

I. What is horary? The divinatory art of answering urgent questions by means of the astrological chart. A chart is cast for the moment that a question is asked of the astrologer, who then evaluates it using an array of techniques to find the answer.

II. When is horary useful for dealing with work and money questions? The birth chart gives the clearest picture of our potentials (and limitations) in any department of life, while the various means of forecasting show us how these matters unfold through time. But often we need a quick answer to an urgent question: *Will the partnership work out? How does he really feel about me? Will I get the job? Should I change careers? Is it a good buy?* That's when we turn to horary.

III. Important things to be aware of (or brace yourself for!):

1. *Horary deals mostly with physical realities: people, places, things and events.* The psychological framework is not very useful in horary, and the habit of reading the chart as a picture of inner dynamics really has to be unlearned. For example, in horary, the 5th house means "children" or "pleasurable activities" more than it means "creativity." Mercury might symbolize a letter or a messenger, not "communication." Keep it real and down to earth!
2. *Horary charts don't generally say what the questioner (which might be you) wants to hear.* There are at least two reasons for this. First, most of us know from experience that it takes a lot of different factors in just the right combination to make anything in life happen. The chart simply reflects reality, which is why astrology works. Second, there's a self-selection process at work in the consultation room. People usually visit the astrologer when things aren't going well, when they're uncertain or when they're not getting enough traction in their projects. So, most of these charts will reflect the challenges that the majority of clients bring to a consultation. On a positive note, work and finance horaries seem to work out more often than relationship horaries. It's nice to be able to say "yes!"
3. *As with any branch of astrology, you can tell the truth but you must never take away hope... or instill false hope.* Be selective and careful about what you report to the client. The great William Lilly, 17th master of horary, puts it this way: "Be humane, courteous, familiar to all, easy of access. Afflict not the miserable with terror of harsh judgment; in such cases, let them know their hard fate by degrees; direct them to call on God..." In other words, be gentle and kind, to others and to yourself.
4. *Horary describes and predicts, but even then it does not prescribe:* The purpose of horary is to inform judgment and assist the querent find the best way forward. It does not deal in "shoulds" and often shows how to navigate towards better outcomes.
5. *Follow a method for entering the chart.* Horary is not haphazard. One of the greatest things about horary is that it will teach you how to step into a chart, know exactly what you're looking for, navigate the chart and find it.
6. *You will have amazing oracular moments with horary. Enjoy it and honor it!*

IV. Some horary terminology

1. *Querent:* the person asking the question, which might be you or another person.
2. *Quesited:* the thing or person being asked about. In work horaries, the job. In relationship horaries, the lover.
3. *Significator:* the planet that "stands in for" the querent or the quesited.
4. *Perfecting the matter:* when the querent gets the quesited, for better or worse.
5. *Denial:* when the querent doesn't get their way. And, yes, it's not just a river in Egypt!
6. *Dignity:* the presence of good quality and strength in a significator; may be *essential* or *accidental*.
7. *Debility:* weakness or corruption in a significator; may also be *essential* or *accidental*.
8. *Testimony:* an argument from the chart for or against perfection.
9. *Judgment:* the process of gathering and weighing testimonies to decide what the chart means.

V. Some things to try on for size...

1. *About sign rulerships:* In my horary work, I always use traditional rulerships, with no modern co-rulers. There are lots of reasons for this, many of which you'll discover if you choose to go deeper into this branch of astrology. I invite you to try working this way, at least as an experiment.
2. *About the modern planets:* Use them, not as sign rulers but as major influences, especially if in a relevant house or near an angle or cusp. Uranus in an important place suggests some kind of disruption, something coming out of left field; Neptune: illusion, confusion, deceit; Pluto: something generally difficult, heavy, weighty.
3. *About aspects:* Ptolemaic aspects only – conjunction, sextile, square, trine, opposition. Horary is the essence of simplicity. A light toolbox is best.
4. *About orbs:* In horary work (as in all pre-19th century astrology), aspects are not treated as having orbs. Only planets have orbs, that vary in size according to the planet. The effective distance between two planets is based on the sum of their half-orbs, or *moieties*. Sun & Moon ~ 12 degrees, Saturn & Jupiter ~ 10 degrees, Mars & Venus ~ 8 degrees, Mercury ~ 7 degrees.
5. *About the Moon:* Whereas the Sun is the heart of natal work, horary is often described as a "lunar art" – the Moon is of utmost importance in every horary chart. This is because of her nearness, her swiftness and her changeableness, which mirror the nature of horary topics. The Moon usually co-signifies the querent or, in questions about fugitives or lost things, the quesited. For everything to work out in a horary, the Moon needs to be healthy.

Reading list

Anthony Louis. *Horary Astrology Plain & Simple*. Llewellyn Publications, 2005.

The first horary textbook I ever studied. Even though I no longer work with some of his techniques (e.g., modern rulerships), Louis provides a lot of excellent information, in a very accessible way, and his method still *feels* like a continuation of the tradition, even where he incorporates modern perspectives. He also has a friendly way of not lecturing to the reader, and that makes him nice to read.

John Frawley. *The Real Astrology & The Real Astrology Applied*. Apprentice Books.

Highly recommended for clarity, wit and incisiveness. He's pretty caustic towards modern astrology, so be prepared. If you can get past that, you will be delighted by what you learn from him.

Geoffrey Cornelius. *The Moment of Astrology*. Wessex Astrologer, 2005.

A work of genius that is a sheer joy to read. Its thesis is that all astrology is divination. Horary takes its place as an argument in building the larger case. This is one of those books that can make you fall in love with astrology all over again.

William Lilly. *Christian Astrology, Books 1 & 2*. Astrological Classics, 2004.

Get this book when you're ready to go down the rabbit hole. This big, old tome of tomes is often described as the "bible of horary astrology." Written in the mid-1600s, it's an astrological masterpiece and a compendium of the most important astrological writings up to Lilly's time. Its rediscovery in the 1980s triggered an astrological revival. A tough read – Lilly was no great prose stylist – but your hard work will be rewarded.

Barbara Dunn. *Horary Astrology Re-examined: The Possibility or Impossibility of the Matter Propounded*. Wessex Astrologer, 2009.

A more advanced book with a stern voice, but full of the technicalities you need if you intend to go very far with horary. The accuracy of my readings doubled after studying this book.

Helene Avelar & Luis Ribeiro. *On the Heavenly Spheres: A Treatise on Traditional Astrology*. AFA Press, 2010.

A very thorough summary of astrological techniques drawn from sources before the 1700s. The focus isn't narrowly on horary but rather expands upon how traditional methods can apply to all charts. This book is more user-friendly than Barbara Dunn's but it lacks example charts and footnotes.

Skyscript – <http://www.skyscript.co.uk>

Deborah Houlding's wonderful website for the contemporary astrologer working within the Tradition. It's jam-packed with essays, tables, glossaries, study charts, biographies, interviews, book reviews, complete classic texts, pretty pictures... whew! A treasure trove. There's even a short course in horary. Get lost for hours on end.

Renaissance Astrology – <http://renaissanceastrology.com>

Christopher Warnock will help you put some magic into your astrology, just like they did in the good old days. The website compiles reams of useful material from traditional sources. Mr. Warnock also offers excellent short courses in the kind of natal, horary and electional astrology that prevailed during the days of Shakespeare. There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

How to Read a Horary Chart

- 1. Spend time working through the question until you grasp its essence.** Since horary is essentially divinatory, it really does help to consciously align yourself (and stayed aligned!) with your Higher Power. At the same time, you don't have to agonize over trying to intuit the perfect moment. The supreme intelligence of the infinite cosmos knows when your intentions are in the right place.
- 2. When you understand the question, set up the chart for your time and location, not the querent's.** Make sure you've entered the data correctly (a.m./p.m.? correct date? Saving time? Is the Sun is in the right quadrant of the chart?). Regiomontanus Houses.
- 3. Get a feel for the quality, vigor and worth of the chart.** Some things to consider:
 - a. The condition of the Ascendant:* what modality? what element? early or late degrees? what house is the Ascendant ruler in? does it aspect the Ascendant?
 - b. The angles:* are they tenanted? are any planets on an angle? are the angle rulers strong by house?
 - c. The Luminaries (Sun and Moon):* are they strong, middling or weak by house? what about the rulers of the Luminaries?
 - d. The planets:* are they clustered anywhere? where are the helpful planets (Venus, Jupiter) and the difficult planets (Mars, Saturn)?
 - e. The Moon:* is she swift, increasing in light (i.e., waxing), applying to an aspect and not Void of Course?
 - f. The Planetary hour ruler?* where is it? does it harmonize with the Ascendant?
- 4. Find your signifiers** – the planets that stand in for the querent and quesited – and write them down.
 1. The querent usually gets three signifiers in any horary: the Moon and the domicile ruler of the 1st house cusp. Planets in the 1st house also belong to the querent.
 2. The quesited's signifier is the domicile ruler of their house.

Important - In relationship questions, the quesited – the actual or prospective partner/lover – is represented by the 7th house, not the 5th house. There's a good reason for this. Every relationship, even a short-lived one like a dating relationship, involves a contract between two people. The 1st and 7th houses show the people involved, while the way they are related in the chart via aspect, reception and house placement will describe the kind of contract they have. The 5th house is important because it represents the fun things we do in relationships (yes, those fun things). So, you do want to see a good, strong 5th house.

In money questions, the quesited – the money, profit, investment or valuable – is represented by the 2nd house or the appropriate derived 2nd house (e.g., how much a job can pay will be shown by the 2nd from the 10th, or the 11th house). In work questions, the quesited – the job, profession or business – is signified by the 10th house, not the 6th. The 6th house rules the querent's own employees and in some contexts work-related skills.
 3. Always pay attention to the angles. An angular planet will always color the question and will sometimes give you the answer by itself.
- 5. Take stock of your signifiers.** They tell you everything: major personality traits, motivation, hidden agendas, and past history.
 - a. The house that belongs to the querent or quesited: take note of the Sign on the Ascendant and any planets in the 1st house.
 - b. The Moon (generally belongs to the querent, unless Cancer falls on the quesited's house cusp)
 1. House and Sign?
 2. Separating from? Going to?
 3. Is it in an appropriate house? If not, why not?
 - c. Planetary signifiers:
 1. *What is the planet's essential nature?* What does it naturally symbolize?

2. *What house is it in?* House position can tell you two things: (1) Whether or not the person is in a position to act; and (2) What the person's situation is like or what they're really "into."
 3. *What aspects does it receive?* These show influences and personality traits.
 4. *What Sign is it in?* Look at modality, polarity, and element.
 5. *Does it have essential dignity? essential debility?* See the Simplified Table of Dignities. A planet has essential dignity when it is in a Sign where it can express its best qualities. It has access to the resources it needs to do what it wants to do. A planet in debility (in detriment or fall) is the opposite.
- In many horaries, a significator having essential dignity doesn't mean that a person is nice or good. It means that they probably don't have a hidden agenda, and that they are likely to be more a help than a hindrance. Essential debility doesn't necessarily mean that a person is unpleasant or bad. It can mean that they have a significant problem or that they're not good for you.
6. *What dignities and debilities of other planets is it in?* The most important thing to be aware of is the significator's Domicile Ruler. It reveals motivation. The house ruled by the Domicile Ruler will often tell you what the person really wants (even if they don't realize it themselves!).
 7. *Are your significators in partial or mutual reception?* If so, there is affinity between the parties, either partial or mutual.
 8. *Ask yourself: does everything add up? Does it look and feel like the situation at hand?*

6. Look for an aspect between the significators, including the Moon.

1. Generally speaking, you need an *applying* aspect to get a "yes." Applying aspects show action that is "going somewhere." Separating aspects represent action that is already behind you.
2. In horary, don't expect to get results from out-of-sign aspects. Aspects need to reach completion before either significator enters a new Sign. If you are new to horary, I also suggest that you not worry about "orb" of aspect, so long as the aspect completes within Sign. But remember that the further apart significators are from each other (by body or aspect), the weaker the connection between parties and the longer it will take to develop.
3. Conjunctions are the strongest way to bring together significators, for good or for ill.
4. If you're dealing with a *square* or *opposition*, you need help to overcome the resistance innate to the hard aspects. This help comes in the form of reception (see above). Is one significator in the domicile or exaltation of the other? This a good thing: it shows a willingness to work through problems and challenges. Is there mutual reception? Even better! If there's no reception, things are unlikely to work out or if they do, it comes to tears.
5. No aspect, nothing happens. Unless you can find a:
 1. "translation of light": a faster planet links up two slower significators; or a...
 2. "collection of light": two significators apply to aspect a third, slower planet.
 These two situations usually tell us that a third person or agency is involved in bringing the parties together. The identity of the person can be found from the house that the third planet is in or the house that it rules.
6. Be on the lookout for the various ways in which aspects can fail to deliver:
 1. Prohibition/frustration: a faster moving significator is moving towards a slower moving significator, but before it can complete the aspect, a third planet interferes by completing an aspect with one of them.
 2. Refragation: before the faster significator can perfect the aspect, it turns retrograde.
 3. Evasion: the slower moving significator changes sign before the aspect is complete.

8. Remember that you need three things to get to "yes": dignity, reception, and aspect. John Frawley has a very handy way of explaining this. "Dignity shows ability to act. Reception shows inclination to act. Aspect shows opportunity to act."

To The Student In ASTROLOGY

My friend, whoever thou art, that with so much ease shalt receive the benefit of my hard studies, and dost intend to proceed in this heavenly knowledge of the stars, wherein the great and admirable works of the invisible and al-glorious God are so manifestly apparent.

In the first place, consider and admire thy Creator, and be thankful unto him, be thou humble, and let no natural knowledge, how profound and transcendent soever it be, elate thy minde to neglect that divine Providence, by whose all-seeing order and appointment, all things heavenly and earthly, have their constant motion; but the more thy knowledge is enlarged, the more do thou magnifie the power and wisdom of Almighty God, and strive to preserve thy self in his favour; being confident, the more holy thou art; and more neer to God, the purer Judgment thou shalt give. Beware of pride and self-conceit, and remember how that long ago, no irrational Creature durst offend Man, the Microcosm. But did faithfully serve and obey him, so long as he was Mr. of his own Reason and Passions, or until he subjected his Will to the unreasonable part. But alas! when iniquity abounded, and man gave the reins to his own affection, and deserted reason, then every Beast, Creature and outward harmful thing, became rebellious and unserviceable to his command. Stand fast, oh man! to thy God, and assured Principles, then consider thy own nobleness, how all created things, both present and to come, were for thy sake created; nay, for thy sake God became Man: thou art that Creature, who being conversant with Christ, livest and raignest above the heavens, and sits above all power and authority. How many Pre-eminences, Priviledges, Advantages hath God bestowed on thee? thou rangest above the heavens by Contemplation, conceivest the motion and magnitude of the stars; thou talkest with Angels, yea with God himself; thou hast all Creatures within thy Dominion, and keepest the Devils in subjection: Do not then, for shame, deface thy Nature, or make thy self unworthy of such Gifts, or deprive thy self of that great Power, Glory and Blessedness God hath allotted thee, by casting from thee his fear, for possession of a few imperfect pleasures. Having considered thy God, and what thy self art, during they being Gods servant; now receive instruction how in thy practice I would have thee carry thy self. As thou daily conversest with the heavens, so instruct and form thy minde according to the image of Divinity; learn all the ornaments of Vertue, be sufficiently instructed therein; be humane, curteous, familiar to all, easie of access, afflict not the Miserable with terror of a harsh Judgment; in such cases, let them know their hard fate by degrees; direct them to call on God to divert his Judgments impending over them; be modest, conversant with the Learned, Civil, Sober man, covet not an estate; give freely to the poor, both money and judgment: let no worldly wealth procure an Erroneous Judgment from thee, or such as may dishonour the Art, or this divine Science: Love good men, cherish those honest men that cordially Study this Art: Be sparing in delivering Judgment against the Common-wealth thou livest in. Give not judgment of the death of thy Prince; yet I know experimentally, that Reges Subjucent Legibus Stellarum¹; marry a wife of thy own; rejoyce in the number of they friends, avoid law and controversie: in thy Study, be Totus in Illis² that thou maist be Singulus in Arte³; be not extravagant or deisrious to learn every Science, be not Aliquid in Omnibus; be faithful, tenacious, betray no ones secrets, no, no I charge thee never divulge either friend or enemies trust committed to thy faith. Instruct all men to Live well, be a good example thy self, avoid the fashion of the times, love thy own Native Country: exprobrate no man, no not an enemy: be not dismayed, if ill spoken of, Conscientia Mille Testes⁴; God suffers no sin unpunished, no lye unrevenged. – WILLIAM LILLY.

¹ "Kings are subject to the laws of the stars."

² "Complete in these matters": a diligent, thorough student

³ "Something in everything": a dabbler or dilettante

⁴ "Conscience is worth a thousand witnesses."

Horary Worksheet

Querent:

Question:

Background:

Date, Time, Place:

Ascendant:

Planetary day:

Planetary hour:

General impressions:

Chart fit to be judged? Why?

Querent's significators:

Quesited's significators:

☾ (degree/sign/house):

☾ from:

☾ to:

	Sign	Exalt.	Trip.	Term	Face	Detr.	Fall	Notes
☉								
☾								
♀								
♁								
♂								
♃								
♅								

Major receptions	Fixed Stars	Antiscia	Arabian Parts

Is there an aspect between significators that could bring the matter to perfection?

Is there an aspect between the Moon and the significator of the quesited that could bring the matter to perfection? If not, between the Moon and the significator of the querent?

Is there a translation or collection of light?

Prohibition or refranation?

Are their any other arguments *against* perfection of the matter?

SIMPLIFIED TABLE OF DIGNITIES				
	Domicile	Exaltation	Detriment	Fall
♈	♂	☉	♀	♅
♉	♀	☽	♂	—
♊	♆	—	♄	—
♋	☽	♄	♅	♂
♌	☉	—	♅	—
♍	♆	♆	♄	♀
♎	♀	♅	♂	☉
♏	♂	—	♀	☽
♐	♄	—	♆	—
♑	♅	♂	☽	♄
♒	♅	—	☉	—
♓	♄	♀	♆	♆

	Domicile		Exaltation	Detriment		Fall
☉	♌		♈	♒		♎
☽	♋		♉	♑		♍
♆	♊	♍	♍	♏	♓	♓
♀	♎	♉	♓	♈	♌	♍
♂	♈	♌	♑	♎	♋	♋
♄	♏	♓	♋	♊	♍	♑
♅	♒	♑	♎	♌	♋	♈

A Table of the Essential Dignities of the PLANETS according to Ptolemy

Sign	Houses of the Planets	Exaltation	Triplexity of Planets		The Terms of the Planets						The Faces of the Planets			Detri-ment	Fall
			D	N	24 6	♀ 14	♃ 21	♂ 26	♁ 30	♂ 10	♁ 20	♀ 30			
♈	♂ D	♁ 19	♁	♂	♂ 6	♀ 14	♃ 21	♂ 26	♁ 30	♂ 10	♁ 20	♀ 30	♀	♁	
♉	♀ N	♂ 3	♀	♂	♀ 8	♃ 15	♂ 22	♁ 26	♂ 30	♃ 10	♂ 20	♁ 30	♂		
♊	♃ D	♁ 3	♁	♃	♃ 7	♂ 13	♀ 21	♁ 25	♂ 30	♂ 10	♂ 20	♁ 30	♂		
♋	♂ D/N	♂ 15	♂	♂	♂ 6	♂ 13	♃ 20	♀ 27	♁ 30	♀ 10	♃ 20	♂ 30	♁	♂	
♌	♁ D/N		♁	♂	♁ 6	♃ 13	♀ 19	♂ 25	♂ 30	♁ 10	♂ 20	♁ 30	♁		
♍	♃ N	♃ 15	♀	♂	♃ 7	♀ 13	♂ 18	♁ 24	♂ 30	♁ 10	♀ 20	♃ 30	♂	♀	
♎	♀ D	♁ 21	♁	♃	♁ 6	♀ 11	♂ 19	♃ 24	♂ 30	♂ 10	♁ 20	♂ 30	♂	♁	
♏	♂ N		♂	♂	♂ 6	♂ 14	♀ 21	♃ 27	♁ 30	♂ 10	♁ 20	♀ 30	♀	♂	
♐	♂ D	♁ 3	♁	♂	♂ 8	♀ 14	♃ 19	♁ 25	♂ 30	♃ 10	♂ 20	♁ 30	♃		
♑	♁ N	♂ 28	♀	♂	♀ 6	♃ 12	♂ 19	♂ 25	♁ 30	♂ 10	♂ 20	♁ 30	♂	♂	
♒	♁ D		♁	♃	♁ 6	♃ 12	♀ 20	♂ 25	♂ 30	♀ 10	♃ 20	♂ 30	♁		
♓	♂ N	♀ 27	♂	♂	♀ 8	♂ 14	♃ 20	♂ 26	♁ 30	♁ 10	♂ 20	♁ 30	♃	♀	