Sign will definitely return the favor, however; the Goat has a luxurious side that delights in indulging a lover's every wish. Appearances are also important to the Goat, which may explain why these folks can spend hours primping and posing.

Goats are generally most comfortable in their own minds (which other, more linear-thinking Signs may have trouble deciphering). This Sign makes a great craftsperson or artisan, or perhaps a teacher of New Age studies -- any occupation that allows its mind the full range of freedom. Goats tend not to be very well-organized, precluding many more dry business endeavors. In fact, Goats tend not to be very materialistic in general, finding plenty of riches in their own imagination. However, especially when in love, the Goat can be quite a lavish gift-giver.

Greeks – fundamental astrology

Greek astrology is often, and more properly, referred to as Hellenistic astrology. It actually originated in Egypt at some point after the conquest by Alexander the Great and the beginning of the Christian era. Hellenistic astrology also comprises Byzantine and Roman astrology. It's therefore more a reference to the general geographic area and an era in history, rather than to one particular society or culture.

While Hellenistic astrology can't be linked to any one individual or culture, it is the root of all modern, or Western astrology. There are numerous documents written in Greek, although some are written in Latin, that are devoted to natal astrology. This is the branch of astrology that concerns the individual. Part of the reason that it's difficult to source these documents to any one individual or culture is that they span a period of time of about 800 years.

But that doesn't mean that important Greek philosophers and scientists haven't been part of the development of astrology. Hippocrates used astrological interpretations as part of his medical diagnostic system. Pythagoras studied in Egypt, and while nothing in writing exists of Pythagoras' theories, he is attributed with stating that the Earth, Planets and fixed stars revolved around the sun, thousands of years before Galileo! Later though, his theory was refuted by Aristotle who declared that the Earth was the centre of the world.

Following Alexander's conquest of Mesopotamia, Greek astrology began to take on a more personal approach. The Zodiac and planets being made to correspond to figures from their mythology; the Stoic philosophers are especially receptive to astrology. Greek astrology influences the metaphysical astrology of India. In approximately 70 BCE, the Greeks devised the first personal horoscope based on time of birth and in 30 BCE, the Emperor Augustus had his horoscope charted and interpreted by Thrasyllus.

Horse

If you were born in the year 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990 or 2002, then you are a Horse. You're popular and attractive to the opposite sex. You can be ostentatious and impatient. You need people, but should marry a Tiger or a Dog. Avoid the Rat!

Horses crave love and intimacy, which is a double-edged sword since it often leads them to feel trapped. Love connections tend to come easily to Horses, since they exude the kind of raw sex appeal that is a magnet to others. This Sign tends to come on very strong in the beginning of the relationship, having an almost innate sense of romance and seduction. Horses are seducers in general; check out any A-list party and you're bound to find the Horse in attendance. This Sign possesses a sharp wit and a scintillating presence; it really knows how to work a crowd. Surprisingly, Horses tend to feel a bit inferior to their peers, a misconception that causes them to drift from group to group out of an irrational fear of being exposed as a fraud.

Horses tend not to look much at the big picture; instead they just follow their whims, which can result in a trail of prematurely ended relationships, jobs, projects and so on. This Sign really knows how to motivate others, though, and get a lot accomplished. Once they find some peace within themselves, they can curb their wandering tendencies and learn to appreciate what's in their own backyard.

Horses are the nomads of the Chinese Zodiac, roaming from one place or project to the next. All of this Sign's incessant activity and searching may be to satisfy a deep-rooted desire to fit in. Paradoxically, Horses feel a simultaneous yearning for independence and freedom.

Indian Vedic Astrology

Indian astrology is based on the theory of fate. The good and the bad actions of the past life determine your fate or Karma of your present life, and the actions of your present life determine your future Karma. According to Indian astrology a person is born at that place, on that day and on that moment when his individual fate is in perfect mathematical harmony with the progress of the stars in heaven.

However it does not preach total dependence on fate. Astrology lets you know what you were born with, what your possibilities are, the limitations, your strong points and your drawbacks. What type of life partners and professions suit you and to expect is also indicated. It also prescribes various remedial measures to ward off the bad effects and to enhance the good results. Astrology is your roadmap of destiny. However your fate is in your hands. The scriptures guide us by telling us what is good and what is bad; what to do and what not to do; how to do and how not to do. You are given a piece of land and the seeds to sow. How much effort to put in to it, what amount of manure and water to add and when how to reap the produce is your job.

After that it is you who have to act using your knowledge intelligence, discrimination and experience. Fate is like a game of cards where you cannot help the cards that have been dealt to you but how to play them is in your hands. You may get good cards but if you play badly you will lose and you may get bad cards and still may win if you play carefully. Don't blame the roadmap if you get drunk, drive badly and have an accident!

Leo

Leos (July 23 to August 22) are among the kings of the zodiac. They are generous and warm-hearted, creative, faithful and loving. They can be prideful and dominant, however. In Greek mythology, Leo was the lion that was killed by Hercules as the first of his 12 chores. Leos are spontaneous and extroverted. Like the king of beasts, they like to be in command and make good leaders. They have strong intelligence and can be philosophical, even religious.

The Age of Leo in the astrological Great Year was between 10750 and 8600 BCE. It was characterized by the Stone Age, and the first towns (Jericho).

A group of lions is called a pride, and this is a characteristic of the Leo personality as well, sometimes to its detriment. But Leos are also highly self-disciplined and will rarely allow any personality characteristic to get out of control.

They make warm-hearted and trusting partners, but can be extremely hurt and let down if this trust is abused. They have a strong sex drive which can make it difficult for them to stay with any one partner for long.

Leos like to be the center of attention and have powerful egos. They can be resentful if they're not the center of attention. Leos occasionally need to remember that less is more and they can attract as much attention if they stop trying so hard to get it. It's that pride thing, again.

There are many, many Leos in the arts and film. Some of them include Zelda Fitzgerald and Alexandre Dumas, Andy Warhol and Neil Armstrong, Roman Polanski and Robert DeNiro.

Which signs are the best and worst matches for the Leo. Surprisingly, the best match is Aries, although you'd think two headstrong signs like these two wouldn't make a good pair. But it's their strong character and passion that makes them a good pair. The worst sign for Leo is a Virgo. Leos tend to be a little more dominating than is good for a Virgo.

Libra

Those born under the sign of Libra, the Scales (September 24 – October 23), have a wonderful balance of traits. They're considered to be diplomatic and urbane, romantic and charming, idealistic and peaceable. Even their darker characteristics aren't so terrible. They can be flirtatious, easily influenced and indecisive. Curiously, Libra is the only sign of the Zodiac represented by an inanimate object, the Scales. Every other sign is represented by an animal or sea creature or person.

Libra is the very first sign of the astrologers' Great Year, and occurred between 15,000 and 13,000 BCE. It marked the dawn of Man and his expression of his condition beyond basic survival mechanisms. This is the approximate date of the monumental Lascaux cave paintings. It also marks the appearance of humans in the Americas, crossing from the Bering Strait into North America.

Like the scales of justice that represented Libra, this sun sign makes good lawyers and judges. They're able to stand back and look at situations with a critical, objective eye. They're among the most civilized of all the signs, with elegance and culture among their traits.

As a partner, Libras are willing to bend over backwards to resolve an issue amicably. The best match for a Libra is a Gemini; they're least compatible with Capricorns because Capricorns like a little more excitement in life, while Libras prefer a more laid-back existence. You won't find Libra sitting out all the dances that's for sure! Very easy going and likeable, you will find Libra's company a pleasure to enjoy. Even though they are outgoing, they are also surprisingly peaceful and calm of spirit.

Famous Librans include John Lennon and Jenny Lind, the famous Swedish singer. Doris Lessing, Luciano Pavarotti, Oscar Wilde and Johnny Carson are just a few of the Librans who have enriched our lives in the arts.

Love signs

The stars can provide much insight about ourselves, including how, when, and with whom we are most likely to fall in love. Of course, astrology is not destiny, so while the one you love may not be a classic match for you in astrological terms, that doesn't mean all is lost. By understanding the universal forces that attract you to your lover, you can learn how to make any relationship work, and better understand your own self in the process.

First consider how accurate your own horoscope is. There are similarities among many of them, but find the resource that best describes YOU. Then use that same resource to do a little research on your beloved. You certainly don't have to reject someone because he's <gasp> a Water sign and you're a Fire sign. But, it can certainly provide some insight into why you two clash, or why you think he's a wet blanket sometimes.

You can really go into detail about the ideal zodiac mate for you, but it's hard enough to find someone, isn't it. So don't walk away from that Water or Earth guy. Use your knowledge to understand him. Maybe you need to borrow some tips from Air or Earth to help manage the communications between the two of you or to help resolve conflicts.

There are many really good books and Web sites to help you figure out the details of your zodiac match. Do a little research. And make it fun! What's your sign can be a cliché, but if you deliver the line in the right way, it can also be a good ice breaker. If you're a Virgo, and you're introduced to, say, a Libra, tell him he's got his work cut out for him. Everyone loves a challenge and it's an easy way to flirt and start to get to know someone.

Monkey

If you were born in 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980 or 1992, then you are a Monkey in Chinese astrology. They are described as intelligent and able to influence people. An enthusiastic achiever, you are easily discouraged and confused. Your best matches are with a Dragon or a Rat and beware the Tiger.

Monkeys are good listeners and tackle complicated situations with ease. This Sign's natural curiosity gives it a broad-based intellectual curiosity. Monkeys have a show-off side that loves nothing more than to impress their friends with all they know.

The Monkey's world, full reckless energy and revelry, isn't for everyone. Remember, though, it's not that this Sign is mean; it might just be a bit too curious for its own good. Monkeys often feel the need to try everything at least once, which can make for a merry-go-round of relationships.

The Monkey's love of self-indulgence can also lead to other types of trouble. This Sign may have limited self-control concerning food, alcohol and other pleasurable activities. It's party time all the time for the Monkey, yet when it leads to a monster hangover or a shattered heart (generally someone else's, not theirs), this Sign might actually show a touch of remorse. They won't flat-out admit the error of their ways, but at least they'll pull back and try to tone things down -- for a while.

Monkeys must try to learn to think of others ahead of themselves, at least some of the time. This Sign's world will be more complete once it realizes the world doesn't revolve around it.

Natal chart

In astrology, your natal chart (sometimes called birthchart) is a graph that shows the positions of the planets and astrological houses in the sky at the moment of your birth. Your natal chart is much more detailed and accurate than your horoscope. A popular horoscope considers only the position of the Sun, whereas your natal chart includes hundreds of pieces of data. Mark Twain once said: The difference between a good word and the right word is like the difference between fire and firefly. Similarly, your popular horoscope may hold some hints of truth, but your natal chart tells us the real story of your natural personality.

Analyzing the planetary positions and relationships in your natal chart affords a remarkably profound and revealing glimpse into your natural character, with its inherent strengths and weaknesses. Among other things, your natal chart will tell you: A) what type of partner and relationship you seek and will be best matched with, B) what type of job or career your natural strengths and weaknesses are best suited for, and C) obstacles that need to be overcome in your life. Most importantly, your natal chart will help you to understand your desires, motivations, and why you are the way that you are.

For a natal chart to be accurate, we must know the exact positions of the stars at the exact moment of your birth. Since the houses of the zodiac revolve one degree every four minutes, an accurate time of birth is necessary to determine your Ascendant sign and some planetary aspects. Although you can generate a natal chart without these highly time-sensitive positions included, to have a more accurate chart that is generated with an exact time and place of birth.

Numerology

Pythagoras, the father of mathematics is also the father of esoteric numerology. He believed that there was an order to the universe and that number were more than a means of quantifying things. His philosophies included the idea that each number had an esoteric meaning.

Esoteric numerology, then, is the art and science of understanding the spiritual significance and orderly progression of all things. Every word or name vibrates to a number and every number has an inner meaning. The letter and number code, when properly understood and applied, brings us into a direct and close relationship with the underlying intelligence and vibration of the universe.

Pythagoras taught that numbers operate on the spiritual plane. With a few exceptions, everything can be factored to a number from 1 through 9 and each of those numbers has an esoteric meaning. It also represents an interval in a cycle. Pythagoras saw in number patterns and geometrical ratios the explanations of all natural phenomena, musical harmony and tonal qualities. He knew that the stars and planets were vibrating entities that produced sound, which he called the harmony of the spheres.

The only times that life numbers are not coded to the lowest single digit is when that number is 11 or 22. Ordinarily, 11 would be factored to a 2. But the number 11 is what's called a Master Number and is extraordinarily powerful in Numerology. There is, in fact, an entire cult built around the number 11, or more specifically, 1111. This is a number that refers to End Time, and is a fascinating study all by itself.

As an example, your birthdate provides the pattern which we call the Life Lesson. Your name given at birth, when transcribed into numbers with a code that has existed since Pythagoras' day, can tell you the state of consciousness that you have achieved in this lifetime and indicate the record of the growth of your soul as well.

Your personal numbers are pieces of the puzzle that define your existence. When you delve into numerology, you also delve into the ancient sciences of astrology and tarot.

Only Astrology Book You'll Ever Need

This is the Publisher's Statement describing this book: Everyone's favorite astrology book, having sold over 500,000 copies, is now even easier to use with an interactive cd-rom. This edition still includes all of the detailed information about how to cast your own chart the old-fashioned way and, more importantly, how to interpret it once you're finished. But the cd-rom in this new edition allows the reader to cast his or her chart in just a few minutes by inputting the date, time and place of birth into the computer, producing a personalized astrological chart in just a few minutes. Once the reader's chart is created, he or she is directed to the corresponding pages in the book to read further about moon signs, sun signs, ascending signs, placement of the planets in their houses, and much more.

The Library Journal's opinion of the book is as follows: Although this is not the only astrology book that your library will ever need, it is still a valuable title that should be strongly considered. Woolfolk, the horoscope columnist for Marie Claire and Redbook magazines, has updated her classic guide for the first time in 19 years. Thoroughly covered here are sun signs, moon signs, planets, and the significance of the 12 zodiacal houses, as well as the most recent discoveries in astronomy and 21st-century projections. The author gives an easy, logical way to integrate the interpretations of the sun signs, moon signs, planets, and houses in any given chart, something not easily done or often seen in general astrology books. The book's only shortcoming is its lack of instruction on making a detailed technical chart, which is necessary if one is to cast a complete and accurate horoscope. However, Woolfolk compensates for this by teaching a simplified method that is about 90 percent accurate enough to get a beginner started and includes a bibliography for further instruction. Astronomical tables are included to help cast the simplified chart. A great bargain for the price, this is highly recommended for all astrology collections.

Origins, Babylonians

The Babylonians are generally acknowledged to have originated the practice and science of astrology. Their astrological charts enabled them to predict the recurrence of seasons and certain celestial events. So, in the beginning and for more than 2,000 years, astrology and astronomy were the same science.

Babylonian astrology was introduced to the Greeks early in the 4th century BCE and, through the studies of Plato, Aristotle, and others, astrology came to be highly regarded as a science. It was soon embraced by the Romans (the Roman names for the zodiacal signs are still used today) and the Arabs and later spread throughout the entire world.

While earliest astrology was used to bring a sense of order out of apparent chaos, it was soon employed to predict weather patterns, primarily for agricultural purposes. It was eventually widened to include forecasts of natural disasters, war and other events in the affecting the human condition. Once success in these fields was established, it was a natural evolution for astrology to be used as a means for advising for kings and emperors and, in time, the population at large.

The zodiac (which is derived from the Greek word meaning circle of animals) is believed to have developed in ancient Egypt and later adopted by the Babylonians. Early astrologers knew it took twelve lunar cycles (i.e., months) for the sun to return to its original position. They then identified twelve constellations that they observed were linked to the progression of the seasons and assigned them names of certain animals and persons (in Babylonia, for example, the rainy season was found to occur when the sun was in a particular constellation which was then named Aquarius, or water bearer).

Around the year 2000 BCE, Babylonian astrologers believed that the sun, moon, and the five planets known at that time (Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Saturn, and Venus) possessed distinct powers. Mars, for example, appeared to be red and was associated with aggression and war.

Ox

If you were born in the years 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985 or 1997 then you were born under the sign of the Ox in Chinese astrology. Our Chinese menu that we pilfered from lunch today says that you are bright, patient and inspiring to others. You can be happy by yourself, yet make an outstanding parent. You should marry a Snake or Cock. Avoid those Sheep.

The Ox is a steadfast and solid, a born leader. It's dependable and has what it takes to achieve great things. They are methodical, not plunging in without considering what the right steps are to get a project finished. They believe in doing it right the first time.

In the business world, because the Ox can be strong leader, it can also be a bit stubborn or dogmatic. They prefer to lead and don't like to be pushed around.

While the Ox is smart, trustworthy caring and honorable, it can also be a bit judgmental and this characteristic can keep them from having the close friends and relationships that they desire. Some good advice for the Ox is to learn to value qualities in others, and to listen to what others have to say. Sometimes it pays just to say nothing.

The Ox's daily horoscope for today: Relatives or friends may provide you with discreet and effective help. Try to spend more time with your children and satisfy their needs. Don't forget to play the lottery today -- you'll be then in a stream of chance. All chances will be on your side and at the highest point; it's essential that you forge ahead courageously and methodically. The stars will support your ambitions and will help you be recognized and appreciated in your work.

Pig

The Pig may be the most generous and honorable Sign of the Chinese Zodiac. Pigs are nice to a fault and possess impeccable manners and taste. They are perfectionists and can be perceived them as snobs, but this is a misconception. Pigs are simply possessed of a truly luxurious nature, one that delights in finery and nice things (in surroundings, food, lovemaking and otherwise). This Sign believes in the best qualities of mankind and certainly doesn't consider itself to be superior. Pigs also care a great deal about friends and family and work hard to keep everyone in their life happy. Helping others is a true pleasure for the Pig, who feels best when everyone else is smiling.

A Pig with no one around to appreciate its giving nature is a sad thing indeed. Pigs are so magnanimous they can appear almost saintly; this can lead some less-than-well-intentioned souls to stomp all over this Sign, and the bad news is, the Pig will take the blows.

Pigs are highly intelligent creatures, forever studying, playing and probing in their quest for greater knowledge. They can be misinterpreted as being lazy, however, due to their love of reveling in the good stuff; this Sign could happily spend hours on end making love, napping, taking a long bubble bath or dallying over an incredible spread of rich foods. Pigs tend to make wonderful life partners due to their hearts of gold and their love of family. Even so, Pigs can be rather exclusive, choosing to spend time with those who will appreciate them most and ignore the rest of the populace. Pigs would do well to realize that there's more to life than being needed. When they open up their world to a diverse group of people, they will truly bloom. The most compatible match for a Pig is the Rabbit or the Goat.

Pisces

If you're a Pisces, you probably have a lot of friends, as you have an accepting and malleable nature that makes it easy for other people to be around you. A Pisces is more likely to go with the flow rather than swim upstream to try to change people or their environment.

They can be more emotional, rather than rational and analytical. They don't thrive in highly disciplined environments. Nine-to-five jobs are anathema to the Pisces nature. They are drawn to situations where they can use their artistic gifts and their appreciation of art and nature. They love luxury and pleasure. They can think on their feet and enjoy new situations and change. They are happiest in the fields of music, literature or art.

Who's the ideal partner for the Pisces. Not the rugged, caveman type, for sure. A relationship with a Pisces will be meeting of the mind and spirit, less so than the body. Pisces are cerebral and not intensely sexual. The need to be courted gently. They are intensely loving and loyal and have a monogamous nature. Don't abuse this rare creature.

If you're a Pisces, you may find yourself occasionally being walked over or taken advantage of because of your fluid nature. You may need to find ways to assert yourself that's in harmony with your psyche. Because you tend to go with the flow and live in the moment, you might have a money-management style that can leave you short of funds at times. You may need to be stricter with yourself to ensure that doesn't happen. Next time you're drifting around a department store, just do a quick tally of everything before you get to the cashier. Put at least half of it back, if not more. Chances are it will still be there the next time you have money in your pocket!

Planets, Moon, Mercury

When most of us think of astrology, we think about our natal sign and not much else. Do you know what some of the major influences are though, that define these Zodiac signs.

First and foremost is the Sun. It is the center of all life and represents a person's personality and spirit. It is the planetary ruler of the sign Leo.

The Moon, on the other hand, gives us our Soul. The Moon is the ruling planet of the Zodiac sign Cancer. It is very much associated with the mother and with maternal instincts. In Chinese astrology, the Moon represents Yin, while the Sun represents Yang.

Mercury rules over Gemini and Virgo. It is the planet of the mind and of communication. In other words, it is the planet of the idea and the means to communicate the idea. The planet Venus rules over Taurus and Libra. Venus is associated with characteristics and principles of harmony and beauty. It is of course, concerned with love. It is also concerned with the pleasure we derive from personal possessions.

Mars is the ruling planet for the dynamic Aries, and to some astrologers, Scorpio, although modern astrologers now determine that Pluto is the ruler of Scorpio. Mars is the planet that is concerned with the things you want, and how you go about getting those things. Jupiter is associated with pleasure and enjoyment. It is the ruler of Sagittarius and is also associated with principles of growth, religion and higher education.

Saturn is the ruling planet of Capricorn and is associated with principles such as reality and restrictions, boundaries and rules. Saturn was traditionally the ruler of Aquarius until the discovery of the planet Uranus. Neptune is the ruling planet of Pisces and is associated with deception, illusions, spirituality and psychic phenomena. The planet Pluto is the ruling planet of Scorpio and is associated with the concept of transformation.

Rabbit

Timid and attractive, the Rabbits of the Chinese Zodiac tend to act more like bunnies, whether they like it or not! This Sign is extremely popular and has a wide circle of family and friends. Its compassionate nature leads it to be very protective of those it holds dear, but where romance is concerned, the Rabbit's sentimentality can lead it to idealize relationships. The sweet, sensitive Rabbit often ends up giving more of itself to a partner than is realistic or healthy. The good news is, when this Sign goes off-balance, the Rabbit's core group of friends and its stable home life help bring it back to center.

The Rabbit is a rather delicate Sign that needs a solid base in order to thrive. Lacking close, supportive friends and family, the Rabbit might just break down in tears at the first sign of conflict. Emotional upsets in this Sign's life can even lead to physical illnesses. Rabbits dislike arguments and other conflict and will try anything to avoid a fight; this results in something of a pushover nature. Rabbits can also lapse into pessimism and may seem stuck in life -- often to mask their insecure natures. Rabbits tend to move through life's lessons at their own, rather contemplative pace; it's a waste of time to become exasperated with this Sign's seeming disinterest in facing its problems and conquering them.

With the right partner -- meaning someone whose high principles won't allow it to take advantage of this sensitive, giving Sign -- the Rabbit can make an incredibly loving and protective partner or family member. Rabbits love to entertain at home and always make sure their house is comfortable and tastefully-furnished. What Rabbits need most is a stronger sense of self-worth and the security that comes with it. Their discerning natures, coupled with some hard-won assertiveness, will help these happy creatures go far.

The most compatible match for a Rabbit is the Goat or the Pig.

Rat

Now remember, in Chinese astrology, the some of the signs have names that we in Western culture might not associate with positive human characteristics. Chief among these might be the sign of the Rat. If you were born in 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984 or 1996 then you are a Rat!

According to today's Chinese menu, you are ambitious yet honest,. Prone to spend freely. Seldom make lasting friendships. You are most compatible with Dragons and Monkeys and least compatible with Horses.

While in the West, we associate rats with sewers, vermin and disease, this animal is viewed a bit differently in the East. The Eastern rat is appreciated for its quick wits and ability to accumulate and hold on to wealth. Rats are a symbol of good luck in the East. It's a stylish and charming sign in Eastern astrology. It's sharp and funny will take good care of those it considers its good friends.

While rats are convivial types, they are also shameless promoters of their own agendas. This Sign's charm and powers of persuasion are often used to their best advantage. Rats are motivated by money and possessions. They're quick-witted and sharp-tongued and love a good debate.

Rats enjoy being on the outside looking in, as they like to learn by observing. They're forever observant, always tucking away information in their brains for use at some future time if they need it. Rats don't like to be bored and are always looking for challenges to keep their already-sharp wits even sharper.

The Rat's horoscope for today: You'll have a tendency to exaggerate the smallest difficulty; there'll be the need to see things with objectivity, and then you'll feel more relaxed and, therefore, more efficient. Beware of intoxications, notably by ingestion. Be very cautious and strict in the use of drugs. If your intestines are sensitive, don't let yourself be tempted by the vegetarianism fad; this diet is too rich in cellulose and consequently doesn't suit you. More than ever you'll aim high and you'll concentrate your life forces on the achievement of your professional ambitions.

Rooster

If you were born in the years 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981 or 1993 then you're a Rooster. The Rooster is described as a pioneer in spirit, devoted to work and the quest for knowledge. It is selfish and eccentric and is best matched with Snakes and Oxen. Oddly enough, the writer is a Snake and her sister is a Rooster. We do think there's something to this astrology thing!

Roosters are quick thinkers and are practical and resourceful, preferring to stick to what is tried and true rather than taking unnecessary risks. Roosters are keenly observers of their surroundings and those around them. It's hard to slip anything past a Rooster, since they seem to have eyes in the backs of their heads. This quality can lead others to think the Rooster is psychic, but that's not generally the case; instead, this Sign enjoys a keen attention to detail that makes it a whiz at anything requiring close analysis. Roosters make great lawyers, brain surgeons and accountants, to name a few of this Sign's possible occupations. Above all else, the Rooster is very straightforward and rewards others' honesty in kind.

Roosters tend to be perfectionists and expect to be in control, especially over their appearance. Primping and posing for the Rooster can go on forever. Being noticed and admired is an aphrodisiac for Roosters, and they can go a long time on a few kind words. Roosters also adore being out on the town, especially if they're in the company of adoring friends. The Rooster will also be the best-dressed one of the bunch -- style counts with this Sign, regardless of the cost.

Roosters need to learn to value their heart and soul as much as their good looks. Their excellent people skills and sharp minds are qualities that others will appreciate as much as a pretty face.

Sagittarius

Sagittarians (November 23 – December 21) have a positive outlook on life, are full of energy, versatility, adventure and eagerness to experience the new and different. They enjoy traveling and exploration; they are ambitious and optimistic, even in the face of disappointment.. Their strongly idealistic natures can also suffer many disappointments without being affected. They are honorable, honest, trustworthy, truthful, generous and sincere, with a passion for justice. They are usually on the side of the underdog in society they will fight for any cause they believe to be just, and are prepared to be rebellious. They balance loyalty with independence.

Sagittarians are usually modest and are often religious, with a strong sense of morality, though they tend to overemphasize the ethical codes they follow and worship beliefs about God rather than God Himself. This means that, negatively, they regard rigid, unloving, intolerant adherence to ritual and conventional codes as more important than the truths they symbolize or embody. They sometimes pay lip service to religions and political parties in which they have ceased to believe because the outward forms satisfy them, yet they may not hesitate to switch allegiance in politics or change their system of belief if they see personal advantage to themselves in doing so.

Sagittarius is the Archer and many war heroes were born under this sign. There are also many artists and entertainers born under this sign, such as Beethoven, Toulouse-Lautrec and Georges Seurat. Winston Churchill, baseball legend Ty Cobb and publishing tycoon William Randolph Hearst were all born under the sign of Sagittarius.

In relationships, Sagittarians are reliable and will almost never betray their partners. They are generous and forgiving, although they are prone to temper and outbursts. Professionally, they make excellent teachers and philosophers. Before the invention of the automobile, they were said to be excellent with horses. This would make some sense, as the symbol for Sagittarius is a centaur, half man and half horse.

Scams

The world is full of all kinds of people. If we just examine the family and friends we are close to, we'll see a wide range of values and behaviors and different levels of integrity. While it's unfortunate, every profession has its bad seeds. This is particularly true of psychic and astrology scams. Let's face it.

When you're happy and fulfilled, you have little need to delve into why things are happening to you the way they are. When a relationship is not fulfilling or you have a run of bad luck, that's when it's easy to get taken in by scam artists who claim they can help you – at a price of course.

Additionally, the world of psychics is a much unregulated one. Therefore, there is no real way to check a psychic's qualifications, or experience (everybody seems to have 20+ years of experience), or morals. Consequently, anybody can get up one morning and declare themselves psychic without any problem.

It is important to be able to make the distinction between serious practitioners and the charlatans. While the following advice cannot guarantee that the psychic you will choose is a good one, it nonetheless will help you avoid a good bunch of scammers

Also, there are a few of my clients that have been scammed by very ingenious, shameless and heartless con artists who have no trouble using personal faith and Christianity itself as a vehicle to gain a victim's trust and scam them out of substantial money.

Trust that all that you need and want will come to you easily when you learn love yourself and live fearlessly again. That will take some time. Be assured, a psychic can neither hurt nor benefit you by asking for large sums of cash to help you with a curse ... you'd be better off taking the money and going on a holiday.

Scorpio

Scorpio, the Scorpion (October 24 to November 22), one of the most energetic and powerful signs in the Zodiac. This is an exciting and magnetic personality, very passionate and emotional. They are forceful personalities and can easily be destined for leadership roles. Consider some of the complex famous characters are Scorpions: Hillary Clinton, Pablo Picasso, Dylan Thomas, both Simon AND Garfunkel are Scorpions. Others include the poet Sylvia Plath and Marie Curie. Marie Antoinette was a Scorpio as well.

Scorpions have a better chance of having genius-level IQs than most of the population; they are intense, critical and analytical. They tend to rebel against all conventions and can be political extremists.

The best love match for a Scorpio is Capricorn; they understand each other on a profound spiritual, almost psychic level. Scorpions give their hearts completely and passionately.

Being so gifted, they can find fulfillment in many employments. Their inner intensity can result in the ice-cold self-control and detachment of the surgeon, the concentration of the research scientist, and the heroism of the soldier. Any profession in which analysis, investigation, research, dealing with practicalities, and the solving of mysteries are relevant, can appeal to them. So police and detective work, espionage and counterespionage, the law, physics or psychology may attract them, and they can become masters of the written and spoken word. They may be most persuasive orators and find fulfillment as diplomats or preachers and, if they make the Church their profession, their inner intensity can express itself in the spiritual fervor of the mystic or the thaumaturgy.

There is no Age of Scorpio in the astrologers' Great Year, because that will be some time in the future. What will characterize that era, we wonder? Will mankind survive that long.

Secret Language of Birthdays

If you're a non-believer in astrology, spend a little time with the Secret Language of Birthdays by Gary Goldschneider and Joost Eiffers. We guarantee it'll make a believer outta you.

It's a weighty tome, to be sure. Each birthday gets two full pages of on-target information as well as the usual celebrity birthdates, etc. Now this is a good book to have. Even better is one of the companion books, the Secret Language of Relationships.

Describing 1,176 possibilities, The Secret Language of Relationships sheds light on the classic questions--the hows and whys of chemistry in relationships. Is there a prime ingredient for love at first sight, a Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers of it all. An entertaining exploration of the very thing we cannot do without--each other--this wonderful volume explains why we feel the way we do about the people in our lives, and how--if necessary--to make it better.

You start with a matrix in the front with birthweeks across the top and side. You match your birthdate on one axis and find the birthdate of your new beloved. Every match-up by birthweek gets its own astrological prognosis. We used this book after many, many first dates, none of whom really worked out.

Both of them are fun books to take to work occasionally or have at parties because they're great icebreakers and a lot of fun to watch people's reactions when they hear their own profiles.

Other books in the series by Goldschneider and Efferes include the Secret Language of Destiny and the Astrology of Time. If you become more involved with astrology, you might want to invest in these books. They're well worth it. You may even want to take a class or seminar in astrology, or join a newsgroup online. There are so many of them, just do a few searches and you're sure to find many like-minded spirits.

Sidereal Astrology

The Sidereal or Eastern system of astrology is based on the position of the belt of fixed stars and constellations in the heavens, whereas the Tropical zodiac or the Western astrological system is based upon the position of the Sun in relation to the Earth. Sidereal astrology is the system of astrology used by some western astrologers which bases their interpretation around the use of the sidereal zodiac. It was introduced to the West by the Irish astrologer Cyril Fagan in 1944 and is practiced by a minority of Western astrologers. Sidereal astrology ties its signs of the zodiac to the actual constellations and is more complex, yet more mathematically oriented than Western astrology.

Originally, the first degree of the zodiac was common to both systems. Due to the peculiarities in the Earth's orbit, however, the belt of stars and constellations appears to shift in relation to the Tropical zodiac. As a result, the two zodiacs are drifting apart. This is called the procession of the equinoxes, and today the difference between the two systems is calculated at about 23 degrees. Thus, if a person is born on January 1, he will have the Sun in Capricorn according to the Western system, but according to the Sidereal system the Sun will be at approximately 16 degrees Sagittarius.

By practical experience the use of the Sidereal method is preferable. It is mathematically more correct, and it also penetrates into the subtle elements of nature, such as mind, intellect, and spirit to present a more complete picture of our soul's sojourn in the realm of time and space.

The Sidereal astrological system notes the strengths and weaknesses that a person will experience in life, and also recommends remedial measures for improving our future. The karma or destiny which we are born with has been destined by activities in previous births. The spiritual astrology of India suggests that karma is not eternal and can be changed.

Skeptics

Skeptics of Astrology often say that horoscope readings are so general they could apply to anyone; and that people will look for what they want to see and ignore what doesn't seem true for them, thus deluding themselves that the horoscope is accurate.

This skepticism would most likely be eliminated if the skeptic actually looked at a real horoscope done by a competent professional astrologer, using his unique time and place of birth. But in this second part of the series, we'll look at an example of how a skeptic of Astrology can come to a false conclusion and go on saying that Astrology is bunk or fake to others - by NOT using a real horoscope to prove his point.

Although astrology will always have its skeptics, they should consider some of the following before making up their minds.

---Astrology probably gave birth to Astronomy. There is nothing supernatural about casting a horoscope, most of it is done according to precise astronomical and mathematical principles.

--Many famous scientists have been into Astrology: Tyco Brahe, Karl Jung, Kepler, Huxley, and Copernicus. Many others remain anonymous.

--Astrologers do not necessarily believe in fate. They believe the stars impel not compel.

-- There are 10,000 practicing paid Astrologers and millions of horoscope followers. There are hundreds of books on the topic. Only 10 percent of Americans believe there can't be anything to it.

--. Many astrologers believe in a natural synchronicity between the stars and events. Other countries place even more value in it.

--It is an undisputed scientific fact that the planets have a measurable magnetic, gravitational and electromagnetic influence on the earth. Most people agree that bizarre behavior tends to peak on full moons.

--Astrology is not limited to natal. There is also electional, horary, mundane, medical, meteorological, Chinese 12 year and millennial.

--The vast majority of those who look at their own chart (not just a newspaper column) find uncanny accurate hits.

Snake

Being a Snake ourselves, we should be able to recite our Chinese restaurant placement profile by heart, but here it is anyway: Born in the years 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989 and 2001. Wise and intense with a tendency towards physical beauty. Vain and high tempered.

The Snake is an interesting mix of extroversion paired with introversion, intuitive reasoning paired with business savoir-faire. Snakes are considered to be lucky with money and will generally have more than enough to live life to the fullest, regardless of how important it considers money to be; this may be due to the fact that Snakes tend to be rather tight with cash. They're not stingy; they're simply more mentally than physically active. Snakes tend to hang back a bit in order to analyze a situation before jumping into it. Their charming, seductive quality actually belies a rather retiring nature; this Sign is perfectly happy to spend the whole day curled up with a good book and, thus, can be mislabeled as being lazy.

The Snake is somewhat insecure deep down and tend to be a rather jealous, possessive lover, behavior that can end up alienating loved ones. Despite these less-than-stellar tendencies, however, the Snake often proves irresistible and is a generous, loving partner. Slightly dangerous and disarmingly smart, the Snake's philosophical and intuitive mind generally supersedes logic in favor of feelings and instinct. Snakes will rely on their own gut reactions and intuitions before turning to others for suggestions. This makes this Sign a great hand in any business venture, possessing the caution and smarts needed to get ahead.

In general, of course, Snakes are generous and genteel, charming and appealing. Snakes must try to learn humility and to develop a stronger sense of self. Once Snakes realize that confidence comes from within, they will finally be comfortable in their own skin.

The most compatible match for a Snake is the Rooster or the Ox.

Sun sign

Your Sun sign represents the sign of the Zodiac that the Sun was in at the time of your birth. The Sun rules willpower and ego. It is the core of who you are and what you are about.

Your Sun sign represents the main direction and focus you want your life to take and your determination to accomplish what you set out to do. It represents your personal honesty and integrity, your ability to command respect and authority and your capacity to impress and influence others.

The beginning and end dates for each of the signs can vary from year to year. We suggest you take a look at our cusp page for greater information if you were born on a cusp. People born on the cusp of a sun sign can exhibit characteristics of both signs.

If the Sun was in the part of the Zodiac called Aries at the time of your birth, then you are an Aries! Your character though similar to one of the twelve zodiac elements, will always be unique as a result of who you are and the choices you make. In fact your character as far as Astrology is concerned requires that the position of all the Planets (the nine planets in our solar system plus the moon and sun) are calculated. Imagine that these planets are the ingredients that can make up a human being, they can all be added in many different permutations and quantities.

So a professional astrologer takes into account the position of all these planets in your Birth Chart, using only your time, date and place of birth. This greater accuracy focuses on your character, problems, and forecasts your future choices and best most timely solutions.

Taurus

Think about characteristics of a Bull other than the well-known phrase of bull-headed. Taureans (April 21 to May 21) are steadfast, loyal, grounded. They are stable and balanced. They're smart without being overly intellectual. They're not likely to strike out for the unknown, but will prefer familiar territory. They're patient, reliable and loving.

In the workplace, Taureans are good craftspeople, good with their hands. You can trust a Taurus; they make good managers and foremen. They're good in the fields of banking, architecture, farming, medicine or chemistry. These are fields in which you can be creative, but within a framework of stable practices and science. Taureans are good workers and not giving to goofing off. Because they're not big risk-takers, they can be trusted with the company finances and are completely reliable and trustworthy.

In the zodiac Great Year, the Age of Taurus took place approximately 4300-2150 BCE which witnessed the rise of Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations. This was the era of the Bronze age in Greece, rise of Minoan and Mycenaean cultures. This was a period characterized by the growth of agriculture, and the building of pyramids and megaliths. Bull cults were prevalent in Assyria, Egypt, Crete.

Famous Taureans have excelled in all walks of life. They include Socrates, George Lucas, George Carlin, Martha Graham and Margot Fonteyn, Audrey Hepburn and Jerry Seinfeld.

As a partner or lover, Taureans are faithful and home-loving, patient parents. Not given to sexual experimentation. Taureans are grounded in practicality. They're stable and like harmony. They love pets and the outdoors, and like biking, hikes and enjoying nature in general.

Every positive characteristic has another side to it, and in the Taurean, this reliability and steadfastness can manifest itself as jealousy and obstinacy. Fortunately, they're also highly intelligent and can soon reason their way out of the occasional dark mood and depression.

Tiger

Is there a creature on the planet more magnificent than the Tiger. We think not, and that's not even our sign. On our Chinese restaurant menu today, here's how they describe the Tiger: If you were born in the years 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986 or 1998, you're a Tiger. Tiger people are aggressive, courageous, candid and sensitive. Look to the Horse and Dog for happiness. Beware of the Monkey.

Tigers are born leaders. The Tiger is the third Sign of the Chinese Zodiac. It is a Yang Sign and most closely associated with the Wood Element. Recent Tiger years have been 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, and 1998. The Tiger is a very changeable person, with a potent natural ability that is often in great danger of being abused. They are either leaders or rebels.

They can be vain, quarrelsome and overly aggressive at times, but their inherent charisma and vast reserves of charm are usually sufficient to extract them from any problems that may arise from their lack of foresight. Their idealistic outlook on life can take quite a few knocks on the head from this abrupt reality until it finally collapses -- at which point the Tiger personality can lapse into its less attractive aspects.

Tigers are courageous beyond compare and generally come out ahead in battle, be it in the boardroom or the bedroom. Seduction is one area where the Tiger is definitely king. Noble and warm-hearted, Tigers have a natural, raw appeal that's extremely attractive to other Signs. They're not just about attraction, though; ever on the side of right, Tigers will fight the good fight to the bitter end if the cause is worthy. Opponents are wise to fear this feline.

A lesson that Tigers would be well-served to learn is moderation in all things. Once these cats can find their center and direct their considerable energies toward worthwhile endeavors (as opposed to racing through life), they will accomplish much.

Tropical astrology

Tropical Astrology is the old astrological division of the sky. When the Zodiac was invented, the position of the constellations were written down. But since then, the whole Zodiac has shifted almost a whole sign due to the Precession, so whoever was once born a Virgo, is now probably born a Leo - with the personality changes that come with it. Tropical Astrology ignores this, and keeps using the old tables - which have nothing to do with where the planets actually are in the sky.

Sidereal Astrology acknowledges the problem with the shifting signs, but digs itself deeper into the ludicrous: The more sidereal astrologers try to follow the real division of the sky, the more they are distancing themselves from the old wisdom. Sidereal astrologers cannot claim to build on ancient knowledge, but have to change the signs and characteristics over time. They are in turn making the whole concept of Astrology invalid. The real astronomical signs are a few days off from the Sidereal system by now - so not even Sidereal Astrology is using the correct star signs.

Sidereal astrology uses the actual constellation in which the sun is located at the moment of birth as its basis; tropical astrology uses a 30-degree sector of the zodiac as its basis. Tropical astrology is the most popular form and it assigns its readings based on the time of the year, while generally ignoring the positions of the sun and constellations relative to each other. Sidereal astrology is used by a minority of astrologers and bases its readings on the constellations near the sun at the time of birth.

According to some astrologers, the data support the hypothesis that there is a connection between heavenly bodies and human events. There are correlations too synchronous to be mere chance between astrological signs and such things as personality, emotions and human destiny.

Virgo

Now sometimes, we're not too sure just how right-on these astrological profiles are. I mean, consider Virgo (August 23 – September 22), your intrepid author's sign. Virgos are universally considered to be very buttoned-down, methodical and detail-oriented. Geesh. Meticulous and reliable. I have to wonder if my mother didn't lie about my birthdate. I'm about as flaky and they come and as far as methodical is concerned, I never do anything the same way twice.

Anyway, for you archetypical Virgos, here's your profile, according to the experts. Now intelligent and analytical, we can agree with. It does say that we're shy and can be difficult to land as a partner. Maybe that's why we're writing this on a Saturday night when all those Aquarius and Pisces are out there living it up.

The age of Virgo in the astrologers' Great Year took place circa 13000-10750 BCE. Not too much going on there. It was the end of the Ice Age (well, we're also considered cool and aloof – it figures). It was also marked by spawning the hunter-gatherer culture and clay pottery has been discovered in artifacts from this period of time. This also marked the first use of agriculture by Man...er, WOMAN. Virgo IS represented by a woman, you know. The only zodiac sign that does so.

The best match for Virgo is Capricorn and the worst is Aquarius. One thing some experts say about the Virgo is that while they appear cool and aloof on the outside, they may be hiding emotion that is almost too intense. We're so grateful someone recognizes this that we may have to briefly disappear and weep in a corner somewhere for a few minutes.

Some of our favorite authors and other celebrated figures were also Virgos. Leonard Bernstein, Mary Godwin Shelley (author of "Frankenstein"), Margaret Trudeau and...Mickey Mouse!

Zodiac compatibility

So is there anything to zodiac compatibility. Does your astrological sign really have anything to do with who your ideal mate is. Or who can be the best friend for you. Is there a reason why some siblings are rivals for life, while others are as close as twins.

Consider the writer, who is a Virgo, although an atypical Virgo (we think). Her sister is a Capricorn, and according to the astrology experts, we should be in tune with Capricorns. And in fact, the writer and her sister are quite literally opposite sides of the same coin. We have the same dreams! And we know when the other is in trouble of some kind. We will call each other at odd times, only to discover that the other was in trouble, or needed help or advice or counsel. We don't know it consciously, but it just works out that way.

Then there was her husband, or ex-husband, to be more exact. He was a Libra and perhaps we should have done some research into astrology before we got married. In one article we read, under Libra, it said "No chance." How true, how true!

So should you make the decision about your life partner based on astrology. Well, it doesn't hurt to do some dispassionate examination before taking such a big step. While you might not want to reject someone on the basis of his birth date, a good horoscope CAN help you out with some clues to his or her nature that you might not pick up on all by yourself. And when they do something that completely mystifies you, perhaps a little basic knowledge of astrology will help you decipher what's going on and help you communicate better. And that's never a bad thing, no matter what resource you're using for better communication.

Conclusion

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