

## How To Use Astrology In Your Daily Life: A Guide

By Joelle Foster

Astrology is the study of the energies of the planets and their cycles. There are better times to do certain things or not. In ancient times, astrologers and astronomers were one in the same. The ancient civilizations used astrology with great reverence and were in tune with the cycles of life, watching the motion of the sun and the moon in particular.

Many of us can probably remember our parents and grandparents using The Farmer's Almanac to make decisions such as when to plant or harvest. My paternal grandfather even consulted it before he got a haircut. Little did he know that he was using astrology! The Farmer's Almanac, a widely popular reference chronicle, has served as a guide to our ancestors for many years.

I suspect that one of the original uses of astrology was to know when to do things such as plant and harvest. Another way that it was used is the selection of auspicious dates and times to perform specific activities such as marriage ceremonies or baptisms. This is based on the cycles of the sun and moon. It is important to be aware of these cycles each month as this is the most practical way to use astrology. The sun cycle creates the seasons and the moon is the "fast hand" as it triggers events.

Retrograde planets are also important to know about as they affect us personally and the overall social climate. In particular, I always note Mercury retrograde. Thirdly, it is essential to be aware of eclipse seasons as they affect the whole of humanity and can impact us powerfully on a personal level depending on the sign and degree of the eclipse.

### Moon Cycles

Let's start with the cycles of the moon. Overall, the New Moon is the time to begin things and the Full Moon is the time that projects come to fruition. This is a cycle of approximately 28 days.

### Retrograde Planets

All planets except for the sun and moon go retrograde. Mercury goes retrograde the most amount of time and Venus the least. It is important to know these dates as they relate to the meanings of the planets going retrograde. When a planet is about to turn retrograde, it is moving slowly and marks a time when affairs ruled by the planet will seem to slow down.

The period right before it comes to a halt and appears to move backwards is called the shadow period. This means that the motion of the planet seems to slow way down. This is why you may feel the effects a week or so before. From the perspective of the earth, the planet appears to move backwards during a retrograde period. It does not really move backwards but is actually just closer to the Earth than usual. This is a time to pull back and review that area of life that the planet represents. The personal planets, Mercury, Venus and Mars travel faster and are the most important to note for retrograde motion as they will make the most impact in our day to day life and society.

## Eclipses

There are two eclipses or eclipse seasons per year. This is caused by the nodes of the moon lining up with the new moon and/or full moon. The nodes are not actually celestial bodies but mathematically calculated points. By an eclipse season I am referring to the weeks prior to or following a solar or lunar eclipse. The opinions vary on how many weeks but I think that it is safe to say two weeks is a definite window of time to observe the effects.

An eclipse season is not a good time to start new activities but it is an excellent time for doing inner work such as meditation or introspection. I suggest that one avoid important new activities about two weeks before and after the eclipse. Also, eclipses tend to bring things that have been hidden to light. Pay attention to the news and you will see this in action. People tend to be on edge during eclipse periods and behave strangely you will notice so exercise more patience with others and yourself. You can get great insight from your dreams during this time as well. Be diligent about writing down your dreams for you will get answers to things that you have been pondering.

Of course, this is general as it can affect each person a little differently due to the fact that we all are unique sparks of the Divine. There are many more ways that you can use astrology in your daily life but as my teacher sometimes says, "This is enough for now!". I invite you to take note of how you feel during these periods and phases of the moon that I have discussed. With this process you will get an idea of how you can make your own adjustments.