

Mercury Retrogrades 2011

Although not as popular as sun signs, Mercury has increasingly become a part of our awareness, it's movements tracked and noted but so many of us looking to assure the smooth efficiency of our daily affairs.

What is a retrograde phase of Mercury? Three or sometimes four times a year, the planet Mercury appears to be moving backward in the sky. Of course, "appears" is the key word here because no planet actually moves backward in it's orbit around the Sun. In fact, they don't even slow down. Retrograde-station-direct cycles are essentially illusions that result from our point of view on Earth, simply because Earth is also orbiting the Sun at a different speed than the other planets. Mercury turns retrograde more frequently than any other planet. It can never be more than twenty eight degrees from the Sun, and whenever it reaches its furthest distance from the Sun, it changes direction.

This year, Mercury retrogrades a total of three times: March 30 - April 23, August 3 - August 26, and finally November 24 - December 14. Of course, these dates don't reflect the shadow phases, a window of about 10 days to either side of the station dates when we feel some impact of the coming energies.

Mercury is the planet of communication, so when it is out of phase, it does tend to breed a certain level of confusion. Mercury rules our perception and interpretation of information we receive from our environment, as well as how we relay that information to others. Mercury rules buying and selling, speaking, listening and negotiating, formal contracts, documents, travel, shipping and even the mail. All of these areas are impacted when Mercury is slogging about in the astrological mud! Decision making is challenging during a retrograde phase and signing contracts is ill-advised. One is safest to delay important decisions, launching new businesses, big-ticket purchases and WEDDINGS until Mercury is safely back to it's normal orbit. After all, one never does anything on a retrograde Mercury that one does not want to have to do again...like get married. Delays and challenges are nearly guaranteed with a retrograde. It's a time when being careless with our money, signatures or personal information can prove costly.

It is important to note there is absolutely no reason to suspend current projects or endeavors on a retrograde cycle. It's not a good time to start new projects or sign documents mainly because you are likely to change your mind when Mercury goes direct again. It's a great time for thinking outside the box, but wait until the end of the retrograde before you implement.

There is a positive side to Mercury retrograde. This period is best used for re-flection, re-assessment, re-renewal, re-view, re-considering....are you following my theme? No NEW projects, no new start ups, no new computers, trucks or homes. During these phases we look a little differently at the world around us and can come to some important inner revelations. It is a good time to re-turn to the gym, re-visit the diet or re-connect with an old friend or love interest. In fact, you may even re-ignite the flames of love on a retrograde Mercury!

Interestingly, not everybody feels the effects of a retrograding Mercury, mostly notably, the approximately 20% of the population actually born with Mercury retrograde. In those circumstances, the thinking processes would be sharpened, as would be the wit and humor.

Think before you speak on a retrograde phase in general, but in particular around the days of Mercury's stations. In this case the dates would be March 30 and April 23. If you are wanting to argue with someone, or if you are planning to sign some kind of contract, try to hold off. It's most likely you will change your mind once the station passes and you could do considerable damage in the meantime!

Adding to the overall impact of the retrograde phases of 2011, is the fact that forward-looking Uranus, planet of individuality, originality and all that is progressive moves into Aries, sign of the pioneer and "me first!" on March 11, 2011 for a seven year stay. The first retrograde of 2011 happens in Aries, providing the opportunity to adjust our thoughts, attitudes and decisions about our issues and new directions as we move through 2011. The changes will be dynamic when those Aries floodgates open.

The August retrograde will happen in Leo, and the December in Sagittarius. We will talk about the impact of those retrogrades later in the year. For now it is of interest to note the retrogrades are all taking place in fire signs.

Also of interest is the fact that the exact retrogrades we will experience in 2011 were the exact same signs, degrees and almost the same dates of the retrograde phases of 1932. This cycle is seldom talked about in the astrology world but is the cause of major course corrections for humanity. We can look back at the history of 1932 to see the impact of Mercury retrograde covering the same time frames, signs and degrees. We are approaching a time as significant as was experienced in 1932. The president at the time was Herbert Hoover, with a birth date of August 10th. Our US president today is Barack Obama born August 4th. Both presidents have their sun in Leo. While even I

am not old enough to recount the transitions of 1932, it becomes history repeating itself to give us a chance to grow as humanity, as a society and as a world. We must get it right and make a difference this time. The planet Mars follows this same cycle and combined with Mercury's influence Mars brings ideas and attitudes into action. The phrase "Thought creates reality" certainly highlights the combination of Mercury and Mars and 2011.

Be good to one another.

Cheers,
Janna