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Glossary of Astrology Terms



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Abscission	Frustration of a planet.
Accidental Dignity	A situation whereby a planet receives strength other than by essential dignity. This happens by random location of a planet in an angular house.
Accidental Debility	A situation where a planet is weakened.
Alcocoden	The giver of years. This planet will have influence on the longevity of the native.
Air Signs	Gemini, Libra and Aquarius – they are masculine signs. Air signs are considered to govern the mental/social functions.
Almutem Figuris	Using a “point” system this is the planet which achieves the highest score in the chart and is considered to have the most influence in the chart.
Almuten	The planet receiving most points as a house ruler.
Angular	There are four angular houses and positions in a chart. Also known as the Ascendant, Mid-heaven, Descendant and Imum Coeli (IC).
Antiscia	The ecliptic longitude point that has the same declination on the other side of the Tropical zodiac Cancer-Capricorn axis as the point in question.
Apogee	The point when a body (ie the moon) is at its greatest distance from the earth.
Applying	An aspect between two planets is considered to be applying when the faster moving planet is approaching the slower moving planet.
Arabic Part	A point in the chart defined as a specific distance from the ascendant having regard to a formula and governing a specific part of life.
Arc	The distance measured along a circle, usually expressed in degrees.
Ascendant	The point of degree on the eastern horizon at birth. The cusp of the first house also known as the “rising sign” Abr: Asc.
Aspect	The relationship or angle between two planets in a chart. An orb may be allowed. Major or Ptolemaic aspects are: Conjunction, Sextile, Square, Trine and Opposition.
Azimuth	A point of the horizon and a circle extending to it from the zenith. An arc of the horizon measured clockwise between the south point of the horizon and a vertical circle passing through the centre of any object.
Beholding Signs	Those at equal distance from the tropics or the same declination. Ptolemy deemed them to be “of equal power” but applied only when two such signs were joined by a body in each, mutually configured. Aries-Virgo, Taurus- Leo, etc. As in Antiscia.
Benefics	The planets which bring benefit namely Venus and Jupiter.
Benefic Influences	Those produced by benefic planets and aspects either natively or by transit.
Besieged	A planet situated between two other planets and in orb of both planets.
Bitter Signs	A term applied to the Fire signs Aries, Leo and Sagittarius which are said to be hot, fiery and bitter.
Cadent	The houses most distant from the angles being the 3 rd , 6 th , 9 th and 12 th houses. Planets in these houses are considered weakened.
Caput Draconis	The Dragon’s Head or North Node.
Cauda Draconis	The Dragon’s Tail or South Node.
Cardinal	A sign modality. Cardinal signs are Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn.
Cazimi	The term describes planets within 17’ (minutes) of arc of the Sun’s longitude. It is said to be “in the heart of the Sun” and thus fortified.
Collection of Light	When a planet is in aspect to two other bodies which are not within orbs of each other, a collection of light results through the action of the intermediary planet. It indicates a third influence.

Combustion	When a planet is within 8.5 degrees of the Sun by conjunction it is considered to be combust. The planet is therefore invisible at this time and “burned” by the Sun.
Conjunction	An aspect between two planets within a certain orb, usually a maximum of 10 degrees. The energies are considered to blend which may help or hinder depending on the planets involved.
Constellation	Groups of fixed stars existing in a circle outside or beyond the tropical zodiac. They bear the same names as the tropical signs but no longer correlate to when the Sun occupies the same sign.
Contra-parallel	Planets having the same declination but on the opposite sides of the celestial equator are contra-parallel. Having an effect similar to an opposition.
Critical Degrees	A planet’s strength is considered to be increased when in one of these degrees.
Cusp	The beginning or edge of a house in a chart. Also the point between zodiacal signs. Planets near the cusp of a house have added significance.
Debility	A planet in debility is considered weak and may not be able to deliver all that it promises. Debilities are made up of detriments and falls.
Declination	The distance of any planet from the celestial equator, either north or south.
Decreasing in Light	From the Full Moon to the next New Moon. A waning Moon.
Decumbiture	Literally a “lying down”. A horary figure erected for the moment when a person is taken ill and used to judge the prognosis and duration of the illness.
Delineation	The analysis, assessment and interpretation of an astrological chart.
Descendant	The point of degree on the western horizon at birth. Also the cusp of the seventh house.
Detriment	The sign opposite to a planet’s rulership. A planet’s energies are considered weakened when in detriment. The planet acts against its own interests.
Dexter Aspect	From the Latin meaning <i>right</i> , referring to a right hand aspect.
Dignities	Dignities refer to strengths and weaknesses of the planets. Planets are considered dignified when in their signs of rulership and exaltations.
Directions	A system which forecasts events from a chart in which each point is moved forward from its natal position by a specific amount.
Direct Motion	A planet that is travelling through the signs in their order is considered direct in motion.
Dispositor	A planet is disposed of by another when it occupies that planet’s sign.
Diurnal	A diurnal chart is where the Sun is placed above the horizon.
Earth Signs	These are Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn – feminine signs. Earth sign natives are predominantly practical.
East Point	The point measured along the zodiacal ecliptic where the prime vertical intersects the horizon in the east. Also called the equatorial ascendant.
Eclipse	An occurrence that involves both the Sun and Moon and Earth. They can be Solar or Lunar and one of the luminaries is obscured.
Ecliptic	The plane of the solar system in which the planets orbit around the /sun. From a geocentric point of view, the apparent path of the Sun through the zodiac. Measurement on the ecliptic is by longitude (Signs and degrees)
Elements	A category of each of the signs of the zodiac. There are four elements being Fire, Earth, Air and Water. The elements are known as the triplicities.

Ephemeris Time	A uniform time scale based on planetary motion. In 1984 Ephemeris time was replaced by a comparable time scale called <i>Dynamical Time</i> .
Essential Dignity	When a planet is in a sign of which it is a ruler or exalted ruler.
Equator	The celestial equator is the projection of the Earth's equator upon the celestial sphere.
Equinox	The time when the days and nights are of equal length, which happens twice yearly when the Sun enters Aries (vernal equinox) and Libra (Spring equinox). The two equinoxes are also the points where the celestial equator intersects the plane of the ecliptic.
Exaltation	Each planet has its own sign of exaltation. In exaltation it is considered to gain some advantage by enhancement of its virtues.
Face	An ancient term for what is now usually referred to as a decan or division of a sign in portions each containing 10 degrees.
Fall	The sign opposite to a planet's exaltation. Here the planetary energies are considered weak and disadvantaged.
Feminine Signs	The six even numbered signs, Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, Scorpio, Capricorn and Pisces. Feminine signs are considered sensitive, responsive and reactive.
Firdaria	Determined by the chart being either Diurnal or Nocturnal. These are periods throughout life where rulership is given to particular planets for a set period of time.
Fire Signs	These are Aries, Leo and Sagittarius – Masculine signs. Fire signs are active and assertive.
Fertile	Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.
Fixed	A sign modality. The fixed signs are Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius. Natives of fixed signs are accumulators.
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time. The Prime meridian of 0 degrees longitude. The starting point for all other time zones.
Gregorian Calendar	Our present calendar. This superseded the Julian calendar during the last 500 years. Commencing in Europe on October 15 th 1582, in England on 14 th Sept 1752. Russia converted in 1918 and Greece on 1 st March 1923.
Hayz	A masculine diurnal planet above the earth in a day figure and a feminine nocturnal planet under the earth in a night figure and considered fortunate. It is better if planets are in the signs of their own gender.
Heliacal Setting	When a star is overtaken by the Sun and is lost in its rays. The Heliacal rising or setting of the Moon occurs when it is within 17 degrees of the Sun. Other stars and planets, when within 30 degrees distance.
Helios	The Greek Sun god who went home at sunset in a winged boat made of gold.
Hemisphere	Half a sphere or a circle. The horoscope is divided into upper and lower hemispheres by the horizon and into eastern and western hemispheres by the meridian.
Hermes	An Olympian god, son of Zeus. The Romans called it Mercury messenger of the gods.
Horary Astrology	Meaning "of the hour" and a branch of astrology used for seeking the answer to a specific question.
Horoscope	Originally this term meant the Ascendant of the chart meaning literally the "hour of birth". In modern times it has come to mean the whole natal chart.
House	The houses result from dividing the celestial sphere into twelve segments. They are numbered from one to twelve in an anti-clockwise direction commencing from the horizon on the eastern or left hand side of the chart. Each house deals with a specific area of life. There are many house systems in use.
Hyleg	The giver of life. There are choices of hyleg and positions of hyleg.

Imum Coeli (IC)	The lowest point of heaven. Opposite the Mid-heaven. It is also the cusp of the 4 th house.
Increasing in Light	Between the New Moon and the Full Moon.
Intercepted	A sign is intercepted when it lies between two house cusps without touching either. It is wholly contained within the house.
Joys (Planetary)	A place which a planet is said to prefer. i.e. The Moon in the third house.
Julian Calendar	This is the European calendar that preceded the Gregorian Calendar.
Julian Day	A continuous count of days and fractions thereof from the beginning of the year – 4712. The Julian day begins at noon, GMT.
Latitude, Celestial	A measurement north and south of the Ecliptic.
Lights	The luminaries – the Sun and the Moon.
Longitude, Celestial	Measured from the Meridian of the Vernal Equinox. 0 degrees Aries.
Lord	Often used synonymously with the Ruler. It means the Ruler of a house in its more correct sense. It may also be used to indicate the Lord of the Year/Hour or Chart.
Luminaries	The Sun and Moon or “Lights”.
Lunar Return	Occurs each month when the Moon returns to its natal position. Alternatively it can be the chart each month when the Moon returns to its position in the current Solar Return.
Masculine Signs	Aries, Gemini, Leo, Libra, Sagittarius and Aquarius.
Midheaven	Medium Coeli (Abr. M.C.) the Southern angle and cusp of the 10 th house.
Midpoint	An equidistant point between two planets or chart points.
Modalities	Astrological energies that are designated Cardinal, Fixed or Mutable. Also known as the Quadruplicities.
Mutable	The mutable signs are Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces. These are considered flexible or changeable signs. Also known as <i>Common</i> signs.
Mutual Application	This results when the applying body is in direct motion and the body to which it is applying is in retrograde motion. That is the motion is toward each other.
Mutual Reception	When two planets are in each other’s essential dignities even if in difficult aspect to each other the effect is considered to be beneficial. This can also apply to planets in exaltation, triplicity and term. They must be in aspect to each other.
Nadir	The lowest point below the earth, or the point opposite the Zenith. Not to be confused with the I.C.
Naibod Rate	A constant mean value for the Sun’s apparent motion, 59’08” of arc per day.
Natal Chart	A graphic depiction of the positions of the planets and house cusps at the date, time and place of birth.
Nativity	The birth moment. When the infant first inhales and is capable of independent life. Not a horary or electional chart.
Nocturnal	Meaning “of the night” and refers to a chart of a person born when the Sun was NOT visible above the horizon.
Nodes of Moon	Called the North and South Nodes. Regarded as a significant point in the chart.
Occidental	A planet is said to be Occidental of the Sun when it rises and sets after the Sun. This tends to weaken the planet.
Orb of Lights	The orb for Lights is usually considered wider than for planets and can be up to 12 degrees for the Sun and Moon.

Opposition	A hard or challenging aspect between two planets where they are 180 degrees apart. An orb is allowed.
Oriental	A planet is said to be oriental of the Sun when it rises and sets before the Sun. Planets are considered stronger when oriental of the Sun.
Part of Fortune	An Arabian Part. It shows the house that will most readily contribute to the financial welfare of the person and how the person will find “luck” in the material world.
Partile	An exact aspect.
Peregrine	Foreign, alien. A planet is not considered peregrine if it is in mutual reception.
Planetary Periods	A time is given in years to each particular planet to rule. These are used to predict events and influences.
Precession of the Equinoxes	The movement of the equinoctial point 0 Aries which causes the tropical zodiac to pass backward in its relation to the constellations at the rate of approximately 50 seconds per year. Precession is caused by the pole of the equator revolving around the pole of the ecliptic in a 25,920 year cycle.
Prime Meridian	0 Degrees 0’ longitude. The line of longitude running through Greenwich, England.
Prime Vertical	A great circle passing through the zenith and nadir of the observer and the east and west points of the horizon at right angles to the meridian.
Proflections	The rising of signs in an orderly fashion where the Lord is rotated in the zodiacal order and rules for a specific period of time. An ancient cyclical method of prediction.
Progressed Chart	A chart that has been “moved forward” by any of the progression methods. The planetary positions will differ from the natal positions. A progressed chart is read in conjunction with a natal chart.
Quadrants	The four quarters of the chart, each containing three houses.
Rectification	The method of using life events to construct the “probable” time of birth.
Reception	Where one planet occupies the sign of another and the planets are in aspect. The receiving planet may be able to help the other planet.
Refrantion	Occurs when one of two planets applying to an aspect turns retrograde before the aspect is complete. Thus there is not a successful conclusion.
Retrograde	The apparent backward motion of a planet as viewed from earth. Retrograde planets are considered weak or debilitated.
Return Chart	A chart where the planet concerned returns to the exact position it occupied at birth.
Rising Sign	The Ascendant or point coming over the eastern horizon at the moment of birth. The cusp of the first house.
Rulership	The place where a planet is in its own sign and its strength is considered to be greatest.
Secondary progressions	The principle of using one day for a year in forecasting coming events or experiences. The planetary positions are taken from the day after birth.
Separating	An aspect where the faster moving planet is moving away from a slower moving planet.
Sextile	An aspect between planets of sixty degrees. It enhances the energies involved and occurs across elements.
Sidereal Zodiac	The zodiac of fixed stars or constellations. This is the Archetypal Zodiac according to R. Zoller.
Significator	A planet may be taken as a significator of a person or event or affairs ruled by a house. The ruler of the ascendant is taken as the significator of the native.
Sinister Aspect	A left handed aspect.
Solar Chart	A chart constructed without a birth time, usually at midday or sunrise.
Solar Return	A chart where the Sun returns to its exact natal position annually.

Square	An aspect of 90 degrees considered to cause stress and challenge internally.
Terms	The division of signs into sub rulerships as used by the Egyptians and others. The fourth level of dignity.
Transits	The aspects formed by the positions of the planets moving overhead at a specific time with those of the natal chart.
Translation of Light	The transference of influence which occurs when a transiting planet while separating from one planet is applying in aspect to another. Usually it involves a faster moving planet taking the light from one slower moving planet to another.
Trine	An aspect in which two planets are approximately 120 degrees apart. This is an aspect of flowing energies.
Triplicity	This is the Third Level of Essential Dignity. Triplicity rulers give the <i>third level</i> of essential dignity and are related to the element in which a planet is posited. There are three rulers for each element.
Tropical Zodiac	The Zodiac used by the majority of Western Astrologers. In the tropical zodiac, the equinoctial point 0 Aries is identical with the nodal intersection of the celestial equator with the ecliptic.
Under the Beams	When a planet is within 15 degrees of a conjunction with the Sun. Considered a minor debility but not as unfavourable as Combust.
Via Combusta	The combust path found from 15 degrees Libra to 15 degrees Scorpio. An area of many difficult fixed stars.
Void of Course	When a planet can form no further Ptolemaic aspect to another planet during the remainder of its course through the sign in which it is presently posited.
Water Signs	Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces- feminine signs. These signs are considered to be both sensitive and emotional.
Zenith	The point directly overhead, through which pass the Prime Vertical and Meridian circles. The nearer a planet is to the Zenith the more powerful its influence.
Zodiac	A circle or belt extending 8 degrees each side of the ecliptic divided into twelve signs each containing 30 degrees of longitude.

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