



# The White Eagle School of Astrology

NEW LANDS · BREWELLS LANE · LISS  
HAMPSHIRE · ENGLAND · GU33 7HY  
[www.whiteeagleastrology.org](http://www.whiteeagleastrology.org)

A COURSE IN ASTROLOGY FOR BEGINNERS BY JOAN HODGSON D.F.Astrol. S

## LESSON 1

### WHAT IS ASTROLOGY? THE SYMBOLS OF THE PLANETS AND THEIR MEANINGS

The value of astrology was well-known in ancient days, when the subject went hand in hand with astronomy, and was used to help in the wise management both of state and personal affairs. Today, its worth is being rediscovered, and in the future it will again be respected for the insight and illumination it can bring to human problems. A knowledge of astrology can be of great value to those whose work is in personnel management, psychology, medicine, marriage guidance, child care, indeed in all kinds of social service. Statesmen and politicians could be greatly helped by understanding planetary trends, so that a favourable time could be chosen for important conferences, diplomatic moves and all kinds of business enterprise. Most important of all, astrology can give to individuals an understanding of their deepest self and the spiritual lesson of the present incarnation. It brings to the soul flashes of insight into spiritual truth and a key to the understanding of some of life's deepest mysteries.

How, then, should we define astrology? It is the study of the heavenly bodies and their influence on the life and evolution of humanity. This probably does not mean the influence of the physical bodies of the planets and constellations, for it is doubtful whether of themselves they have any more influence than have the bodies of human beings without the spirit and soul behind them. However, occult law teaches that behind the physical planets are great spiritual Beings, Archangels, who, with their host of helpers, ranging from Devas to the little fairies and gnomes of the nature kingdom, have as part of their work the evolution of the human soul.

Astrology is both a science and an art. It demonstrates the laws of life and of the universe with mathematical precision, and yet the interpretation of these laws when we are delineating a horoscope requires from us more than a scientific knowledge of planetary and zodiacal principles. Every horoscope may be likened to a piece of music containing infinitely varied combinations of the seven basic notes of the scale, or a painting containing infinitely varied combinations of the seven colours of the spectrum. The 'native' of the horoscope—the person whose horoscope it is—may be likened to the composer or the artist, who has these seven notes or colours with which to work. The work is limited by (a) the instruments for which the piece is composed, or the size and nature of the canvas or paper, i.e. the native's environment and upbringing, and (b) the quality and quantity of the instruments which are going to play the piece or the paints which are to convey the picture on to the canvas or paper, i.e. the native's quality of consciousness and ability to respond to planetary rays.

Every horoscope will show these seven notes or colours; it will show clashes that must be harmonized, limitations that must be observed, but it will not show the experience and skill of the artist behind — the age of the soul. Consequently we must realize that when reading a horoscope we can only point out the possibilities shown in it, the discords that need to be resolved, the clashes to be harmonized. To do this we must strive through aspiration and meditation for intuitive guidance, which alone will enable us to give real help and inspiration to the native of the horoscope which will enable him or her to make the inner effort needed to harmonize the conflicting elements in the nature so that with the materials given (as shown by the horoscope) he or she will be able to build the life and character into a harmonious whole and so be of the greatest service to God and humanity.

The study of astrology teaches us to be tolerant and sympathetic in our outlook and dealings with humanity, for through it we realize that on the journey from the babyhood to the Christhood of the soul many phases of consciousness must be experienced and many lessons learnt. The noble dignitary of the Church in one life may experience in another the sorrow and privation of a beggar; the only key we have to humanity's true greatness is its capacity for suffering, for joy, for compassion, for wisdom, humility and service. Angels of destiny working through the planetary rays guide and discipline us inexorably until we have mastered every detail of the Law of Life. Since at our present stage of evolution we cannot even begin to understand this process, we should not presume to judge or criticize another or question anyone's response to those angels of destiny.

In order to study astrology, we must firstly learn the signs and symbols with which we have to deal, secondly how to set up a horoscope, and thirdly we must acquire such a deep knowledge of the planetary principles that we are able to interpret them in any configuration.

In studying a horoscope we have to deal with the following:

1. The Sun, Moon and planets
2. The *Signs of the Zodiac*
3. The *Houses* of the horoscope
4. Interplanetary relationships known as *aspects*

The Sun, Moon and planets, signs of the Zodiac and aspects are all denoted in a horoscope by *glyphs*, symbols which are as ancient as the world itself and are connected with the meaning behind the sign, planet, or aspect. As you study them and become more familiar with astrology, you will find that meditation on these symbols will help you considerably, for it will stimulate your faculty of intuition which needs to be developed if you are to become a really good astrologer. The aim of this course is not only to give you the salient facts and to guide your study of astrology, but also to help you to develop your own powers of judgement and interpretation through meditation and aspiration.

## THE SUN, MOON AND PLANETS

The glyphs or symbols of these are composed of varying combinations of the **circle**, which represents spirit, or the spark of God within us all, the **semicircle** which represents soul, and the **cross** which represents matter. Those planets in which the circle of spirit or the semicircle of soul is placed *above* the cross are the ones which give the greatest freedom from material limitations, while the planets in which they are *below* the cross are those which cause us to wrestle with material limitations and so gain strength.



## THE SUN

(This is not strictly a planet, astronomically speaking, although it is all right to call it a planet in astrology.) It is the centre and lifegiver of the solar system and represents the Spirit, the source of life, the individuality or real self, the spark of God that resides within us all.



## THE MOON

(Also not strictly a planet.) The satellite of the earth. It collects the life-force from the Sun and redistributes it to the earth. It represents the psyche, and the personality of the present incarnation.

The Sun and Moon, for obvious reasons, are sometimes referred to as *lights* or *luminaries* rather than planets.



## MERCURY

The planet nearest to the Sun; in mythology, the winged messenger of the gods. It is the planet of wisdom: it represents the mind. Notice the blend of all three symbols, spirit, soul and matter. It is the power of mind that helps us consciously to coordinate all the aspects of our being into an harmonious whole, developing gradually from the small self-consciousness centred in the physical brain to the full God-consciousness centred in the 'mind in the heart'.



## VENUS

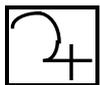
The planet of harmony, unity and beauty. The symbol shows spirit brooding over matter and moulding it into beauty.

The orbits of both Mercury and Venus are closer to the Sun than the Earth's orbit; all the other planets have orbits further out from the Sun than the Earth's.



## MARS

(This was once written as an upside-down Venus symbol, with a cross over a circle, but has since become corrupted.) Spiritual fire and energy struggling to manifest in and through matter. The planet of energy and desire.



## JUPITER

The soul rising above the limitations of matter. The planet of expansion, philosophy and aspiration.



SATURN

The soul striving for expression beneath the cross of matter. The planet of contraction, limitation, concentration and purification.



URANUS

The divine fire of spirit motivating the balanced soul, which is gaining mastery over matter. A 'new age' influence. The lightning flash, the truth-bringer and awakener. Can be very destructive in a material sense, but always clears the path for progress.



NEPTUNE

The soul above the cross of matter, free and open to the inspiration of the Light. A beautiful, subtle influence to which it is difficult to respond. The planet of mysticism and at-one-ment. Its influence always needs watchfulness for it is subtle and insidious, like the tide which creeps up before we realize it. It can bring wonderful blessing and illumination, or muddle and chaos.



PLUTO

For a while after Pluto was first discovered (in 1930), three different symbols were used, but this is now the one in common use, although some astrologers feel that  best expresses the rather extraordinary duality of the planet. Its power can be transforming or annihilating and it has much to do with the release of atomic energy. It touches the highest and the lowest, and is especially connected with group activity of all kinds, ranging from gangster groups, trade and business combines to secret brotherhoods working chiefly on the inner planes. It is usually active at the closing of one phase or cycle and the beginning of another.

In the solar system the planet Earth comes between Venus and Mars. Astrologically Earth is regarded as the centre of the birth-chart, the focusing point of all the planetary forces. From humanity's point of view, the heavens appear to revolve round the earth. This *geocentric* (earth-centred) viewpoint is natural while humanity is at its present stage of evolution, but as we evolve to spiritual maturity we shall gradually become freer from earthly limitations and begin to take a *heliocentric* (Sun-centred) view of life. We shall then begin to see the working of the Cosmic Plan not only for the earth but for other parts of the universe also.

The Sun, Moon and Mercury represent within us spirit, soul and mind respectively. In their influence they are to a large extent governed by their relationships with other planets. For example, if they were linked with Mars, the spirit, soul or mind would be brought strongly under the Martian ray. These three planets are therefore termed *neutrals*, because their influences are so coloured by the planets(s) that most closely aspect them or which rule the signs in which they are placed.

You will have noticed that the symbols of Venus and Jupiter both have the circle (spirit) or semicircle (soul) above the cross (matter). These two planets therefore help to bring expansive and easier, harmonious conditions into the life. Conversely, those of Mars and Saturn have the circle or semicircle below the cross; by bringing difficult and testing

conditions they bring out the strength in a soul. (In medieval times when astrology was much associated with fortune-telling, these two pairs of planets were referred to as *benefics* and *malefics* respectively, because they were thought to bring good or bad luck into the life.)

Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are much involved with experiences and opportunities outside the ordinary and with spiritual matters. They are often implicated in the breaking up of old and outworn conditions in a life and releasing the soul and spirit to greater freedom and understanding, and so in the long run are growth promoting, but not usually comfortable from a material viewpoint.

It is important that you become familiar with these planetary symbols and you will find it helpful to have pencil and paper by your bed so that just before you go to sleep you can jot them down, at first copying them and later doing them from memory. While doing this try to meditate on the symbol — this will prepare your mind so that when you fall asleep your spiritual guide will be able to take you to the 'Halls of Wisdom' on the inner planes and teach you more. It is very helpful to try to establish and maintain this contact with your guide, who will help you to develop the intuition needed for interpreting planetary influences. It has also been found helpful to make geometric designs and patterns with the symbols. This is not as childish as it sounds, because if your mind is alert, even though your hand is, as it were, playing, you will sometimes find that suddenly some combination of the three basic symbols (circle, semicircle and cross) will give you an inspiration, a momentary glimpse of cosmic truth.

After each lesson in the course you will find suggestions for reading and exercises to be completed before starting the next lesson. These should be sent in to your tutor for correction, but if you are reasonably confident about your answers you need not send them all in individually, but in batches every few lessons. If you have any doubts about your work, however, it is best to send them in as soon as you have done them so that they can be checked before you carry on. Your tutor will always be happy to answer any queries you may have.

## WORK BEFORE LESSON 2

1. Memorize the planetary symbols thoroughly so that you can draw them and recognize them instantly, and immediately call to mind the basic principles of each.
2. List the planets from memory in their correct order, with their symbols and brief details about them. Check carefully from the details given in the lesson and keep for future reference (you need not send this in).
3. (For sending in)
  - a. Write the glyphs (symbols) for the Sun, Venus and Moon.
  - b. Name and write the glyphs for the two planets which tend to bring harmonious conditions.
  - c. Name and write the glyphs for the two planets which tend to bring testing conditions.
  - d. Write the glyph for Neptune. What is its meaning?
  - e. Write the glyph for Uranus. What is its meaning?
  - f. Write the glyphs of all the planets in the correct order.
  - g. Which is the planet (a) of mind, (b) of beauty? Write their glyphs.
  - h. Discuss the influence of Pluto on humanity, and its glyphs.