

Lunar Ladies

Glossary of Terms:

Lunation: The period of time averaging 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, and 2.8 seconds elapsing between two successive New Moons.

Lunar Cycle: The moon's continuous orbit around the earth; from one New Moon to the next New Moon

Lunar Phase: The shape of the illuminated (sunlit) portion of the Moon as seen on the Earth. The lunar phases change cyclically as the Moon orbits the Earth, according to the changing positions of the Moon and Sun relative to the Earth.

Moon: The natural satellite of the earth, visible (chiefly at night) by reflected light from the Sun.

Blue Moon: A Blue Moon is the second Full Moon in a calendar month. The Moon, the closest astral body to the Earth, revolves around the Earth 13 times a year. The lunar month, is the period of one revolution of the moon.

New Moon: The phase of the moon when it is in conjunction (0 degrees) with the sun and invisible from earth, or shortly thereafter when it appears as a slender crescent. New Moon or Dark Moon is when the Moon is directly between the Earth and the Sun and therefore hidden. This is a time of new beginnings and new undertakings.

Waxing: The Moon at any time after New Moon and before Full Moon, so called because its illuminated area is increasing.

Waning: A Waning Moon is any phase of the Moon during the lunar cycle between the Full Moon and the New Moon. It is a Moon that is getting smaller every night.



Waxing 1st Quarter Moon: Waxing Moon means the moon is getting larger in the sky, moving from the New Moon towards the Full Moon. This is a time to take action on new beginnings, to conceptualize ideas, to invoke. At this time the moon represents the goddess in her maiden aspect, give praise to Epona, Artemis or one of the other maiden goddesses. The period of the Waxing Moon lasts about 14 days.

Full Moon: Full Moon is when the Moon has reached its zenith. It forms a perfect silvery sphere in the sky. This is a time for celebration, transformation, increased psychic ability and invocation to lunar goddesses. This is a time of strength, love and power. At this time the moon represents the goddess in her mother aspect, give praise to Cerridwen, Isis or one of the other mother goddesses. The period of the Full Moon lasts from about 3 days before to 3 days after the actual Full Moon.

Waning 3rd Quarter Moon: Waning Moon means the Moon is decreasing in size, moving from the Full Moon towards the New Moon. This is a time for banishing, releasing, letting go and surrendering. This is a time to break bad habits or bad addictions, to end bad relationships. This is a time of deep intuition and a time for divination. Slow down and reflect during this time to also prepare for the next lunar cycle.

Gibbous: The definition of gibbous refers to a moon in between a Quarter Moon but less than a Full Moon.

Balsamic: As the final phase in the lunation cycle, the Balsamic Moon is the monthly “sleep time”. Balsamic Moon is a slim crescent, forty-five degrees behind the Sun. This ending time of the lunar cycle is deeply intuitive and reveals what is most important for you to learn from the lunation.

Crescent: This is the “Cheshire Cat” Moon and is a famous image of the Moon frequently used in the media, consisting of only a thin crescent slice of the Moon visible from Earth. This phase of the moon occurs just after the New Moon phase, which is also known as dark of the Moon. There is also a Crescent Moon phase just prior to the next New Moon as well.

Lunar calendar: A lunar calendar is a calendar that is based on cycles of the lunar phases. This can be contrasted with the Gregorian calendar, which is a solar calendar based on the revolution of the Earth around the Sun.

Almanac: An annual publication containing a calendar for the coming year, the times of such events and phenomena as anniversaries, sunrises and sunsets, phases of the Moon, tides, etc., and other statistical information and related topics.



Tides: The periodic rise and fall of the waters of the ocean and its inlets, produced by the attraction of the Moon and Sun, and occurring about every 12 hours. The inflow, outflow, or current of water at any given place resulting from the waves of tides.

Lunar Eclipse: Any interference between the light from the Sun and the object being illuminated. The Earth frequently moves between the Moon and the Sun, blocking out the Moon's light.

Solar Eclipse: When the Sun is obscured by the Moon from the perspective of Earth.

Ephemeris: An astronomical text which contains the position of celestial bodies in the sky as seen from Earth at specific times. These positions are given in coordinates that astronomers can then use to locate and view these bodies.

Nodes: The points where the orbit of the moon intersects the path of the Sun in terms of how it appears to move against the stars. This solar path is called the ecliptic.

Penumbra: The shadow cast by a celestial object that only blocks a portion of the light.

Perigee: The closest point to the Earth in the Moon's orbit.

Phases: When applied to the Moon, phases refer to the different stages of illumination that the Moon undergoes in the course of its orbit.

Umbra: The name given to the shadow cast by a celestial object that entirely blocks out illumination.

Houses: The 12 Houses of astrology are symbolic of the all the departments that make up human life. The planets and zodiac signs will manifest themselves most strongly in the sphere of life represented by the House in which they fall on your chart. The houses are where these energies are most likely to manifest. The houses are the fields of experience, not the experience themselves.

Planets: Every planet orbits the sun at a different speed, going slower and slower the farther they are from the sun. Each planet affects a different part of your personality. The "inner planets"—the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Mars and Venus—move quickly through the zodiac. As a result, they affect your day-to-day life, moods and habits. The "outer planets"—Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, Uranus, and Pluto—move slowly, changing signs every one to fifteen years. They shape the bigger trends in your life. Neptune, Uranus and Pluto orbit the sun so slowly that they're said to shape entire generations.



Zodiac Wheel: Like a clock, the zodiac is divided into 12 segments, or houses, each one ruled by a different sign. The zodiac wheel begins with the first house, and proceeds counterclockwise around the circle's perimeter. Each house is associated with a set of traits, beginning from the self, and expanding outward into society and beyond.

The houses help predict which parts of your life will come into focus, and where you can take the best possible action. To learn more about a house, read about the sign that's associated with it. The first six houses are known as the "personal houses," while the last six houses are known as the "interpersonal houses."

Midheaven (Medium Coeli -- MC): The point in the sky directly overhead relative to the position on Earth. In the chart, the midheaven is represented by the vertical line at the top of the chart between the ninth and tenth houses. The Midheaven is the zenith point of your chart and it is where you connect to your spiritual soul self.

Imum Coeli (IC): The Imum Coeli is the lowest point of your chart, or the roots of your chart. This represents where you came from, your upbringing, who you are deep inside and where you go to retreat into yourself. Any planets in conjunction to this point will be the deepest part of your being. Connecting with these planets is important for you to truly understand yourself.

Conjunction: The term applied when two planets have a proximity to each other of 10 degrees or less. Conjunctions intensify the relationship between planets.

Sextile: The term applied when two planets are within 60 degrees of one another in the sky. Sextiles have a harmonic relationship between planets and signify ease.

Square: The term applied when two planets are within 90 degrees of one another in the sky. Squares bring tension and conflicted relationships between planets. Squares help us grow and learn about ourselves.

Trine: The term applied when two planets are within 120 degrees of one another in the sky. Trines have flow and foster happier relationships between planets. Trines signify harmony, gifts, ease and flow.

Yod: The term applied when two planets are within 150 degrees of one another in the sky. Yods are said to be "fingers of God" in a chart. This relationship is spiritual in nature. Its energy can wobble if a spiritual understanding is not present.



Opposition: The term applied when two planets are within 180 degrees of one another in the sky. Oppositions signal an intensity between planets. Planets in opposition can come into harmony when they are looked at as an octave. These planets are mirrors of one another.

Grand Cross: A Grand Cross is a concurrence of four Squares, when four planets are simultaneously within 90 degrees of one another. Grand Cross can be fundamentally stressful because squares create tension and motivate action. They are perceived as uncomfortable influences because as the tension develops over time, it creates a strong urge to take action to reduce some of the pressure. Depending on our actions or reactions, squares can be both constructive and destructive.

Grand Trine: The Grand Trine occurs when three planets are in the same element (Fire, Earth, Air or Water), while forming trines to each other. Having a Grand Trine is similar to having a planet in a sign that it rules. It is believed that a Grand Trine is, taken as a whole, the purest expression of an element. Grand Trines signify natural gifts and talents. These gifts come so easily that they may sometimes be overlooked.

Kite: The Kite configuration is an extension of the Grand Trine. There is a fourth planet that opposes one of the three trine planets. Kites will always be in the same polarity, either masculine (Fire and Air) or feminine (Earth and Water). The influence of the Kite pattern is similar to Grand Trines with added motivation and potential. The opposition is especially productive in spurring individuals to utilize the opportunities and gifts offered up by the Grand Trine.

Mystic Rectangle: A Mystic Rectangle occurs when two oppositions are sextile to one another. The balance and structure of this planetary configuration is highly beneficial. There is a high degree of synchronization between the four planets when the Mystic Rectangle is triggered. Unfortunately, understanding and acknowledging the balance is not the rule; the individual must consciously react with awareness and mindfulness. Giving too much attention to any one of the four placements will throw off the balance of the energies, setting the well-meaning individual adrift. Once one understands the relationships between the points, magic can happen.

Spring Equinox: March 20-22 is the focus for a number of religious and traditional celebrations. As the Sun appears to cross the Earth's equator, entering the zodiacal sign of Aries. Day and night are equal in length. This astronomical phenomenon is a day anciently revered amongst pagan peoples.



Fall Equinox: Fall equinox falls on September 22-23, marking the official first day of fall as well as the pagan holiday, Mabon, in the northern hemisphere. Mabon is a harvest festival, the second of three, that encourages pagans to “reap what they sow,” both literally and figuratively. This is a time of giving thanks for the things we have, whether it is abundant crops or other blessings. It’s a time of plenty, of gratitude, and of sharing our abundance with those less fortunate.

Summer Solstice: The summer solstice is the longest day of the year and the beginning of summer weather. Summer solstice is the Wiccan celebration of Midsummer, or Litha. There is a fundamental shift in the power of the wheel at this time. The life force has been growing since Yule (winter solstice), and has reached its peak by the summer solstice. Now this power begins to ebb as the wheel turns, the days now shorten again toward midwinter. This is a joyful time of the year and Litha is a festival that invites us to live in the moment.

Winter Solstice: Winter solstice is the longest night of the year and varies from December 20 to December 23 depending on the year in the Gregorian calendar. Yule is also known as the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere. Yule, (pronounced EWE-elle) is when the dark half of the year relinquishes to the light half. Starting the next morning at sunrise, the sun climbs just a little higher and stays a little longer in the sky each day. The sun’s “rebirth” was celebrated with much joy in ancient times. Our ancestors celebrated the rebirth of the Oak King, the Sun King, the Giver of Life that warmed the frozen Earth. From this day forward, the days would become longer.

Ascendant: The point in the sky of the eastern horizon. In the chart, the Ascendant is represented by the horizontal line at the left hand side of the chart which crosses between the twelfth and first houses. The sign on the ascendant is also referred to as the rising sign.

Aspects: When the relative positions of two planets in the horoscope form a significant angle with each other, they are said to be in aspect with one another. The type and quality of the aspect is determined by the number of degrees between the two planets and is only considered significant if it is within a narrow range of degrees, or orb.

Natal Chart: From Latin, meaning of or pertaining to birth; therefore your birth chart, or planetary positions at birth.

Nodes: The lunar nodes are the two points where the Moon’s orbital path crosses the plane of the ecliptic (the plane of the Earth’s orbit around the Sun). Symbolically they represent talents and life path, or destiny.



Transits: Aspects formed between the current positions of the planets and the positions of your natal planets at the time and place you were born.

Cardinal Sign: Cardinal signs represent the leaders of the zodiac. They are designed to initiate action and be dynamic. The cardinal signs are Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn. They represent the four directions of an astrology chart: ascendant, Medium Coeli (M.C. or midheaven), descendant and Imum Coeli (I.C.). Individuals with charts abounding in cardinal signs like to lead and get things going. They are active, quick, ambitious and great at starting projects, although they find it hard to finish them. That's why they need the help of the other signs.

Fixed Sign: Fixed signs represent the stabilizers of the zodiac. They understand that steadiness and focus are the keys to success. Individuals with a strong fixed quality are happy to forge ahead with their projects, calmly working away until they have achieved their goals. Hard work and persevering makes them content. These individuals are stable, determined and resolute, having strong abilities to concentrate and stay the path.

Mutable Sign: Mutable signs are the harmonizers of the zodiac. They know how to change and go with the flow. Individuals with strong mutable signs are very resourceful, adaptable and flexible. They can adapt their forms of expression to whatever is needed to resolve a situation. They would rather conform to help the greater good. Versatility makes mutable people “jacks of all trades”, chameleons and wonderful performers.

