

# Vedic Astrology

## A. Introduction

Vedic Astrology refers to Indian or Hindu astrology, a system that originated in ancient India and which was documented by sages in the Vedic scriptures. Also known as "Jyotish"—the science of light—Vedic astrology deals with astral light patterns that are thought to determine our destiny.

### A1. What Is Vedic Astrology?

Astrology is the science of the effects of planetary movements on our lives. Astrology is based on astronomy, and astrologers need to know the correct positions of the planets among the fixed stars at any given time, as well as the correct positions of the zodiacal fixed star signs in relation to any place on earth at any given time. Once the correct positions of the signs and planets are known, astrologers can construct charts representing these positions. Using her knowledge, the astrologer can study the charts and can make a wide range of conclusions about the moment the chart was cast for. Primarily, astrology is used to understand one's self and our karma for this life.

### A2. Basic Principle of Vedic Astrology

The basic premise of this astrology is that all things are linked. Your karma or fortune is determined by a predestined cosmic design. You are a soul incarnating in a body at a very specific time and place, and your life is a reflection of the greater whole into which you are born, just as flowers bloom at certain times, when all conditions are perfectly congenial. So is the case with our births on this planet, according to the theory of karma.

### A3. What Are Charts?

In Jyotish, the main item is your chart. It's a map of the planets in the signs of the zodiac. Charts are cast based on an exact moment at an exact place on earth. Therefore, the moment you were born and the place you were born has a chart, which is known as your "birth chart" or "natal chart".

By reading the chart of the heavens for the time and place of your birth, astrologers claim they can know much about you. The positions of the planets in the real star-based zodiac are taken and your "dashas" (predictive timeline) are arranged. Your Vedic chart will most likely reflect your real life, and your dashas are probably operating the way they should. The Vedic astrologer looks at these planets, signs and house placements in your chart and can "see" your

personality, as well as life events and possibilities—both the good and the bad times in your life. The dashas are then used to determine "when" the events will unfold in the life.

#### A4. The Predictive Magic of Vedic Astrology

Dashas give a greater predictive accuracy to Vedic astrology than is possible with Western astrology. These "planetary ruling periods," which are unique to this system, give Vedic astrologers a tool for quite accurately predicting the trends, changes, and events in your life with amazing precision. Therefore, Vedic astrologers are less limited to talking about your general overall self and can get more deeply into what's going to happen in your life.

#### B. Jyotisha or Jyotishya

Jyotisha or Jyotishya (from Sanskrit jyotiṣa, from jyóti- "light, heavenly body") is the traditional Hindu system of astrology, also known as Hindu astrology, and more recently Vedic astrology. The term Hindu astrology has been in use as the English equivalent of Jyotiṣa since the early 19th century, whereas Vedic astrology is a relatively recent term, entering common usage in the 1970s with self-help publications on Āyurveda or yoga. Vedanga Jyotishya is one of the earliest texts about astronomy within the Vedas. However, some authors have claimed that the horoscopic astrology practiced in the Indian subcontinent came from Hellenistic influences, post-dating the Vedic period. Some authors argue that in the mythologies Ramayana and Mahabharata, only electional astrology, omens, dreams and physiognomy are used but there have been several articles and blogs published which cite multiple references in those books about rashi(zodiac sign) based astrology.

#### B1. History and Core Principles

Jyotiṣa is one of the Vedāṅga, the six auxiliary disciplines used to support Vedic rituals.[10]:376 Early jyotiṣa is concerned with the preparation of a calendar to determine dates for sacrificial rituals, with nothing written regarding planets. There are mentions of eclipse-causing "demons" in the Atharvaveda and Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the latter mentioning Rāhu (a shadow entity believed responsible for eclipses and meteors). The term graha, which is now taken to mean planet, originally meant demon.

The foundation of Hindu astrology is the notion of bandhu of the Vedas (scriptures), which is the connection between the microcosm and the macrocosm. Practice relies primarily on the sidereal zodiac, which differs from the tropical zodiac used in Western (Hellenistic) astrology in that an ayanāṁśa adjustment is made for the gradual precession of the vernal equinox. Hindu astrology includes several nuanced sub-systems of interpretation and prediction with elements not found in Hellenistic astrology, such as its system of lunar mansions (Nakṣatra).

## B2. Modern Hindu Astrology

Astrology remains an important facet of folk belief in the contemporary lives of many Hindus. In Hindu culture, newborns are traditionally named based on their jyotiṣa charts, and astrological concepts are pervasive in the organization of the calendar and holidays, and in making major decisions such as those about marriage, opening a new business, or moving into a new home. Many Hindus believe that heavenly bodies, including the planets, have an influence throughout the life of a human being, and these planetary influences are the "fruit of karma".

The Navagraha, planetary deities, are considered subordinate to Ishvara (the Hindu concept of a supreme being) in the administration of justice. Thus, it is believed that these planets can influence earthly life.

## B3. Elements

### 1. Rāśi – zodiacal signs

The Nirayana, or sidereal zodiac, is an imaginary belt of 360 degrees, which, like the Sāyana, or tropical zodiac, is divided into 12 equal parts. Each part (of 30 degrees) is called a sign or rāśi (Sanskrit: 'part'). Vedic (Jyotiṣa) and Western zodiacs differ in the method of measurement. While synchronically, the two systems are identical, Jyotiṣa primarily uses the sidereal zodiac (in which stars are considered to be the fixed background against which the motion of the planets is measured), whereas most Western astrology uses the tropical zodiac (the motion of the planets is measured against the position of the Sun on the spring equinox).

### 2. Nakṣatras – lunar mansions

Nakshatras - The nakshatras or lunar mansions are 27 equal divisions of the night sky used in Hindu astrology, each identified by its prominent star(s).

### 3. Daśās – planetary periods

The word dasha (Devanāgarī: दश, Sanskrit, daśā, 'planetary period') means 'state of being' and it is believed that the daśā largely governs the state of being of a person. The Daśā system shows which planets may be said to have become particularly active during the period of the Daśā. The ruling planet (the Daśānātha or 'lord of the Daśā') eclipses the mind of the person, compelling him or her to act per the nature of the planet.

There are several dasha systems, each with its own utility and area of application. There are Daśās of grahas (planets) as well as Daśās of the Rāśis (zodiac signs).

The primary system used by astrologers is the Viṃśottarī Daśā system, which has been considered universally applicable in the kaliyuga to all horoscopes.

#### 4. Grahas – planets

The Navagraha (nava; Devanāgarī: नव, Sanskrit: nava, "nine"; graha; Devanāgarī: ग्रह, Sanskrit: graha, 'planet') describe nine celestial bodies used in Hindu astrology.

The Navagraha are said to be forces that capture or eclipse the mind and the decision making of human beings, thus the term graha. When the grahas are active in their Daśās or periodicities they are said to be particularly empowered to direct the affairs of people and events.

Rahu and Ketu correspond to the points where the moon crosses the ecliptic plane (known as the ascending and descending nodes of the moon). Classically known in Indian and Western astrology as the "head and tail of the dragon", these planets are represented as a serpent-bodied demon beheaded by the Sudarshan Chakra of Vishnu after attempting to swallow the sun. They are primarily used to calculate the dates of eclipses. They are described as "shadow planets" because they are not visible in the night sky. They have an orbital cycle of 18 years and are always 180 degrees from each other.

#### 5. Gocharas – transits

A natal chart shows the position of the grahas at the moment of birth. Since that moment, the grahas have continued to move around the zodiac, interacting with the natal chart grahas. This period of interaction is called gochara (Sanskrit: gochara, 'transit').

The study of transits is based on the transit of the Moon (Chandra), which spans roughly two days, and also on the movement of Mercury (Budha) and Venus (Śukra) across the celestial sphere, which is relatively fast as viewed from Earth. The movement of the slower planets – Jupiter (Guru), Saturn (Śani) and Rāhu–Ketu — is always of considerable importance. Astrologers study the transit of the Daśā lord from various reference points in the horoscope.

#### 6. Yogas – planetary combinations

In Hindu astronomy, yoga (Sanskrit: yoga, 'union') is a combination of planets placed in a specific relationship to each other.

Rāja yogas are perceived as givers of fame, status and authority, and are typically formed by the association of the Lord of Keṇdras/quadrants, when reckoned from the Lagna/ascendant, and the Lords of the Tṛkoṇa/trines. The Rāja yogas are culminations of the blessings of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī. Some planets,

such as Mars for Leo Lagna, do not need another graha to create Rājayoga, but are capable of giving Rājayoga suo-moto due to their own lordship of the 4th Bhāva and the 9th Bhāva from the Lagna, the two being a Keṇdra and Tṛkoṇa Bhāva respectively.

Dhana Yogas are formed by the association of wealth-giving planets such as the Dhaneśa or the 2nd Lord and the Lābheśa or the 11th Lord from the Lagna. Dhana Yogas are also formed due to the auspicious placement of the Dārāpada/A7, when reckoned from the Ārūḍha Lagna (AL). The combination of the Lagneśa and the Bhāgyeśa also leads to wealth through the Lakṣmī Yoga.

Sanyāsa Yogas are formed due to the placement of four or more grahas, excluding the Sun, in a Keṇdra Bhāva from the Lagna.

There are some overarching yogas in Jyotiṣa such as Amāvasyā Doṣa, Kāla Sarpa Yoga-Kāla Amṛta Yoga and Graha Mālika Yoga that can take precedence over Yamaha yogar planetary placements in the horoscope.

## 7. Bhāvas – houses

The Hindu Jātaka, or birth chart, is the Bhāva Chakra (Sanskrit: 'division' 'wheel'), the complete 360° circle of life, divided into houses, and represents a way of enacting the influences in the wheel. Each house has associated kāraka (Sanskrit: 'significator') planets that can alter the interpretation of a particular house.[29]:93–167 Each Bhāva spans an arc of 30° with twelve Bhāvas in any chart of the horoscope. These are a crucial part of any horoscopic study since the Bhāvas, understood as 'state of being', personalize the Rāśis/ Rashis to the native and each Rāśi/ Rashi apart from indicating its true nature reveals its impact on the person based on the Bhāva occupied. The best way to study the various facets of Jyotiṣa is to see their role in chart evaluation of actual persons and how these are construed.

## 8. Dṛṣṭis – aspects

Drishti (Sanskrit: Dṛṣṭi, 'sight') is an aspect to an entire house. Grahas cast only forward aspects, with the furthest aspect being considered the strongest.

The principle of Dristi (aspect) was devised on the basis of the aspect of an army of planets as deity and demon in a war field. Thus the Sun, a deity king with only one full aspect, is more powerful than the demon king Saturn, which has three full aspects.

Aspects can be cast both by the planets (Graha Dṛṣṭi) and by the signs (Rāśi Dṛṣṭi). Planetary aspects are a function of desire, while sign aspects are a function of awareness and cognizance.

There are some higher aspects of Graha Dr̥ṣṭi (planetary aspects) that are not limited to the Viśeṣa Dr̥ṣṭi or the special aspects. Rāśi Dr̥ṣṭi works based on the following formulaic structure: all movable signs aspect fixed signs except the one adjacent, and all dual and mutable signs aspect each other without exception.