

An E-Book of Western Astrology by “A Study of Astrology”

This E-book was published with much research and study. This work contains a compilation of information relating to the most common House Systems used in Astrology. Contained within is a comprehensive guide talking about 10 of the most widely used house systems in Astrology today. Included are basic information pertaining to each system as well as the strengths and weakness each system presents.

Placidus House System

The Placidus house system is a house system derived from the works of Placidus de Titis in the 17th Century. This system is based on the idea that life is motion and not stationary. This method casts a chart using the time measured for the Ascendant to become the midheaven. Paths are drawn outward from every single degree occupying the space from the 4th house to the horizon and the horizon to the midheaven. After that both drawn out quadrants are trisected which create the entirety of the houses.

Placidus is the most commonly used house system in the world today. It began gaining popularity in the late renaissance period and was adapted as a standard onward. Placidus is extremely popular in the United States and is used mainly in the psychological interpretation of a chart. Despite its popularity it still has struggles as a time-space based system which causes controversy.

Placidus well known for its unequal house sizes along with signs enveloped completely in a house called interceptions. Interceptions can explain psychological issues pertaining to a person's life; and intercepted planets can show potential issues with energies manifesting outward.

This house system is notorious for its struggles in higher latitudes. As the latitude increases from a birth location the house cusps become wider, sometimes cause two or

more signs to exist in a single house. For this reason the distortion effect can cause struggles doing interpretations, thus other house systems can be used.

Due to the uneven house sizes this house system was the origin point for "Ptolemy's five degree rule" all signs within five degrees at the end of the house are to be interpreted as being in the next house.

Strengths of the Placidus House System

- Much has been published about it due to its mass accepted nature and popularity
- Every major angle starts at a house cusp thereby diffusing any kind of controversy that confuses some astrologers.
- Inside the 66 parallels it works well and tends to explain issues on the psychological level due to interceptions created with the system
- Intercepted planets have more strength coming out when transit planets or progressions activate them

Weakness of the Placidus House System

- The mathematical time space formula to cast the system leaves distortion and holes in charts
- People living above and below 66th parallels have distorted chart's not may not always represent their psychological states
- Planetary rulership readings can be out of line due to sign interceptions
- Doing transits with this house system can be difficult and sometimes inaccurate more so than other house systems due to uneven house spacing
- It is more difficult to do mass horoscope readings due to unequal house sizes that are more individualized in this system

Koch House System

Dr Walter Koch's house system is based upon the idea that houses in a horoscope are relative to the birth place using geographic latitude. The Koch system uses mathematical time calculations from the birth data and points on the ecliptic to formulate it's house divisions.

Koch is a more advanced version of the Placidus house system and uses the Midheaven as the starting point for the casting of the chart. After the midheaven is drawn houses are formed by trisecting the time it takes for the ascendant and midheaven to rise to the ecliptic from the horizon.

Strengths of the Koch House System:

- More accurately uses the latitude birth location to draw up natal charts
- The house cusps are more accurately defined due to more advanced math techniques in play
- Rulerships flow better and the planets in houses may make sense for many more people
- Since it is similar to Placidus many of the same rules can apply; namely Ptolemy's five degree rule

Weakness of the Koch House System

- "Dead zones" in the mathematical spacing from geographic latitudes to determine houses cause distortions in the charts (interceptions and inaccurate planets in houses.)
 - Still faces the issues of Placidus with Intercepted planets and signs
 - Struggles to portray equality when birth latitude is above 66th parallel
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Campanus House System

Quadrant based House system which is based on space as opposed to time. It is calculated using the prime vertical passing east to west of the Zenith of a specific point on a map. This house system casts 12 houses after the prime vertical is cut into 12 equal parts. The Ascendant begins the 1st house and the midheaven is fixed to the start of the 10th. This house system shares many similarities to Placidus house system in theory.

As with the Placidus house system this chart is best used for psychological understanding purposes. It does contain interceptions as every sign may not rule a house cusp despite the equal division of the chart. Planets may be intercepted and contained within a sign of a house which is said to inhibit their expression outward. Unlike Placidus this house system can be used all over the earth. It does not have a restriction on the 66th parallel where the houses dissipate and get distorted.

Strengths of the Campanus House System:

Ability to accurately explain the psychological complex of a person

Intercepted signs and planets tend to explain shortcomings and issues expressing certain traits

Intercepted planets have more strength coming out when transit planets or progressions activate them

Is useable anywhere on the Earth with no distortion of the house sizes

Every major angle starts at a house cusp thereby diffusing any kind of controversy that confuses some astrologers.

The midheaven is fixed to the 10th house for easy interpretation of adult life focus

Weaknesses of the Campanus House System:

Planetary rulership readings can be off due to sign interceptions

Doing transits with this house system can be difficult and sometimes inaccurate more so

then other house systems due to uneven house spacing

It is more difficult to do mass horoscope readings due to unequal house sizes that are more individualized in this system

Regiomontanus House System

Regiomontanus is a time based divisional quadrant house system. The celestial equator is divided into twelve divisions and projected on the ecliptic plane. The houses are cast based off the division and come out very similar to Placidus. The Ascendant starts the 1st house, IC starts the 4th house, 7th house begins the Descendant and Midheaven starts the 10th house.

The difference with Placidus is usually seen in the degrees the succedent and cadent houses start at. When compared to Placidus there is usually a difference in the position of the Moon's nodes. This is due to the positioning of the crossing of the moon in the elliptical orbit. Usually the variance comes in the node falling in a different house in some Placidus charts.

Due to the striking similarities in the time based system shared with Placidus, Regiomontanus shares interceptions a cast horoscope. Like most time-based systems not every sign will rule a house and distortions can exist in the houses when the birth place is close to the poles.

Strengths of the Regiomontanus House System

- Takes into account the importance of birth location
- Every major angle starts at a house cusp thereby diffusing any kind of controversy that confuses some astrologers
- Intercepted planets have more strength coming out when transit planets or progressions activate them

Weaknesses of the Regiomontanus House System

- The mathematical time space formula to cast the system leaves distortion and holes in charts
 - People living above and below 66th parallels have distorted chart's not always representing their psychological states
 - Planetary rulership readings can be out of line due to sign interceptions
 - Doing transits with this house system can be difficult and sometimes inaccurate more so than other house systems due to uneven house spacing
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Meridian House System

Meridian is a time based divisional quadrant house system sharing similarities to Regiomontanus. The celestial equator is divided into twelve divisions and projected on the ecliptic plane. The Major difference between Meridian and Regiomontanus/Placidus is the Meridian system uses the east point in calculation as the ascendant. The houses are cast based off the division made.

In many instances the Ascendant comes off wildly different than other popular house systems. The houses also come out closer to equal all the way around due to using the equator to cast them. The Ascendant itself can fall anywhere between the 1st and 12th house in this system. An interesting factor to note is the Meridian ascendant tends to portray the way a person sees themselves.

Strengths of the Meridian House System

- Takes into account the importance of birth location
- Tends to cut down on house distortion due to casting the chart based on the eastern point causing more equal house sizes

Weaknesses of the Meridian House System

- Still has a slight chance of containing intercepted signs and planets
 - The Ascendant is not traditional and may cause confusion in interpretation for some
 - Signs on the houses tend to come out dramatically different versus other house systems which may turn people away.
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Porphyry House System

The Porphyry house system is based on the most simplest of formulas to divide houses. Created by the Greek philosopher Porphyry, he created a simple system of dividing the ecliptic to cast charts quickly. Some say this birth chart system was the birth and inspiration for all house systems used in Astrology going forward.

The ascendant and midheaven are calculated and straight lines are drawn through the chart to create the angular houses of 1, 4, 7 and 10. After that is established the remaining houses are drawn up by splitting each quadrant into three equal parts of 30 degrees each. Easiest for drawing up house systems, can be done on the fly, and solves issues with 66 parallel issues with Placidus and Koch.

Strengths of the Porphyry House System:

- Quick and simply way of dividing the ecliptic to form houses

- Back in predated times it was easier to cast a chart without the need for mathematicians or computers (like we have today of course)
- The chart is balanced and every house is equally defined with no chart interceptions
- Has no issues with latitude parallel's failing to form a readable chart
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Weaknesses of the Porphyry House System:

- Does not define the chart based on the birth latitude as well as more modern house systems like Placidus or Koch
- Has shortcomings interpreting the psychological aspects of a person due to the simplicity of the chart
- The quick calculating speed of present day computers has surpassed this house systems use

Equal House System

The Equal House system is a system in which every house in the horoscope is divided up evenly in 30 degree segments. Every house begins in the same degree in the next sign as the ascendant began. The ascendant and its degree marks the start of the 1st house. The 7th house of course is drawn opposite the ascendant a full 180 degrees.

The midheaven and IC begin 90 degrees equally away from the Ascendant and Descendant. The midheaven point itself "floats" and is not attached to the start of the 10th house cusp. The Succedent and Cadent houses are drawn up in each quadrant after the angular house 30 degrees apart from one another.

Strengths of the Equal House System:

- Easy to Draw up. Just need the ascendant starting degree.
- Every sign rules a house cusp and is easier for predictive purposes.
- The Midheaven floats allowing for more versatility in translation
- No interceptions of signs or planets in house cusps.
- The system works above and below 60 degrees lateral

Negatives of the Equal House System:

- Does not factor deeply into the location born on Earth and its impact on development
- Lacking interceptions with planets and signs means less psychological in depth translation potential of chart
- The house size difference may cause issues with predictive astrology; especially transits and pinpointing when effects are felt
- The midheaven may be confusing to interpret for less experienced Astrologers
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Whole Signs House System

Whole signs is one of the most ancient and simplest house systems ever created. A system where all houses are equal in size, and every house is ruled by and contains an entire sign. The sign of the Ascendant becomes the 1st house despite the location in degree of the Ascendant. This can mean a Capricorn ascendant at 15 degrees shows the Ascendant in the middle of the 1st house with 0 degree Capricorn starting the 1st house. Unlike more modern house systems the Ascendant, Descendant, IC and midheaven points float and don't always start the 1st 4th 7th and 10th houses cusps.

This house system is used most popularly by modern astrologers to showcase transit readings in mass horoscope interpretation. The area of life impacted is easily

interpreted since a sign is enclosed in a single house. Since a planet moves through an entire sign while in transit, it is easy to tell the impact for a specific ascendant. The house shows the area of life impacted which is easy to read.

An example of above; Scorpio ascendant natal with Mars transiting Sagittarius. An astrologer would see in whole sign that every Scorpio Ascendant has Sagittarius in the second house. Mars would be transiting the 2nd house for every Scorpio Ascendant; thus an interpretation may look like "Scorpio Ascendant may have struggles or ups and downs with personal finances this month..."

Strengths of the Whole Signs House System

- Very easy to draw a chart by finding the ascendant and equally dispersing a wheel around it
- Lacks interceptions and house distortion due to every sign ruling a house
- The chart casts and works well anywhere on Earth birth occurs with no parallel issues
- Mundane aspects (planets aspecting planets through houses) are easier to see with equal sized houses
- Strong with current transiting planets because every time a planet moves into the sky it starts transiting a new house
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- Astrologers can cast mass horoscopes based on ascendant signs because they can see when a planet switches and which area of life it will affect for a person based on the house it moves into
- The ASC, DSC, MC and IC are not fixed to the start of the angular houses allowing for more interpretation of how they impact life
- Due to the ancient working of the house systems, the Arabic lots works best in this house system because they were created using it.

Weakness of the Whole Signs House System

Inexperienced Astrologers can struggle without the ASC, DSC, MC and IC fixed to the start of the angular houses

Requires more intuitive interpretation to synthesize how the whole chart melds

Planets in houses can shift considerably when the chart is cast versus Placidus, Koch and Campanus

Solar Chart House System

The Solar Chart house system is a specific form of Astrological chart used when the birth time is unknown. The Sun is moved to the rising position of the horoscope and becomes the start of the ascendant and 1st angular house. This chart is meant to show the fully developed Ego and how the aspects with it play out. Some argue it is not fully realized and accurate; but for many without birth times it is better than nothing.

Strengths of the Solar Chart House System

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- Gives a house system to work with when the birth time is unknown
- Can help correct distorted house systems (Even though better options exist)
- Can see important aspects to a person's inner self

Weakness of the Solar Chart House System

- Doesn't have a true Ascendant so much of the chart picture is missing
 - Lacks any kind of angular house structure so it's impossible to translate their impact on a person's life
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Sidereal House System

A Zodiac system in which the stars play a significant role in calculating the planet's, houses and interpretation of the general celestial sky into a natal chart. This system's strength is the consistency over time with the degrees of signs not changing as they do in Placidus and other such western house systems. This can be attributed by the fact that the stars are "fixed" and do not as wobble the earth does. The wobble accounts for the variation in degrees over time between sidereal and time based western systems.

The effect of degree difference in the tropical zodiac is caused by the seasons change ever so slightly over time due to the wobble. This action makes the equinox's fall later in time. This is why over the course of history Western Tropical house systems have a 23 degree difference (currently) in planets in signs as opposed to the Sidereal placements. The stars have not moved from their celestial positions, but appear to through western house systems. The Sidereal will always generate the same consistent chart throughout time.

Sidereal is mainly used in the Vedic Jyotish Astrology. When a chart is cast all houses are equal of 30 degree denominations. Sidereal, unlike western, is mainly used for its fixed star interpretations seen in lunar mansions (or nakshatra's.) The moon is the main source of interpretation in Indian charts, as well as Rahu (the north node) and ketu (the south node.)

Through interpretation, the other planets (up to Saturn, since this system is based on planets only observable by the naked eye) are either cited as malefic or benefic to a chart. Depending on the ascendant, each sign on a house can create super charged friendly planets called functional benefics. Functional malefics are the opposite end of the spectrum and can cause blockages from planets expressing themselves. These concepts are used in place of planetary aspects like conjunctions, trines and sextiles.

One of the most important things to realize is most people Astrologers do not judge a sidereal chart by planets in signs, rather by planets aspect each other, houses and fixed stars. Since the sidereal system is consistent it has more scientific interpretations. Divisional (or Varga charts) are the one of strengths of this house system which brings added depth to a person's reading. The other main advantage is the creation of Dasha periods in which a planetary time period is signified which give that planet priority in a

chart.

Strengths of the Sidereal House System

- Time proven and tested system which has been around for thousands of years
- Consistent due to being based on fixed stars in the celestial sky
- Does not create interceptions due to its equal house cusps
- Strong scientific and mathematical calculation method allows for accurate divisional varga charts
- Easy to read system of planets aspecting each other, houses and fixed stars

Weaknesses of the Sidereal House System

- Does not incorporate new age philosophies into calculations and casting of chart
- Since the system lacks interceptions it struggles and doesn't dive into psychological issues a person may face
- The system may be far too scientific and not esoteric like some Western Astrologers prefer
- The translations of the texts that utilize the sidereal system are based off Jyotish writings
- They can be hard to interpret and some of the translations are either out of date or seem nonsensical