



Llewellyn's Complete Book of Astrology: The Easy Way to Learn Astrology (Llewellyn's Complete Book Series)

By Kris Brandt Riske Riske

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The easiest way to learn astrology is to start with yourself. Your astrological birth chart is a powerful tool for gaining a deeper understanding of your unique gifts, talents, challenges, and life's purpose. As you begin to decipher the wealth of information in your own birth chart, you'll experience astrology in a personally meaningful way-which makes it easier to understand and remember. Once you learn the basics of astrology, you'll be able to read the birth charts of yourself and others.

This friendly guidebook is the most complete introduction to astrology available. Popular astrologer Kris Brandt Riske presents the essentials of astrology in a clear, step-by-step way, paying special attention to three areas of popular interest: relationships, career, and money. She explains the meaning of the planets, zodiac signs, houses, and aspects, and how to interpret their significance in your chart. Over 30 illustrations, including the birth charts of several famous people?Al Gore, Oprah Winfrey, Brad Pitt, and Tiger Woods, to name just a few?add a helpful visual dimension to your learning experience.

Practical and positive, *Llewellyn's Complete Book of Astrology* offers techniques for using astrology to identify the qualities you seek in an ideal mate, realize your career and financial potential, calculate your luck, and discover your inner strength.

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Editorial Review

Review

"If you want to teach a class, or just learn astrology on your own, this book will make a comprehensive, clearly written companion." -- *Dell Horoscope, January 2008*

About the Author

Kris Brandt Riske, M.A. (Arizona) is the executive director and a professional member of the American Federation of Astrologers (AFA), the oldest US astrological organization, founded in 1938. She is also a member of the National Council for Geocosmic Research (NCGR). She has a master's degree in journalism and a certificate of achievement in weather forecasting from Penn State.

Kris has been a speaker at various astrological conferences and has written for several astrological publications. She currently writes the annual weather forecast for Llewellyn's *Moon Sign Book* and is the author of *Llewellyn's Complete Book of Astrology* and *Llewellyn's Complete Book of Predictive Astrology*. In addition to astrometeorology, she specializes in predictive astrology.

Kris is an avid NASCAR fan and enjoys gardening and reading.

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You've probably read your horoscope online, in newspapers or magazines, or in publications that focus on the year ahead. These forecasts are based on your Sun sign, which is easily determined by your birth month and day. You might even know some of the characteristics associated with your Sun sign and those of family and friends. Sun sign descriptions are amazingly accurate, even though there's no rational explanation why astrology should work. After all, the Sun, Moon, and planets are millions of miles away from Earth. How can a body in outer space realistically affect a person on Earth?

A Sun sign is just a Sun sign. It's important, yes, because it's the essence of you. It's your ego at work. But from an astrological viewpoint, there's so much more that defines you—your character, talents, strengths, and challenges.

The ancient Babylonians were as perplexed by this astrological phenomenon as we are today. In the four thousand or so years since they invented astrology, no one has discovered an explanation for why it works. But work it does.

Around the sixteenth century BC, the Babylonians began to observe that events on Earth could be correlated to celestial phenomena. Their brand of astrology is what is today called *mundane astrology*, or the astrology of countries, wars, coups, economic conditions, and weather, to name a few. It eventually evolved into what is now known as *electional astrology*, the branch in which the planetary positions are used to select a favorable time to launch an event, such as a wedding, business opening, meeting, or job application. Babylonian astrologers used the 360° circle (a zodiac of twelve signs similar to what is used today) and also developed *ephemerides* (tables of astrological data) that listed the planetary positions and eclipses. At that point in time, no connection had been made between astrology and

the individual.

It wasn't until more than a thousand years later, sometime between the seventh and fourth centuries BC, that the Babylonians developed the concept of natal astrology. The natal horoscopes of the time, which probably were limited to royalty and wealthy people, were inscribed on cuneiform tablets and listed the planetary positions along with comments referring to wealth potential, longevity, family, and status. The natal horoscope was seen as a predictor of the person's life, much as it is today, the difference being that twenty-first-century astrologers-and people-recognize that everyone has free will; the Babylonians considered the chart fateful.

The Babylonian knowledge was passed to the Persians, Egyptians, and Indians. It was readily adopted in India, where today it is considered not only valid but necessary to a successful life. Great advances in astrology were made in Alexandria, Egypt, in the second and third centuries AD, partly as a result of King Ptolemy I Soter, who ordered the construction of a great library that attracted scholars. During this period, the following concepts were developed: the Ascendant (rising sign) and Midheaven, astrological houses, planetary rulers, aspects, and predictive techniques. Astrology was considered a science and spread to western Europe, where educated people knew Greek and Latin.

Although astrology died out in western Europe with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, it survived somewhat in the Eastern Roman Empire. A general revival of astrology began around 1000 AD and continued for the next five hundred years. Like all else, astrology benefited from the invention of the printing press, which made information more readily available to the populace. Astrology was taught in colleges and universities and was a required subject for medical students.

Astrology then experienced another decline, which began in the late seventeenth century and lasted about two hundred years. It was still popular in England, however, because the annual astrological almanacs that had been printed since the sixteenth century continued to be in demand by the public. Renewed interest in astrology developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but it wasn't until the 1930s that first weekly and then daily horoscopes began to appear in newspapers. The first such column appeared in the London *Sunday Express*.

The twentieth century saw refinements in astrological technique and an emphasis on psychological astrology versus event-oriented astrology. But the basics remain the same today as those developed by the earliest astrologers, and there is a growing interest in older astrological literature as more of these works are translated and made available.

why study astrology?

Metaphysics encompasses a wide range of subjects and areas, most of which are focused solely on

divination, or predicting the future.

What makes astrology different from the tarot, I Ching, runes, and other forecasting methods is that it is all-encompassing. You can use astrology not only to forecast events but also to gain great insights into your personality. You may think you know yourself better than anyone else walking the planet; that's probably true. But has someone ever commented on a personality trait that you were unaware of, at least on a conscious level? Something that you only then realized was a strength-or a detriment-because it is such a natural part of your personality? Something that made you realize you'd just discovered another whole side of yourself ? This is part of the natural growth process.

Have you ever asked yourself why you react the way you do in certain situations? Why you repeat negative behaviors even though you know better? Have you ever knocked yourself out trying to do something, when your energy would have been better directed elsewhere?

This, too, is part of the natural growth process. It is how we evolve as humans.

Now suppose you had all this information sooner rather than later. You'd be able to use it to your advantage for many more years, to make the most of your potential and in essence speed up that growth process. After all, we don't have all that many years in a lifetime to do everything we want to do.

This is one fabulous reason to study astrology: self-knowledge is the ultimate form of personal empowerment.

You may have heard people say that astrology is difficult, that it requires "all that math."

Yes and no.

The math of astrology is nothing more than simple addition and subtraction using preset formulas. But in today's world you don't ever have to pick up a pencil. There are numerous online sites where you can get a computer-calculated birth chart in seconds (see appendix III), or you can take advantage of the free birth chart offer at the back of this book. Later, when you're more advanced in your studies and want to become a certified astrologer, you can learn the math in preparation for taking an exam. Or, if you're not at all intimidated by math or just want to challenge yourself, you might want to learn this nuts-and-bolts side of astrology now. The point is that it's no longer necessary to first learn the calculations. You can get started right now! Now, the question about difficulty. Is astrology difficult or isn't it? Yes, it is, or can be, but no, it's not.

Have you ever done anything in your life that was difficult at first but then came easily, such as playing a musical instrument or sport, speaking in public, or learning a language? Chances are, you have. And each came with a learning curve that began with initial excitement and quickly

acquired skills, followed by the middle ground that required more study or practice to jump the hurdle to a comfort zone of confidence.

Learning astrology is no different than learning anything else. It requires some patience and a lot of practice.

But how difficult is it, really, to read a birth chart? To glean all the insightful information about you and your personality? Not as hard as you might think. It's a matter of learning what each factor in the birth chart symbolizes and then blending the information until you have a full picture. Although that might seem like an oversimplified answer, consider this example using astrological keywords, which is the way every future astrologer learns to interpret a chart: Sun (ego) in Capricorn (ambitious) in the personal financial sector (second house) conjunct (next to) Jupiter (expansion) adds up to an individual whose self-esteem is linked to achievement and high earnings but who also spends freely on status symbols. It's that simple!

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Griffin:

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