

Decans: The Three Flavors of Each Zodiac Sign

By Tiffany Harelik

What Are Decans in Astrology? A Quick Guide

Astrology enthusiasts know there's more to your Sun sign than meets the eye. One way to explore the nuances of the zodiac's personality is through decans—which are subdivisions of each astrological sign. Decans divide each zodiac sign into three equal parts of 10° each. The meaning of each third of the slice is found in sub-rulers.

In other words, each decan brings unique qualities influenced by its planetary sub-ruler. These variations explain subtle shifts in personality, and why people born under the same Sun sign can express it so differently. But it's not limited to Sun signs - all of the planets can be viewed through the lens of the decans.

So how do you determine the sub-ruler, or flavor, of each decan?

Understanding Decans: Two Main methods:

Chaldean Method

The Chaldean method assigns one of the seven visible planets to each of the three decans per zodiac sign. These *assignments along with date ranges are listed in two separate tables at the end of the article.

Triplicity Method

The more common/modern method is the triplicity method. Here, the three decans are represented by the three expressions of the same element that rules each sign. To study the decans with this method, you need to know there are four elements, and that each element has three signs.

Review of the elements:

- Fire element signs: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius
- Earth element signs: Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn
- Air element signs: Gemini, Libra, Aquarius
- Water element signs: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces

The three decans:

- First Decan (degrees 0-10):
 - Ruled by the same planet as the sign. Represents the purest expression of the sign's traits.

- For example, Aries is ruled by Mars. This first decan of Aries is Mars. This means an Aries-Sun in degrees 0-10 are doubly influenced by Mars and will relate to the iconic Aries themes.
- Second Decan (degrees 11-20):
 - Influenced by the next sign within the same element. Adds new dimensions to understanding personality.
 - For example, Leo is the next sign in the same element (fire). The second decan of Aries is the Sun. So an Aries-Sun in degrees 11-20 has a Leo-tone to it. It adds some flair, creativity, and romance to the normal Aries themes.
- Third Decan (degrees 21-30):
 - Influenced by the final sign within the same element. Often marks a more developed or philosophical expression.
 - For example, Sagittarius is the final sign in the same element (fire). The third decan of Aries is Jupiter. So an Aries-Sun in degrees 21-30 has a Sagittarius-tone to it. It adds some adventure, spice, and culture to the normal Aries themes.

To reiterate this example, it's not just that your Sun is in Aries. What decan is it in? Knowing this will give you an extra layer of information about how that Sun-in-Aries is expressed. If it's in the second or third decans, looking at the triplicities offers more information.

A Guide with Both Methods

Aries (March 21 – April 19)

Aries themes include self-discovery, pioneering, trailblazing, new beginnings, right action, mindset, quick thinking, fierceness, the spice of life, action, inspiration, energy, sportiness, physical strength, competitiveness, striving for excellence, spontaneous, bold, authentic, eager, following first instincts, self-sufficiency. Challenging themes to disengage from include self-centered, bratty, being overly assertive, and firing off words during a hot temper moment. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Aries 1°-10°
 - Triplicity and Chaldean Methods: Mars (Aries) – Bold, courageous, and independent, the warrior spirit. Spirited, assertive, fierce. Fiery approach to life softens over time.
- Aries 11°-20°
 - Triplicity and Chaldean Methods: Sun (Leo) – Charismatic leaders, love attention and have a creative spark, romantic, lovers of life, honoring self-expression through outward appearance like fashion helps their 'performance' in life.
- Aries 21°-30°
 - Triplicity Method: Jupiter (Sagittarius) – Adventurous and optimistic, philosophical and freedom-loving. Midas touch - they have good luck.
 - Chaldean Method: Venus - Loving, sensual, and beautiful, good aesthetics, clear core values.

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Taurus themes include dependability, loyalty, stability, groundedness, value systems, self-worth, money, stock exchange (grains, livestock), perseverance, being methodical, routines, consistency, physical and material comfort, food, the body, strength training, sensuality, possessions, pleasant aromas, the sweetness of life, satisfaction, and luxury. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include possessiveness, attachment, stubbornness, and resistance to change. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Taurus 1°-10°
 - Triplicity Method: Venus (Taurus) – Sensual, grounded, and connected to beauty and luxury. Structure, healthy homes and beautiful work environments are important to their wellbeing.
 - Chaldean Method: Mercury - Intelligent, curious, and sociable, connected to education and information exchange.
- Taurus 11°-20°
 - Triplicity Method: Mercury (Virgo) – Communicative and analytical, with a practical approach to life. Meticulous, carefully crafted scripts, and a desire to learn.
 - Chaldean Method: Moon - Intuitive, spiritual, and reflective. A need to understand their spiritual abilities over time.
- Taurus 21°-30°
 - Triplicity and Chaldean Methods: Saturn (Capricorn) – Hardworking and responsible, with a mature focus on long-term stability. Recognition, rewards and awards - celebrating milestones is important. Foundations are important.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

Gemini themes include new ideas, information exchange, curiosity, intelligence, communication, podcasts, blog posts, short books, book club, articulation, writing, radio, media, data, facts, listening, memory, teaching, classes, elementary schools, social events, siblings, roommates, friends, motion, activities, hobbies, versatility, options, cars, and transportation. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include overstimulation, overcommitment or a fear of missing out, calming mental anxieties and restlessness, getting out of fight/flight/fright nervous behavior. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Gemini 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Mercury (Gemini) – Quick-witted, curious, and excellent communicators. Talkative intellectuals.
 - Chaldean Method: Jupiter – Optimistic, benevolent, curious about philosophy and culture, finds answers through travel.
- Gemini 11°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Venus (Libra) – Sociable, charming, and deeply interested in relationships. Hopeless romantics, they have an appreciation of loving words, and balance/harmony in all things.
 - Chaldean Method: Mars – Information warrior, spirited, bold, fierce, enjoys creating strategic battle plans.
- Gemini 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Uranus (Aquarius) – Innovative and free-spirited, they crave mental stimulation and change. Rebellious, breaking out of society's norms, quirky, next-level genius.
 - Chaldean Method: Sun – Self-expression, self-study, self-paced learning, brilliant teachers.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

Cancer themes include intuition, gut instincts, moods, empathy, vulnerability, tenderness, nurturing, hospitality, nurses, mothers, caretakers, close family relationships, nourishing foods, cooking, digestion, protection, home, family, hearth, financial security, silver, property, and real estate. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include fear of rejection, tendencies to close up, letting insecurities motivate decisions and behaviors, and controlling others thinking you're helping them. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Cancer 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Moon (Cancer) – Emotional, nurturing, and deeply intuitive. Nostalgic, with a special focus on homemaking, cooking, or creating safety.
 - Chaldean Method: Venus – Sociable, charming, and deeply romantic. A special focus on walking the Beauty way—the act of living in harmony with all of Life.
- Cancer 11°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Pluto (Scorpio) – Intense and transformative, with a strong sense of personal power which can be expressed as controlling or possessive at times. They need solitude and quiet time to recharge to fulfill their heart's desire of supporting themselves and others.

- Chaldean Method: Mercury - Quick-witted, curious, and excellent communicators. Intuitive learning, telepathic communication, and having an instant knowing - they would do well to understand their psychic side and take spiritual development classes.
- Cancer 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Neptune (Pisces) – Dreamy and spiritual, with a strong connection to imagination. Fantasy, illusion, and romance can be their preferred forms of escape (recharge). They have a deeply psychic side that needs to be explored and developed.
 - Chaldean Method: Moon - Intuitive, spiritual, and reflective. A need to understand their spiritual abilities over time.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Leo themes include the heart, leaders, having fun, creative projects, cheerleading, film industry, celebrities, crushes, romance and passion, gold, speculation, confidence, generosity, determination, optimism, courage, dignity, loyalty, royalty, joy, radiance, benevolence, parties, vacations, stamina, extravagance, heart-centered leadership, and admiration. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include approval seeking tendencies, arrogance, self-righteousness, bossiness, and stubbornness, and dramatic tendencies. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Leo 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Sun (Leo) – Confident, radiant, and natural leaders. Tenacious and inspiring. Bold, beautiful, and full of energy and vitality.
 - Chaldean Method: Saturn - Hardworking and trustworthy, they take on the habits of successful people. They go the distance and rise to the top.
- Leo 11°–20°
 - Triplicity and Chaldean Method: Jupiter (Sagittarius) – Generous, optimistic, cultured, and driven by a sense of purpose. Motivated by a higher calling. World travelers.
- Leo 21°–30°
 - Triplicity and Chaldean Method: Mars (Aries) – Energetic and ambitious, with a competitive edge. Action-oriented go-getters, they embrace their inner fire and celebrate the passionate side of life.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

Virgo themes include health, diet, organization, purification, efficiency, practicality, protocol, procedures, plans, ethics, analytical, details, dependability, bullet points and bite sized data, paperwork, punctuality, focus, discernment, tasks, everyday maintenance, routines, chores, cleanliness, day to day order, healing, the little things, gifts of service, helpfulness, work/jobs/vocation, pets, gardens, herbs, ancestry, passing down traditions, problem solving, and fitting puzzle pieces together. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include perfectionistic tendencies, worry, criticism, and analysis paralysis. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Virgo 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Mercury (Virgo) – Analytical, detail-oriented, and highly intellectual. Order, precision, and cleanliness are important. Check lists and bullet points are a love language of having clear communication.

- Chaldean Method: Sun - Health and vitality, self-paced learners, able to master successful habits including self-control.
- Virgo 11°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Saturn (Capricorn) – Disciplined, practical, and focused on self-improvement to the extreme. Hardworking, successful, and mentally resilient.
 - Chaldean Method: Venus - Charming, witty, and romantic, they have an appreciation of loving words, and balance/harmony in all things.
- Virgo 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Venus (Taurus) – Artistic, harmonious, and drawn to beauty and refinement.
 - Chaldean Method: Mercury - Analytical, detail-oriented, and highly intellectual. Order, precision, and cleanliness are important. Check lists and bullet points are a love language of having clear communication.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Libra themes include beauty from the inside out, art, harmony, aesthetics, refinement, luxury, fine art, decor, pampering, good taste, style, relationships, courtship, cooperation, team oriented, marriage, pairings, partnership, devotion, sharing, interdependence, equality, counseling, giving and receiving support, companionable, friendly, sociable, grace, love, balance, diplomacy, harmony, justice, regional/local banks, speculative assets (unproven businesses), objectivity, fairness, mediation, and negotiations. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include gossip, slander, codependency, indecision. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Libra 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Venus (Libra) – Diplomatic, romantic, and highly focused on balance. They are fulfilled in experiencing the finer things in life, the pleasures. A special focus on walking the Beauty way—the act of living in harmony with all of Life.
 - Chaldean Method: Moon - Intuitive, spiritual, and reflective. A need to understand their spiritual abilities over time.
- Libra 11°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Uranus (Aquarius) – Innovative and unconventional, with a strong sense of individuality. Brilliant, genius, outspoken.
 - Chaldean Method: Saturn - Disciplined, practical, and focused on self-improvement to the extreme. Hardworking, successful, and mentally resilient.
- Libra 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Mercury (Gemini) – Sociable, quick-thinking, and articulate communicators. Free thinkers, natural connectors, and networkers.
 - Chaldean Method: Jupiter - Benevolent, indulgent, optimistic, cultured, and driven by a sense of purpose. Motivated by a higher calling. World travelers. Justice seekers.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

Scorpio themes include sex, life's deepest human bonds, soul mates, passion, seduction, charisma, eros, sensuality, deep healing, subterranean emotions, intensity, regeneration, change, power, resources, steel,

weapons, defense systems, mining, bonds, loans, taxes, debt, illegal activity, determination, bravery, politics, big connections, big business, inheritances, death, insightfulness, psychic gifts, death, crisis skills, self-mastery, secrets, mysteries, metaphysical topics, psychology, forgiveness, and redemption. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include abandonment issues, power struggles, trauma, extreme tendencies, addictions, obsessions, jealousy, vengefulness, guilt, shame. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Scorpio I°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Pluto (Scorpio) – Intense, passionate, dark, and deep. Powerful, resourceful, tapped into something big. Secrets and taboo surround them. The promise of their journey is nothing short of total transformation. Alchemists. Subconscious healing is required of these master therapists.
 - Chaldean Method: Mars - Bold, jealous, courageous, and independent, the warrior spirit. Spirited, assertive, fierce opponent, incredibly strong and resilient.
- Scorpio II°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Neptune (Pisces) – Mystical and introspective, with a focus on dreams and intuition. They have a creative side, and a need to develop their creative and spiritual gifts.
 - Chaldean Method: Sun - Health and vitality are incredibly important. They undergo a shedding of skins, often transforming who they are at the core - getting more and more attuned to their metaphysical and spiritual life as they get older and wiser.
- Scorpio 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Moon (Cancer) – Emotionally powerful and deeply connected to the inner worlds. Excellent intuitives who are protective of their clients, and loved ones health and comfort. They need to nurture their spiritual gifts over time.
 - Chaldean Method: Venus - Sensual, with a special focus on walking the Beauty way—the act of living in harmony with all of Life. They are deeply connected to justice and the changes that must take place for fairness to reign.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

Sagittarius themes include adventures, humor, visionary, magic carpet rides, hot air balloons, travel, yogis, broadening horizons, meditation, broadening horizons, magical third options, new pathways, spontaneity, foreign language, publishing, teachers, professors, mentors, college, university students, faith, temples/churches and places of worship, religion/spirituality, philosophy, independence, quest for truth and justice, spontaneity, nature, exploration, morality, good luck, wisdom, the court, legalities, foreign affairs, crude oil, national banks, airlines, inflation versatility, and flexibility. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include bending the truth, being overzealous, self-righteousness, overly harsh/blunt communication, and excess. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Sagittarius I°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Jupiter (Sagittarius) – Optimistic, adventurous, philosophical and sometimes brash. These larger-than-life free spirits cannot be fenced in and love to devour new ideas and experiences.
 - Chaldean Method: Mercury - Sociable, quick-thinking, trivia winners, and articulate communicators of details. Free thinkers, natural connectors, and networkers.
- Sagittarius II°–20°

- Triplicity Method: Mars (Aries) – Dynamic, ambitious, and driven by action. Bold conquerors, they come across as strong commanders. Warriors of the truth.
- Chaldean Method: Moon - Deeply intuitive, they need to explore their spiritual side and develop their spiritual gifts as part of their fun adventures.
- Sagittarius 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Sun (Leo) – Showy, vibrant, charismatic leaders with a strong creative streak. Creative self-expression is their love language and they do well to study, or make a name for themselves in the arts.
 - Chaldean Method: Saturn - They take on the habits of successful people, although must watch out for workaholic tendencies. They go the distance and rise to the top - becoming known for their special gifts and talents.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Capricorn themes include foundations, focus, discipline, sensibility, maturity, long term vision, strategy, structure, reaching goals, business, financial infrastructure, ambition, designing something solid, resilience, respect, sticking with the winners, professionals, executives, fathers, grandfathers, authorities, being in charge, handling responsibilities, taking care of your future self, retirement, adulting, public image, reputation, accomplishments, stones/crystals, traditions, time, wise healers. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include self-justification, pessimistic tendencies, controlling tendencies, being overly strict. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Capricorn 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Saturn (Capricorn) – Disciplined, responsible taskmasters focused on achievement. They take on the habits of successful people, and go the distance and rise to the top - becoming known for their special gifts and talents. They are the authority, the final say, the ultimate boss.
 - Chaldean Method: Jupiter - Optimistic, wise beyond their years, deeply philosophical and sometimes brash. They have a need for new experiences and adventures all life long.
- Capricorn 11°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Venus (Taurus) – Practical and elegant, with a focus on creating beauty in structure. Indulgent yet refined, and old-fashioned with good taste.
 - Chaldean Method: Mars - Dynamic, ambitious, and driven by action. Bold conquerors, they are strong commanders and leaders.
- Capricorn 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Mercury (Virgo) – Strategic thinkers with a talent for communication. Wise beyond their years, with good memory. Smart teachers, healers, taskmasters who are also attuned to nature and likely have a green thumb.
 - Chaldean Method: Sun - Health and vitality, self-paced lifestyle, able to master successful habits including self-control.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

Aquarius themes include friends, networks, groups, the village, the tribe, the collective, teamwork, platonic love, humanitarian aid, clubs, unusual hobbies, cooperation, revelations, revolution, rebellion, independence, individuality, being unique, standing out from the crowd, freedom, unexpected, unconventional, brilliance, genius, aha moments, lightning, technology, science, robotics, the future, the unexpected/alien, space, internet, innovation, apps, central banks, construction, labor, eccentricity, larger worldview, excitement, radical change. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include detachment, self-righteousness, inflexible opinions, disconnection. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Aquarius 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Uranus (Aquarius) – Visionary, independent, and forward-thinking. Trend-knowers, and trend-setters, are in tune with the cutting edge of culture. Humanitarians who think outside the box, and want what is best for their fellows. Edgy, interesting, and innovative. Born under a different star.
 - Chaldean Method: Venus - Refined, yet wild - and with good taste, their wild ideas propel society forward. An insistence on beauty.
- Aquarius 11°–20°
 - Triplicity and Chaldean Method: Mercury (Gemini) – Innovative communicators with sharp intellectual abilities. They are blessed with genius ideas that create exciting changes for society and humanity. A human circuit board for interesting ideas to flow and connect the dots.
- Aquarius 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Venus (Libra) – Romantics with a strong desire to enforce peace. They possess outlandish beauty and have interesting fashion/aesthetics. An interesting combination of freaky and polished.
 - Chaldean Method: Moon - Deeply intuitive, they need to explore their telepathic side and develop their spiritual gifts as part of their contribution to helping society progress.

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

Pisces themes include mystical states, intuition, inner peace, healing, divine intervention, spiritual connection, psychic hygiene, dreaming, sleeping, enlightenment, imagination, universal love, compassion, philanthropy, meditation, gentleness, surrender, forgiveness, universal love, meditation, gentleness, surrender, forgiveness, fantasy, ecstasy, illusion, art/poetry, blending, daydreams, hammocks, star gazing, hot tubs, long naps, dream journals, purification, detoxification, sea animals, water conservation, the ocean, crude oil, pharmaceuticals, drugs, inflation. Challenging themes to disengage from (or heal) include codependency, lack of boundaries, spiritual bypassing, addictions, delusion (the lies we tell ourselves), and deception. Adding the decans adds layers of information.

- Pisces 1°–10°
 - Triplicity Method: Neptune (Pisces) – Dreamy, intuitive, and deeply spiritual. Fantasy and illusion are their favorite forms of therapy. Deeply romantic, they do well to develop their love of ‘blending’ by focusing on spiritual oneness with a Higher Power.
 - Chaldean Method: Saturn - Responsible stewards of their spiritual gifts, they become known for their special talents. They exude graceful authority. They know their boundaries and look up to the ultimate boss.

- Pisces 11°–20°
 - Triplicity Method: Moon (Cancer) – Empathetic, nurturing, and emotionally connected. They are the ultimate spiritual sponge and considerate caregiver. They have the gift and responsibility of developing as spiritual counselors no matter what career they pursue or wherever life times them.
 - Chaldean Method: Jupiter - Optimistic, adventurous, philosophical and over-indulgent dreamers. These larger-than-life free spirits cannot be fenced in and love to devour new ideas and metaphysical experiences.
- Pisces 21°–30°
 - Triplicity Method: Pluto (Scorpio) – Intense, transformative, and driven by inner growth. These souls are in touch with the Great Mysteries of life. Sometimes broody and controlling, they are learning to trust a Higher Power—surrender is key.
 - Chaldean Method: Mars - Ambitious, spiritual ladder-climbers who are driven by fighting the good fight.

Understanding your decan adds depth to your zodiac sign, offering insights into your unique traits and personality. Look to your decan (your planetary sub-ruler) for guidance on how these cosmic energies influence your life.

Tables

Decans - by Dates

Aries (March 21 – April 19)

- Aries 1: March 21–30
- Aries 2: March 31–April 9
- Aries 3: April 10–19

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

- Taurus 1: April 20–29
- Taurus 2: April 30–May 9
- Taurus 3: May 10–19

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

- Gemini 1: May 21–30
- Gemini 2: May 31–June 9
- Gemini 3: June 10–20

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

- Cancer 1: June 21–July 1
- Cancer 2: July 2–11
- Cancer 3: July 12–22

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

- Leo 1: July 23–August 1
- Leo 2: August 2–11
- Leo 3: August 12–22

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

- Virgo 1: August 23–September 1
- Virgo 2: September 2–11
- Virgo 3: September 12–22

Libra (September 23 – October 22)

- Libra 1: September 23–October 2
- Libra 2: October 3–12
- Libra 3: October 13–22

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

- Scorpio 1: October 23–November 1
- Scorpio 2: November 2–11
- Scorpio 3: November 12–21

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

- Sagittarius 1: November 22–December 1
- Sagittarius 2: December 2–11
- Sagittarius 3: December 12–21

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

- Capricorn 1: December 22–31
- Capricorn 2: January 1–10
- Capricorn 3: January 11–19

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

- Aquarius 1: January 20–29
- Aquarius 2: January 30–February 8
- Aquarius 3: February 9–18

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

- Pisces 1: February 19–28
- Pisces 2: March 1–10
- Pisces 3: March 11–20

*Chaldean decan assignments are:

- Aries: Mars, Sun, Venus
- Taurus: Mercury, Moon, Saturn
- Gemini: Jupiter, Mars, Sun
- Cancer: Venus, Mercury, Moon
- Leo: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars
- Virgo: Sun, Venus, Mercury
- Libra: Moon, Saturn, Jupiter
- Scorpio: Mars, Sun, Venus
- Sagittarius: Mercury, Moon, Saturn
- Capricorn: Jupiter, Mars, Sun
- Aquarius: Venus, Mercury, Moon
- Pisces: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars

