

Useful Astrology Techniques: Quadrant Counts

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QUADRANT COUNTS

The simplest subdivision of the natal chart is into halves: what is above the horizon and what is below (artificial vs. natural). It can also be divided along the meridian into an eastern half and western half (assertive vs. receptive). When these two divisions are combined, we get four quarters in the chart, which are identical to our natural subdivisions of the day: morning, afternoon, evening, and night (profession, relationships, natural development, and self-exploration).

Each of these halves and quarters can be correlated with a basic area of human experience and weighted according to the planetary allocations of a given chart. In order to keep this technique simple, I use the 10 planets commonly used by astrologers today (☉ through ♃). In fact, when first introducing a client to their chart, I often simply place hash marks or numbers in each sector – something that the ‘begin’ page of Solar fire™ does for you. This allows the client an opportunity to participate in a first exploration of their chart – as they don’t have to recognize any astrological symbols, but can easily see where their own chart has strengths and weaknesses.

These strengths and weaknesses are entirely relative: what is good in one context is bad in another. (It is my opinion and experience that there are some definitively good and bad signatures to be found in the horoscope, but for the most part such judgment is harmful and often wrong.) In the current context, the premise is that wherever you have the most planets, that is an area of natural (or learned) strength and ability – which is good, at least with respect to that area of life. Conversely, wherever you have few or no planets, that is an area of natural weakness, and often an area of inexperience or indifference to the native – which is bad with respect to itself. After all, each planet is going to get about the same number of transits over the course of a lifetime, so the sector with the most planets will get more opportunities for stimulation and thus the native will (eventually) get stronger!

Although the meaning of each half and quarter of the horoscope is quite simple, it is by no means barren or boring in its simplicity. In the opening paragraph I offered some keywords; now let’s look at them more carefully.

First comes the artificial/natural polarity of the upper and lower halves of the chart. By artificial I mean ‘man-made’ and by natural I mean, well, natural. Look at the (simplified) meanings of the first 6 houses: personality; body; siblings; home; children; and sustenance-work. Each of these are natural to the human condition and are least affected by era, culture, or economic circumstances. Everyone has a personality, a body, some sort of home and some activity which provides resources for food and shelter – even if it is nothing more than rag-picking and sleeping in a dumpster. The absence of siblings and children is as significant to an individual’s daily life choices as is the presence thereof. So these houses, taken as a group give us the night-time, lunar phase of our life, the part that we believe to be unique but so often is nothing new under the sun (or moon).

The circumstances of the upper half are very different. Here the house meanings are: marriage; inheritance; religion; profession; ideology; and public presence. Each and every one of these is highly colored by the culture, era, and economic state of the native, to say nothing of race, creed, color and gender. The choices and meaning of marriage to a rich modern Hindu woman are radically different from those of a 15th century gay German man. To be an astrologer in the 1960's is cool; in the 1760's it is too hot for comfort – in America – and the exact reverse in China! So I have chosen to call this half of the chart 'artificial' in the sense that each culture makes its own rules and judgments about the types of human experience allocated to houses 7 through 12.

A person who has a lot of planets below the horizon will learn a great deal from and about the natural issues of the human condition: parenting, aging, taking care of their body, learning to survive in the world. A person with a lot of planets above the horizon will learn a lot from their position in the world, and will be preoccupied with world-wide events, and cultural factors that may or may not be part of their immediate experience, but which are of great significance to them nonetheless.

So, how many is 'a lot'? In general, more than 6 planets in a given half will make a strong emphasis on that area for the native. Oddly enough, a 6/4 ratio (either way) is most normal – since we all like to be a little above average in some aspect of our life, and can find ways of seeing the other half as above average as well. In fact, people with a 5/5 split are often a bit more troubled; since the pull to learning their lessons from their own natural experience (below) and from what the world offers (above) is equal, they don't feel any particular ability or inclination one way or another. Alternately, people with a 7/3, 8/2, or 9/1 split are pretty happy, because their life-emphasis has been set from birth, as has their focus and the development of their abilities. Even so, there is a temporal consideration for these bigger imbalances: when a person is quite young and they have a top-heavy chart, they will often be quite unhappy and almost inert – since they have little natural access to the arenas of life in which they can develop. Such children will often benefit from day-care over having mom at home, from after-school activities, early religious training, and even early opportunities to perform or become involved with sports.

The East/West split gathers all the self-referencing houses (East) and other-referencing houses (West) together. The Eastern half of the chart is at once self-referencing and assertive; I call it the "driver's side" of the chart – which makes the other half the "passenger's seat." Individuals with a strong emphasis on the Eastern half of their chart (a ratio of more than 6/4) are commonly more assertive, less able to accommodate others. Some people will be very self-contained, inclined to protect their privacy by being invisible or innocuous to others; others will develop a strong gregarious extroversion, working on the belief that the best defense is a good offense. In every case the need is the same – to maintain their own course at all costs. When the context is either that of self-development, or an exploration of the world, this singularity is not only appropriate, it is necessary.

When the context is either that of relationships or culture, a chart weighted on the Western hemisphere will be far more at home. These individuals are very receptive to

others – sometimes to the point of co-dependence or sheer passivity. They are always either open to or in need of the company of others, and will go to any length to get and keep it – from tolerating destructive relationships well past their ‘sell by’ date to fabricating relationships that exist only in their own imagination (including psychic and ‘spiritual’ connections). Once again, in the proper environment – the company of others – an emphasis on the Western half of the chart is great; whereas when the native is required to act alone, without the guidance, feedback or support of others, it often flounders. Of course, life requires that we participate in both modes, regardless of our skills, which means that we’ll either develop avoidance mechanisms or choose to undertake such education as will provide us with some of the lacking skills and abilities.

After all this, we’re finally ready to deal with the title subject – quadrant counts. We can segue into these by overlapping the hemisphere values:

COMBINED HEMISPHERE MEANINGS	
Artificial & Self-Referencing	Artificial & Other-Referencing
Natural & Self-Referencing	Natural & Other-Referencing

This table only points to the simple meanings of the quadrants: morning has its own quality which is more than a blend of East and Daylight, and so forth. However, there should be a correlation between the meanings of the quadrants and of the hemispheres – so that our interpretation of the weighting in one reference is not out of balance with that of the other. Following the Sun counter-clockwise from dawn through the quadrants, we have: morning = profession; afternoon = relationships; evening = normal life; midnight = individuality.

Profession refers to our place in our current society; it includes a lot of our demographic identity: education & geographic whereabouts (12th house); social status and altruism (11th house); our job & economic worth (10th house). Geographic whereabouts includes such things as city vs. country; Californian vs. New Yorker, and sailor vs. desert rat. Social status includes who we know (the president or the janitor or both) and how much we care about such things. “Profession” is a little trickier: this refers to the public standing of our primary cultural identity. This is not always our primary means of income, or even how we spend our ‘nine-to-five.’ The waitress who is beginning to pursue her acting career may legitimately think of herself as a theater person, and view her life accordingly. Thirty years later, if she is still waiting tables full time, it may be healthier to re-align herself with the profession of waitress. A parent may view their responsibilities and experiences of tending their child’s needs and development as far more important than their own job, and thus make a career of being a ‘stage mother’ or ‘sports dad’ (or vice-versa). For those who have an emphasis in this quadrant (three or more planets), every experience, transition, and accomplishment in this realm is of great and true significance. For those lacking emphasis here, they can have a successful and significant career – but

nonetheless, the navigation of that career is likely to be of little interest or significance to them, and decisions are likely to be based entirely upon objective (or even arbitrary) considerations.

The afternoon quadrant is the arena of relationships: to individuals (7th); to groups and political, cultural identities (8th); and to religions or nationalities (9th). An emphasis in this quadrant gives the person a strong connection to any or all of these. Some will find their character transformed through their choice of spouse, others through finding a home in their native (or other) culture, or through choosing a strong religious affiliation (relationship to a specific Deity). Here are also all the 'ologies' by which we map – and explain – our world and our experience to ourselves. These range from psychology to biology, from economy to theology, from linguistics to astrology. All of these are useful as tools and pretty much useless as things-in-themselves. The same is true for a person with a strong emphasis in this quadrant – they are skilled in 'processing' life, whether as a scientist, politician, occultist, or theologian. To the extent that they are directly in contact with life, this skill gives them great power and significance to their community; if, however, they get lost in the processes themselves, they run the risks of irrelevance, heresy, or insanity – living more in their own reconstruction of experience than in life itself. Those weak in this quadrant will have little patience with theories of human experience or the world; and will have their lives little changed by their religious, cultural, or even marital affiliation. They may have all of the above affiliations, and treasure them as well; they are simply not troubled or transformed through such contact. Born a devout Catholic, they are likely to die one, or change to meet spousal commitments without much of a struggle.

This last observation points to a generalization for weighted and unweighted quadrants: the more planets in a quadrant, the more of the soul and psyche is present therein – which offers the opportunity and the requirement for a lot of growth and development. Where there are only a few planets, the soul is little troubled by experience, so there is little demand to evolve in that area – which also means that we're free to explore and experiment with little obligation to measure our progress. Consequently, people are often more at home in their empty quadrants, for there is little work to be done there, and no real consequences for slacking off or making mistakes. Only as we mature and begin to seek real transformation and development for ourselves do the over-weighted regions of our chart become more meaningful, and ultimately our primary area of focus.

Furthermore, each quadrant has its own means of development and its own measuring stick. The professional / morning quadrant measures life by results – the stage parent is nuts until their child becomes a hot Hollywood property, the ruthless entrepreneur dies a beloved philanthropist, and so on. In the relationship / afternoon quadrant it is the process and its proximity to experience that matters, not the results (or the person's own assimilation of their partner, not the partner themselves). Ecology is not a clean stream, but if the word becomes meaningful to enough people, the streams will start getting cleaner. A lot of people say they love God, and some even say God loves them back; those we believe we canonize, those we don't find themselves in an institution. In the evening quadrant we'll see that it is the initiative not the consequences which matter: how

we begin our family life, our job, our self-expression, not how they end or how they are seen by others. In the individual / midnight quarter, we are measured by our abilities and ourselves – not by the utility of those abilities, or by our association with others (this will be expanded shortly).

Returning to the quadrants, the third in our series is the quadrant of the evening and normal experience. I call this quadrant ‘normal’ because it contains the circumstances most common to the human condition – around the world and throughout time. We all have a family (or feel the lack of one, should we be a foundling); we all seek ‘life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness’ (otherwise known as the 5th house) and we all have to make some effort to secure food, clothing, and other comforts for ourselves and those we are responsible for (the 6th house). The experiences of this quadrant include being affected by our gender, and age, by the weather, the season, by our children’s age(s) or lack thereof, by the demands of a regulated job life, or freedom therefrom. In short, any of a number of day-to-day contexts that greet people around the world, regardless of their profession, marital status, psychological maturity, or inner life. While one person may check their transits before buying gutters (afternoon quadrant), and another check their stock portfolio (morning quadrant); *everyone* who owns a house will sooner or later have to buy and install the bloody things. Those blessed with an emphasis in this evening quarter will become very involved with the experience of gutter-installation itself, with neither the need nor the inclination to qualify the activity by seeking its meaning or economic significance. Here we find the farmers, householders, and laborers of the world – even though their farm may be the entire Ohio valley, their house may be a mansion, and their labor may be that of the research scientist. A person with more than 3 planets in this quadrant will surely change as they age (where a person with few planets here is likely to appear ‘ageless’); a change of residence heralds a fundamental change in their identity and focus; job relationships of every type are likely to be compelling and may even supercede romantic or marital events. When the economy changes the value of the house or job, this is not a reflection of (or even significant to) this quarter, for these events are ‘results’ and belong to the morning quadrant. Here the individual is measured by the appropriateness of their undertaking: could they afford the house when they bought it? Did they know that the boss was mean before they took the job? Did they plan for a child or just accidentally conceive? Is the person comfortable being middle-aged and childless? Are they still trying to live in the tropics even after they’ve relocated to Canada? When the native ‘acts their age’ here, we can say that they’ve either assimilated the lessons of this quadrant, or have no such lessons to learn (because they have no planets here).

The last quadrant, representing the time from midnight to dawn, refers to our most hidden and intimate experiences: the inner experiences of self-exploration (1st house), self-development and stability (2nd house), and general condition of consciousness (3rd house). It is a quadrant of individuality, privacy, and eccentricity; it is the locus of power, talent, and personal effort. Since it is the quadrant of absolute individuality, of necessity its meaning changes from one individual to the next (which is one reason I have left it for last). This also means that the processes of self-revelation, self-enhancement and living with oneself are

nearly intransmissible to anyone else. In the afternoon quarter, we find science, religion, and psychology, which gain their value according to the universality of their application; here we find activities of the mind, imagination, and body which gain value only in and for one person. Who we are, how well we care for ourselves, the extent to which we see ourselves as others see us, and the degree to which we stay true to our own essence or dharma – these are the considerations of the midnight quadrant. In ancient India, a coming-of-age ceremony culminates in a single question: “are you ready to be alone for the rest of your life?” When the candidate can truly answer in the affirmative, they are declared to be an adult. This is the truth of the midnight quadrant. Such a declaration does not preclude companionship or seeking guidance from others: it simply precludes *depending* upon companionship or guidance for fulfillment. So, for individuals with a heavy emphasis in this quadrant, the long night journey of self-discovery is their lot, and their reward. For those with only a few planets in this sector, the journey may still be undertaken, but will present fewer crossroads and crises. In either case, this arena of life deserves as much time and attention as do those of family, society, and profession, for without it the circle is not complete.

Well, that’s a short tour of the quadrants and their meanings. There are still a couple of points I’d like to address: choice of points used for weighting, and signs vs. houses. Let’s address the choice of Weight-points first. By limiting the points considered to the 7 Chaldean planets and the three trans-Saturnians, we have a nice round number: 10 – a number which can be evenly distributed by hemisphere, but not by quadrant, which guarantees some revelation of strength and weakness. If the lunar nodes are added, then of necessity two quadrants simultaneously gain an extra point, which is one reason to exclude them. A better reason is that the nodes, the Part of Fortune and other ingredients of the nativity may or do have great influence when considered in their own right, but have little influence or even viability when taken as part of a group. A final reason is that the 10 planets represent all the faculties that the psyche share with the soul, thus allowing a deeper reading of the chart without further adjustments.

So, we take our ten planets and sprinkle them around the chart: the best distribution we can hope for is some variation of 3-2-3-2; this produces two moderately strong and two moderately weak quadrants – and also combine to produce a 6/4 relationship by hemisphere. (When the 6/4 emphasis is diagonal, we can say that the 1st / 3rd (midnight/afternoon) quadrants combine to give emphasis on process, while the 2nd / 4th (evening/morning) quadrants give greater emphasis on origins and results.) Although there is no statistical reason that I can think of, I have found that a very common distribution is 4-3-2-1, which produces a superior function / auxiliary pair / inferior function mapping not unlike Jung’s typology. In fact this mapping will hold for *any* distribution of planets as long as there are at least one planet in each quadrant.

When there is one or more empty quadrants, the paradigm shifts considerably, as there is no potential for balance or centering through sustaining an awareness of one’s strengths and weakness – because the native will simply not be psychologically aware of the missing quadrant(s). They are not merely unconscious of the missing piece, but rather

have no reference to it whatsoever except through reflective consciousness – even as a person blind from birth may learn that they are blind, but this information gives them no experience of sight or the lack thereof. Such a person must learn to be consciously imbalanced, using the extra strength of their chart to maximize their own development while learning to honor those more balanced than themselves. They must also learn of the existence and reality of the missing quadrant(s) – for otherwise they will develop a false superiority over other people, to their own detriment and often to the suffering of others. In fact, I have found that this tool is a very helpful one in couple counseling for this very reason. It affords an opportunity for a naturally imbalanced person to recognize the existence of other modes of life experience and invites them to compare their weakness to that of their partner, rather than the habitual tendency to compare my strength to your weakness.

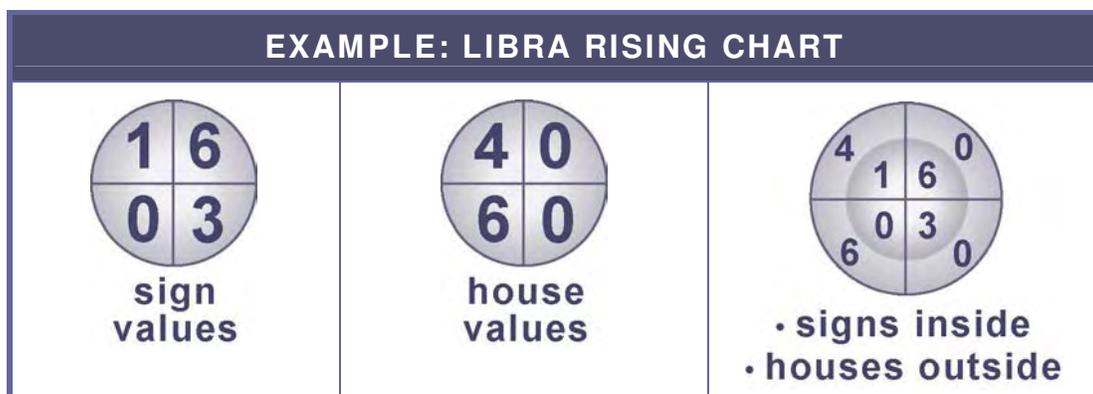
For example, one person may have a strong morning quadrant and nothing in the afternoon quadrant, while their partner may have nothing in the morning quadrant and an emphasis on the evening quadrant. The first individual will be completely focused upon career and current events, and will be unwilling to believe that anyone can be mature and lack such accomplishments or knowledge. At the same time this person can be first shown their auxiliary quadrants – (midnight and evening) which provide them with a modicum of involvement with their own development and the events of their family life. This latter can be contrasted with the accomplishments and concerns about household management which predominate their partner's life. Next, (presuming the client is open-minded) he or she may be able to see their partner's skill in handling people and psychology, where they themselves are utterly blind and helpless in this regard. Finally, the client can compare their own indifference to psychology with their partner's indifference towards the world. After all that, one can only hope that life treats them kindly when it forces them to recognize their own failings.

In the rare cases where all 10 planets (or at least 8) are all in one quadrant, I refer the reader to Jones' excellent discussion of a bundle chart in his "Essentials of Astrological Analysis" (which you should read anyway!).

Turning now to my second point: houses vs. signs. This turns out to be a big topic for me, and I will attempt to treat it succinctly here, in hopes of developing a whole paper as time goes by. To begin with, this method of weighting works quite well in both contexts, and can reveal some remarkable things when the two are combined. Here I will boldly state that the sign position (Υ rising chart) reveals our Nature and our unconscious modes, whereas the house position reveals our Soul's agenda and hence our destiny. This differentiation is partially based upon the fact that date of birth is roughly set at conception, but the time of birth has no discernable biological motivation. When we look at an equal-house chart drawn with $0 \text{ } \Upsilon$ rising, we are looking at the natural pattern and inclinations of the individual. When we look at the planetary placement in a modern house system (Placidus, in my case – which is yet another essay), we are seeing an emphasis 'chosen' by some power or force other than nature's own impulse. I see that force as a reflection of the

Soul's own imaging power – a force which is behind the incarnation of a sentient evolving Person into a naturally developing (and deteriorating) body.

After looking at the weighted quadrants in their own context – by house and by sign, the final consideration is to combine them. Comparing the weighting of each set of quadrants will commonly show one of three things: a marked similarity between house and sign emphasis; a marked polarity between them, or an indeterminate emphasis from one to the other. This combined result is partly a side-effect of the rising sign: ♍ rising obviously duplicates the sign position; ♎ and ♏ produce a house-placement square the sign-weighting and ♌ flips the emphasis completely around. All three of these latter immediately create a conflict between the natural inclinations of the individual and where they will find their destiny – and such a conflict is surely the hallmark of cardinal rising anyway!



Let's look at the example above of a ♌ rising chart; the first circle shows the sign emphasis; the second the house weightings, and the third shows both. Clearly this is a chart of great strengths and weaknesses – and one which gets stood on its head when the perspective shifts from sign to house and vice-versa. The sign emphasis points to an individual largely preoccupied with psychology, process, relationships, and sitting in the passenger's seat. There is little awareness of the world of commerce and not even an un-awareness of herself. Her relationship to the evening quadrant is a normal strong weight (3) – which usually gives the native great comfort and stability in the activity of house-holding and family affairs. That is still the case here, but the power of the afternoon quadrant overshadows this normalcy and may leave the person feeling inadequate in this area.

The house emphasis is almost the reverse of the signs: now we find 40% of the psyche preoccupied with career and 60% drawn to the inner world and private activities of the midnight quadrant. At the same time there is now little awareness or interest in relationships or family affairs, and no capacity to be in the passenger seat whatsoever. Such a house placement suggests a very remarkable individual who is clearly recognizable in their profession and who is yet a very unique and private person.

Clearly there is a lot of opportunity for specialization in either the sign or the house weighting of this chart – and equally clearly these two levels of the chart are entirely

polarized. The only quadrant which has planets in both sign and house is the morning 'career' quadrant. So even though this is not the quadrant with the greatest strength either by sign or by house, it is probable that the native will prefer this arena for development to any other – as there is both some natural inclination to do so, and some conscious desire to do so as well. The more this native can differentiate their conscious and unconscious patterns, the less surprised and disturbed they will be when they find themselves almost literally 'flipping out' as they flicker in and out of self-awareness. As this person becomes individuated – which means she maintains an active dialogue between her spiritual direction and her psychological needs – she will turn out to be quite well rounded or balanced. After all, the average weight for each quadrant ranges from a mildly weak 1.5 for the evening quadrant to the ordinarily strong 3.0 for the midnight and afternoon quadrants. And such eventual dynamic balance between inner and outer, between active and passive behavior, etc. are all characteristics we find in Ω , which once again reveals the deep symmetry of the horoscope and the wisdom of the Soul from which it depends.

There are many more sample images that I could offer here, but if this technique is as simple and as clear as I claim it to be, you should be able to apply the basics to any chart readily to hand – and perhaps you will discover something new about yourself, and have a new tool with which to share the exploration of the chart with your clients!

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