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Aug. 2020 Blog: Integrating your Solar Return Chart with your Natal Chart

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Why do some years feel easier than others?

There's always a lot of emotions to process around birthdays. Some post birthday periods are seamless, some feel like upgrades, and others can feel like you're still waiting for your latest operating software to finish downloading. Why the variety of feels? Because each year we integrate a new solar return chart to work in tandem with our natal chart. More so, it is how those charts relate (or not) to each other that indicate how quickly we feel aligned with the year ahead.

What is this solar return chart you speak of?

A solar return chart is a snapshot of what all of the planets in the cosmos are doing the moment the sun returns to the exact point of your birth. Like that whole getting older thing, this happens every year around your birthday.

While it is important to study the solar return chart on its own, the real magic happens when combined with your natal chart which we will touch on more later.

For now, consider that the solar return chart is like adding a topographical map (the one with all the bumpies) on top of a standard map which for the purpose of this analogy is your natal birth chart. Your natal chart is still the overall guide, but the solar return chart adds crucial details about navigating the year ahead.

Oh, what's that, you're not into cartography and would prefer a reality TV metaphor? Cool, cool. Your solar return chart is like getting a new cast on your favorite, longstanding, binge worthy reality show. Like it's still the Bachelor or Below Deck as in same rules/concepts apply but now you get all new contestants/cast members (aka solar return planets) that have to build chemistry and connections to succeed.

Fun. How is my solar return chart calculated and how different will it look from my natal chart?

A new solar return chart is calculated based on when the sun returns to the exact point of your birth. Because of the micro-shifts in the cosmos, this will almost always be a different time than your natal chart and that means that besides from your sun which will always remain in the same sign, every other placement can change. In our solar return chart (or annual reset as I like to call it) you're often gifted with new personal and outer

planets, and most notably, a brand spanking new rising sign. That last one is especially important because with a new rising sign comes a shift in the houses, meaning new areas of your life are adjusted into focus.

****One quick note, be sure to include the exact location of where you are during your solar return, so if you go on a trip (in less pandemic-ey times) factor in that location as it will impact your chart.***

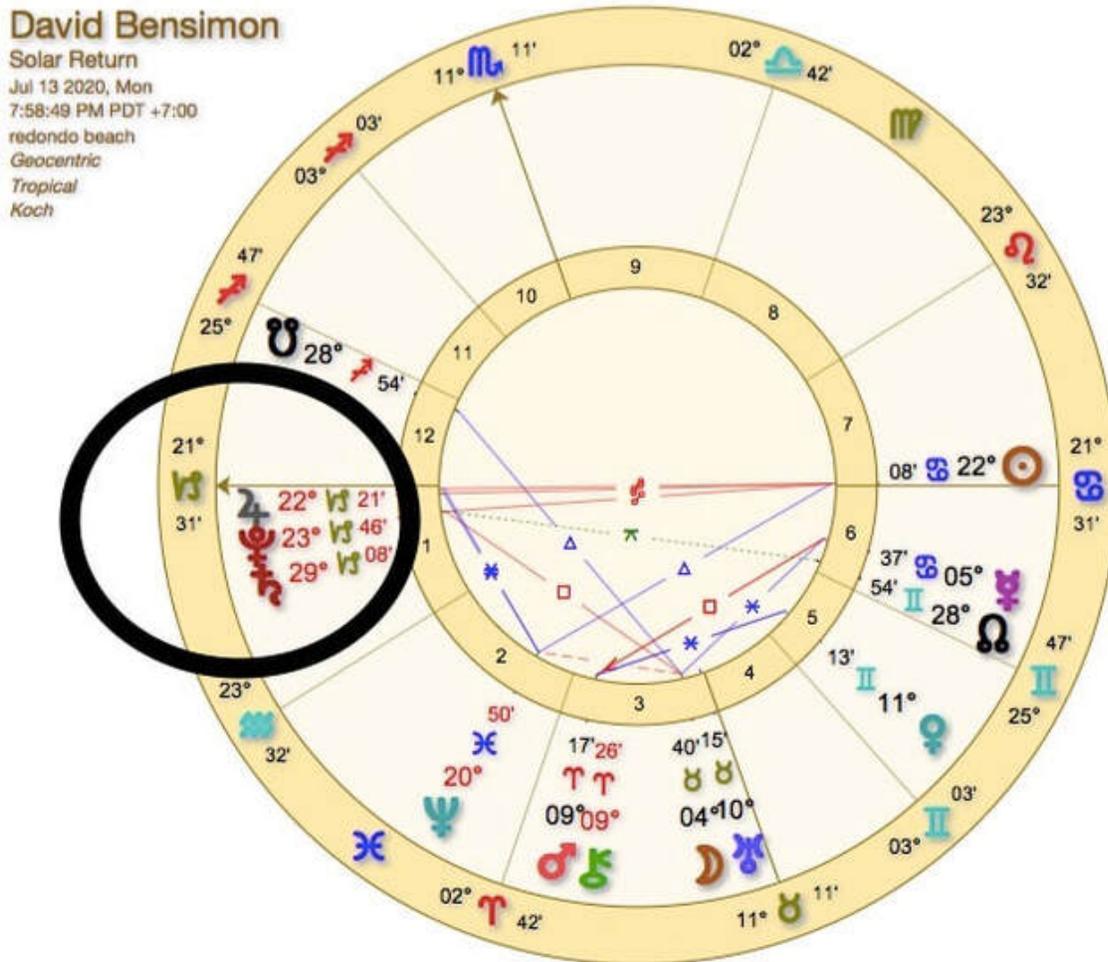
So.... What about me? How do I calculate my solar return chart?

Use the Solar Return Chart Calculation in the [Astrology Resource](#) page to calculate your solar return chart. You don't have to wait until your next birthday. Simply pull a solar return chart for your nearest past birthday or closest upcoming b-day period.

What to look at first in your solar return chart?

The rising sign. This placement is definitely going to determine the vibe and experience of the year.

We'll use my latest solar return chart as an example.



What's circled in black is the first thing I look at in my solar return chart and that's the Rising Sign of the year. In this solar return chart, it's at 21 degrees Capricorn ♑.

****In a single wheel chart (non-composite) your rising sign will always be on the left-***

hand side, and right in the middle on the equator separating the two sides of the hemisphere.

What does the Rising Sign signify?

In our natal charts, the rising sign indicates our outer identity, attitudes, physical body (yes, hella counting facial expressions) and the impressions we make on others. In my natal chart, I've found this to be how others perceive me. Like if one were to ask "hey, what is this David person like?" Then someone would usually describe my rising sign. In my solar return chart, I've seen this play out as more on how people react to the current state of my life. Fictional examples "Oh my gosh, that's so exciting you're going abroad for a year!" or conversely "Wow. So sorry. I heard you're dealing with a breakup."

The **MOST** important takeaway though is how **YOU** feel about your year ahead.

To understand how you will receive and experience your solar return chart, we first have to identify the planetary ruler of that sign and hence your chart's ruler.

This step is huge because once we know who's running the show (as in what planet rules your solar return chart), we can begin to understand the themes and experiences that await. Here's a quick cheat sheet to help you locate yours.

Rising Sign and Ruling Planet

If your solar return rising sign is:

Aries or Scorpio: then your ruler is Mars

Taurus, Libra: Venus

Gemini, Virgo: Mercury

Cancer: Moon

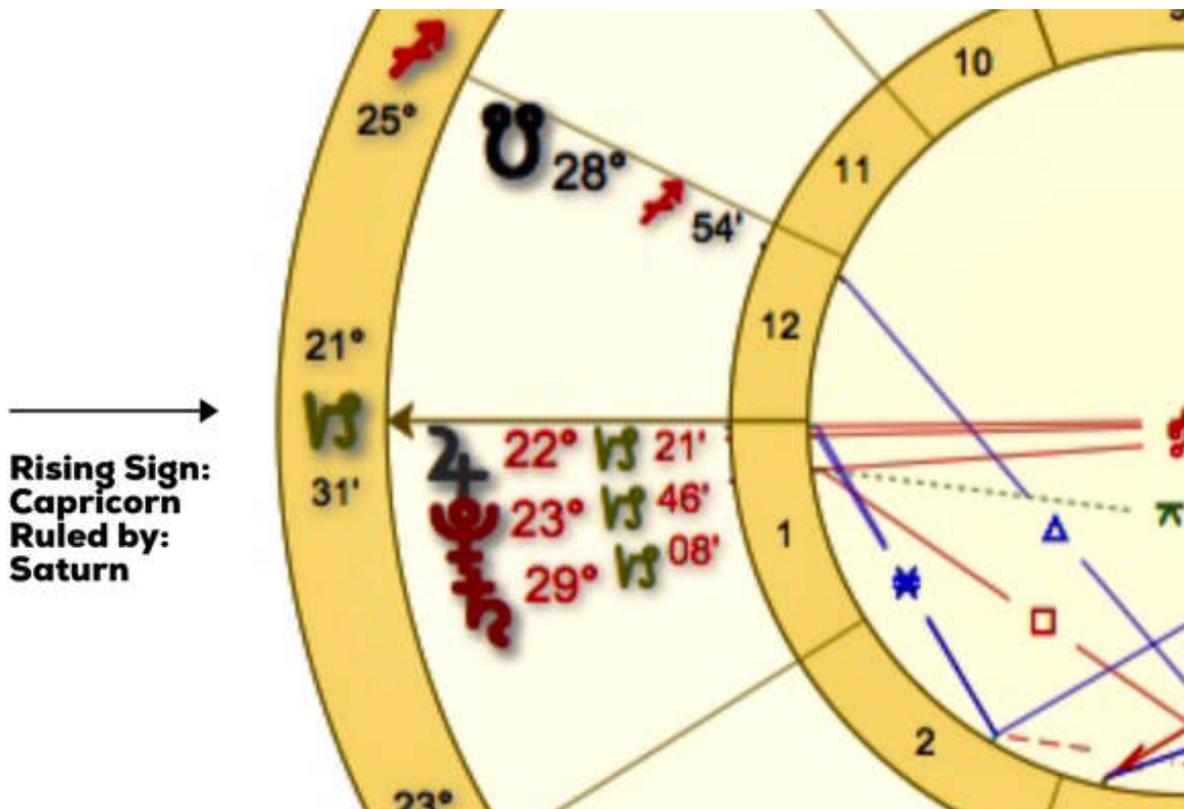
Leo: Sun

Sagittarius, Pisces: Jupiter

Capricorn, Aquarius: Saturn

****Note the above is based on the traditional ruler of the personal and interpersonal planets which are: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars and interpersonal planets Jupiter & Saturn. I am not including the outer planet co-rulers of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto because in my experience it doesn't translate as well. However, feel free to factor it in if you're a Scorpio, Aquarius, or Pisces and feel very connected to those planets and their themes.***

Below is my rising sign and ruler in this 2020 solar return chart... Oh WOW! Social distance hug me please.



Now it's my turn to ask you the million-dollar question about your solar return chart. What is YOUR relationship with what your ruling planet represents?

And then you might say. "What the hell does this planet represent dude? I'm an accountant not an astrologer?" Fair point, here's another cheat sheet to help you grasp the meaning of each planet. Still, I urge further investigation and research to get the full picture.

One word (but there's sooooo much more) on what the planets represent:

- Mars: Action*
- Venus: Cooperation*
- Mercury: Communication*
- Moon: Emotions*
- Sun: Talent*
- Jupiter: Expansion*
- Saturn: Commitment*

Now, ask yourself, what does my solar return ruling planet represent? And what is my relationship with those traits?

For example, in my solar return chart this year, Capricorn is my rising sign, and Saturn rules Capricorn so I have Saturn (aka: Warden Mc Stricty-pants) as my chart ruler. JK Saturn, I actually LOVE you now and those pants look greatttt on you.

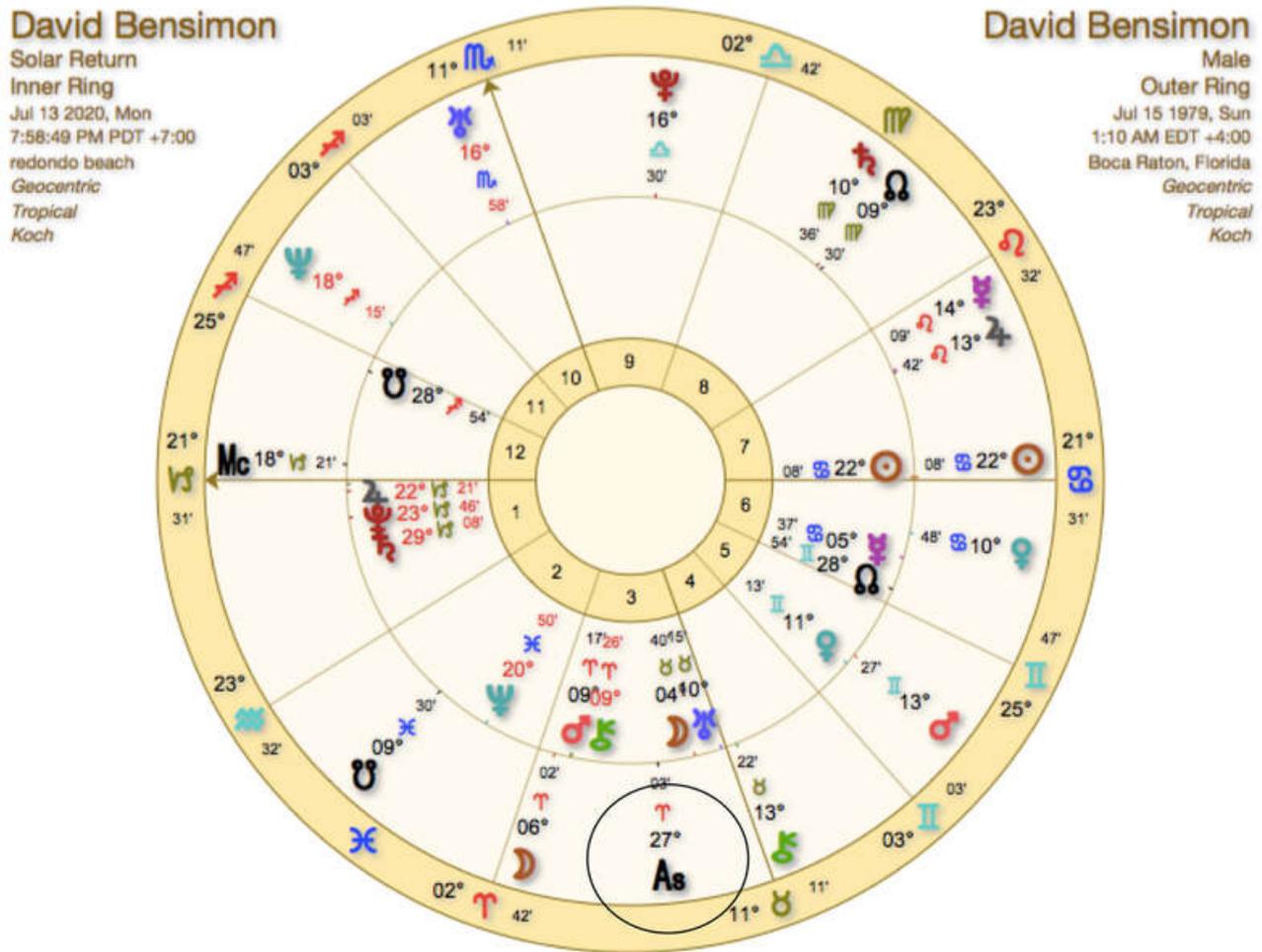
Why the warm embrace for such a tough planet? Because I understand what Saturn expects and requires which is consistent effort every day. It can be a modest amount, but a commitment to consistency is required to keep the vessel afloat. And so, this is

what I implore upon you- understand what your feelings are on what that ruling planet is asking of you?

To figure that one out we need to-

Integrate your Solar Return Chart with your Natal Chart.

If you have it, take a look at your natal chart. Go to [myresource page](#) to find a natal chart calculator. Using the cheat sheet above, find your rising sign and match which planet rules the chart. I'm again offering up my chart as a guinea pig for how this integration can play out. Below is the bi-wheel chart which shows both my solar return chart (inner ring) and on the outer ring, my natal chart.



My Natal Chart Rising sign is circled above ↑. I'm an Aries rising in my natal chart and Mars rules Aries. This never changes, but this year I have to factor in Saturn which is the ruler of my solar return chart. Now, I have to ask myself how does my natal chart ruler Mars relate to my Solar Return ruler Saturn. Ummmmm... Damn.

Okay, so yeah, I got the two bad boys (malefic planets) in the cosmos needing to work together so I don't implode. Using the other cheat sheet on the last page, I know Mars requires Action and Saturn requires Commitment (no matter the hardships). These two planets demand effort (Saturn) and courage (Mars), but the reward and the outcome can be well worth it (which is Saturn's silver lining).

Next, we should determine which planet will have more influence; determining if I tackle this year in more of a Mars or Saturn style. In this year's solar return chart, both planets are in dignity (their home base) which means both are in their strongest placement. However, it is the bigger planet which often wins the match. Saturn being the second largest planet behind Jupiter will have the upper hand (size matters to the planets), so overcoming this year will require me to rely more on Saturnian traits (hard work, discipline, playing by the rules) then it will Mars (which values bravery, and an act before you analyze approach). Based on the rest of the cosmos, I've determined that going the Saturnian route this year will probably yield the best results even if I have to work twice as hard to achieve the same results. I also know that Mars will most likely be frustrated in this instance, so giving it an outlet (that IS NOT rage yelling) will be constructive.

****I would also consider sect (which determines if planets function better or worse in a night or day chart). This is an ancient astrological practice that I won't delve into in this blog but that I do address in my consultation page.***

How do you relate this information to you and your life?

At this point, if you were my client during a solar return consultation, I would offer a similarly styled interpretation. I would also consider your natal plants (especially Mercury) and tailor that message so it is constructively received.

However, at the end of the day you are the best authority on you. Allow your experiences and knowledge of self to determine how to best implement the information given.

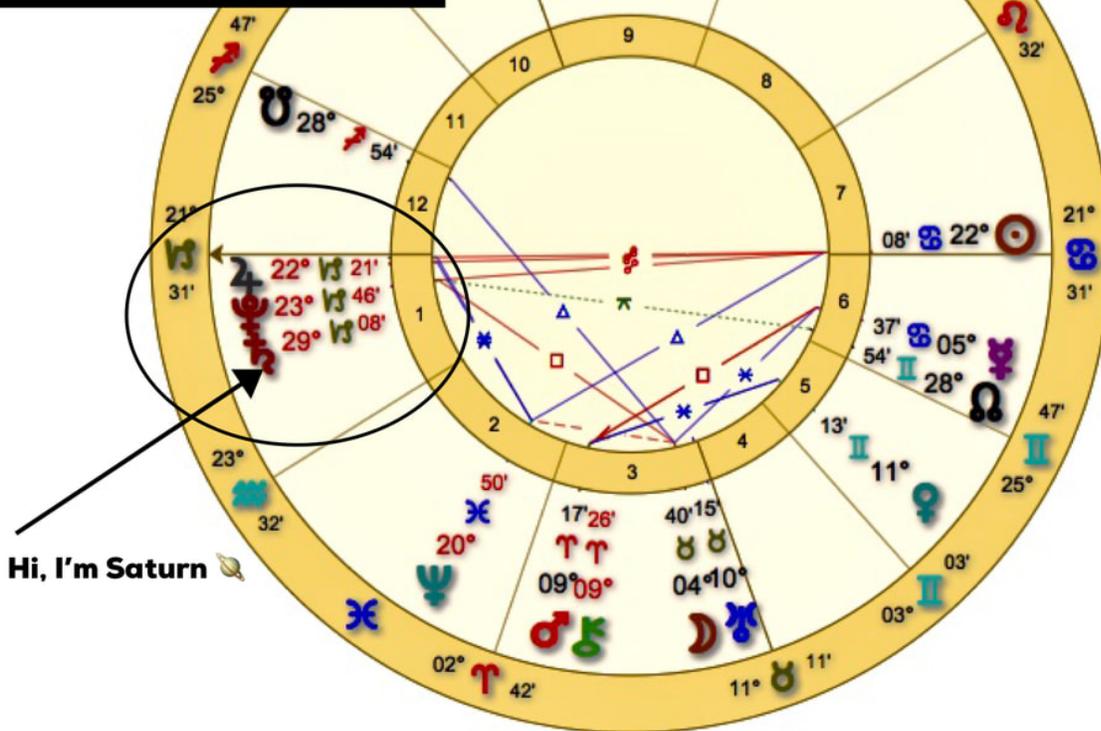
Last Step: Looking at the condition of your ruling planet in your chart.

"Damn it Jim! What are you asking now?"

First, I appreciate both the o.g Star Trek reference and the more formal spelling of dammit. Classy. Second, it's not that bad.

Once you've identified the ruling planet of your solar return chart look to see where that planet is (what sign & house). Let's find it together using my solar return chart-

Ruler: Saturn
Location: 1st house



So, I have Saturn in the first house... “this is fine (house on fire, burning plank of wood crashes down beside me). Maybe my neighbor will be helpful... Oh, hi Pluto, nice flamethrower!” I know, I’m being cheeky with my astrology but real talk- no planet is there to destroy you (well Pluto wants to destroy you and then put you back together better than before) but truly your astrology no matter how potent, is there to move you along in your evolution.

Here’s a quick rundown of the houses to use along with the planetary cheat sheet.

****This is a modern Interpretation which differs from Vedic and other forms of ancient astrology like Hellenistic.***

House descriptions:

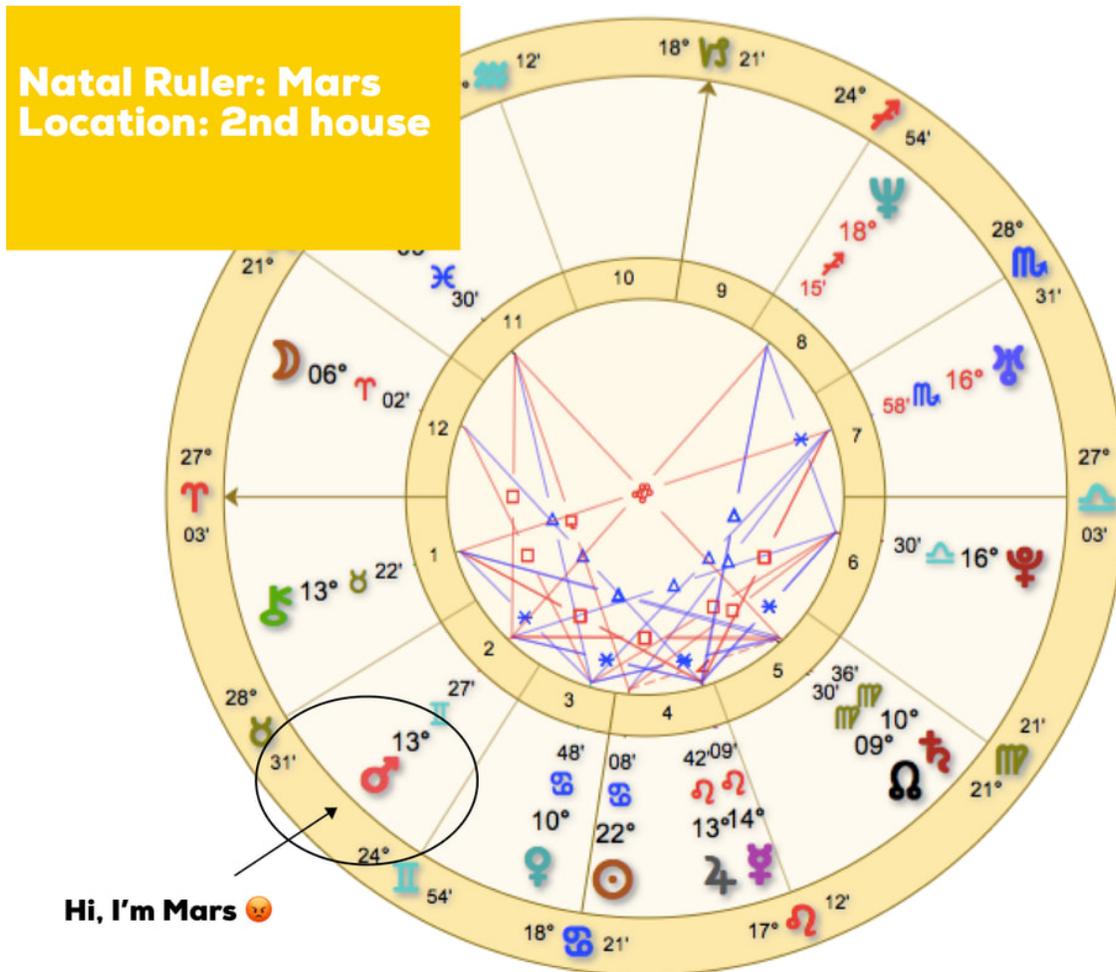
- 1st House: Who you are
- 2nd House: What you have
- 3rd House: What you say
- 4th House: Where you live
- 5th house: What you can do
- 6th house: What you HAVE to do
- 7th house: Who you’re with
- 8th house: What you desire
- 9th house: What you believe
- 10th house: What you want to achieve
- 11th House: Who you know

12th house: What you dream

****Like my planetary description, there is so much more to these houses than what's listed below, so please research on your own but I hope this simplified description helps***

Taking this information above, you can identify the house your ruling planet will be presiding over in your solar return chart. That house where the planetary chart ruler lives is the area of life taking on the greatest emphasis.

I always find multiple examples helpful in learning how to identify where the ruling planet is. So here is my natal chart below that has a different ruling planet and different house rulership.



In my natal chart, Mars is in my second house (this is calculated using the Koch method but I also like to view it through a whole sign house filter as well).

Pacing:

I should also mention that the planet that rules my rising sign in my solar return chart tends to dictate the pace of the year.

Here's a rundown of the pace and feelings that the planets can dictate:

Jupiter: Go big or go home. So much packed into a year that it can feel long but exciting. It's usually a sensory overload year. Like getting TOO many gifts on a holiday. Know when to say yes and when to say no.

Saturn: The long haul. Slowwwwww, methodical and measured. Work consistently to bring about small but significant changes. Sometimes you may fall victim to inertia but progress made during this time lasts. At the end of the year you can look back and hopefully be proud what was accomplished.

Mars: Fast! A need to finish first and best type of vibe where spoils go to the victor. Taking bold action and asserting oneself goes far this year. However, be careful not to burn too many bridges.

Sun: Step into the spotlight. This is a period where what you want to do with your life becomes the singular focus. The sun eventually sets each day, so pace yourself during this meaningful time.

Venus: Stop and smell the roses. A happy Venus year is one spent luxuriating in the sensory pleasures of this world. Who you spend your time with matters too, so enhance your relationships, including the one you have with yourself.

Mercury: Another year that can fly by. Mercury years are multifaceted and often include a wide range of experiences, especially from an intellectual perspective. The pacing of the year is dictated too by how fast your individual days go by. A Mercury year may feel like checking off boxes on one, very long to-do list. Leading with logic can take you far but do also include time to clear your mind.

Moon: So many feels. This year can feel like more than one because of the extreme highs and lows experienced. Since the moon travels so quickly through signs, every day can have such a different feel to it. Your intuition and gut-feeling are your best navigational friends.

But Wait There's More:

To understand the full implication and meaning of your solar return chart you have to take into account the whole cosmic picture. While the rising sign is where I recommend starting, there is so, so much more to examine. As in enough placements, asteroids, fixed stars, and predictive timing techniques to fill a year. But for starters I recommend checking out:

- How your solar return rising sign gels with your sun sign. Is your rising sign the same element as your sun sign? For example, two water signs like a Sun in Cancer with a Scorpio Rising would make for a more easeful transition into the new year vs. having your rising sign oppose or square. I found it helpful to look at past solar return charts (for example your 2018 birthday period) to see how in hindsight they played out.
- Do the same for your moon sign. This will speak to how emotionally keen & comfortable you are to the upcoming solar year.
- What planets are conjunct with your rising sign by degree or sign?
- Check out all of the personal and outer planets and the relationship they form with your sun, moon, rising in your natal, and solar return chart. Then identify conjunctions, oppositions, trines, squares, and other aspects between them.

What pairs well with the solar return chart is implementing an ancient timing technique known as Annual Profecions . This technique highlights a different house (area of your life) each birthday year and repeats after 12 (since there are only 12 houses in the zodiacal wheel.) Similar to a solar return chart the planet that rules that house and planets within the highlighted house of the year take on significance. Pairing this technique with your solar return chart works wonders. I added a link to the resource page explaining more as well.

In Conclusion:

Your solar return chart is an amazing tool that is updated every year. Personally, understanding my solar return chart has helped me break patterns limiting my growth and development.

If you would like to delve further into your chart, please visit the [Birthday Time-Solar Return Chart page](#) to book a consultation.

Please share your thoughts in the comments section below.

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