

2. The Set of Signs on the Four Angles

Our second assessment is to note the set of signs on the four angles. Are they of a particular mode? Are all four elements found on the angles? Does a pair have a planetary ruler in common? This assessment is important when considering our relationship with our immediate and broader environments, and it may also introduce a key theme that will become apparent in later stages of interpretation.

The angles reveal our *orientation* and the type of *interaction* we have with the world around us. Is our stance seemingly rock-like or permanent, or even stuck or immovable (fixed signs on the angles)? Is it focused on initiating matters and engaging with life's conflicts (cardinal)? Or do we pursue freedom and versatility, and have less of a grip on our environment, but are more able to mutate into new surroundings with ease (mutable)?

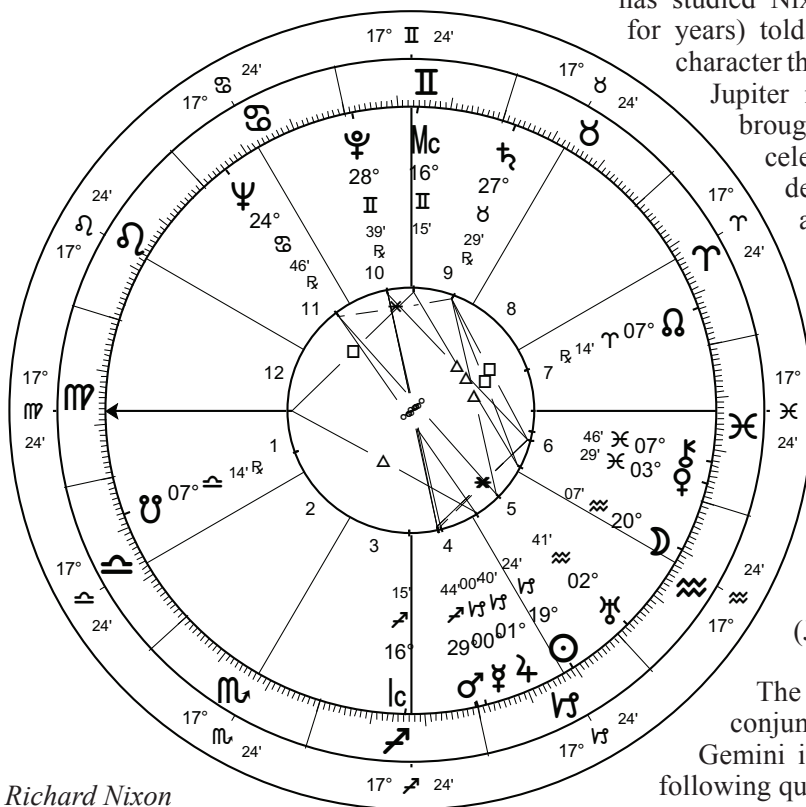
Once we've looked for links between the four signs on the angles, what about their rulers? Are they connected in any way? Perhaps the rulers are in aspect to one another, making that aspect a pivotal one in the horoscope. In addition, look out

for planets that rule more than one angle, e.g. when Virgo is on the Ascendant and Gemini on the MC, Mercury automatically becomes doubly important (as does Jupiter, which co-rules the Descendant and rules the IC). It would be noteworthy then if Mercury and Jupiter were in major aspect to one other, suggesting that a dialogue/bridge is built between all four angles.

And finally, how does our particular compass (four angles) sit with the elements and modes of our inner planets (especially the Sun and Moon)? If we have a fixed compass/orientation, this might prove frustrating to those of us with a mutable Sun and Moon, for example. Or if used well, the fixed angles might stabilize us (and make others see us as secure and grounded) and provide necessary support and steadiness (fixed signs) to go off and enjoy the freedom and flexibility of personal pursuits (the energy of mutable planets).

Richard Nixon's chart (below) has four mutable angles. These are ruled by Mercury and Jupiter, which are found conjunct in Capricorn in the 4th House. Astrologer Richard Swatton (who has studied Nixon's horoscope and psychology for years) told me of traits central to Nixon's character that epitomize this pivotal Mercury–Jupiter in Capricorn: young Nixon was brought up in a Quaker household, was celebrated for winning a number of debating competitions as a child, and by age fourteen had written a theological argument on the existence of God. Books and his imagination brought freedom from the appalling conditions of his home life. He dreamed of being someone of importance – a 'great man' – perhaps to make up for the un-lived ambitions of his father. Nixon's own ambitions were grandiose and matched his exaggerated sense of purpose (Jupiter).⁸

The Mercury–Jupiter conjunction also conjuncts Mars and it opposes Pluto in Gemini in the 10th House of career. The following quotes reveal these aspects:



Richard Nixon

Several warring personalities struggled for preeminence in the same individual. One was idealistic, thoughtful, generous; another was vindictive, petty, emotional.

His decisions were courageous... often taken in loneliness against all expert advice.

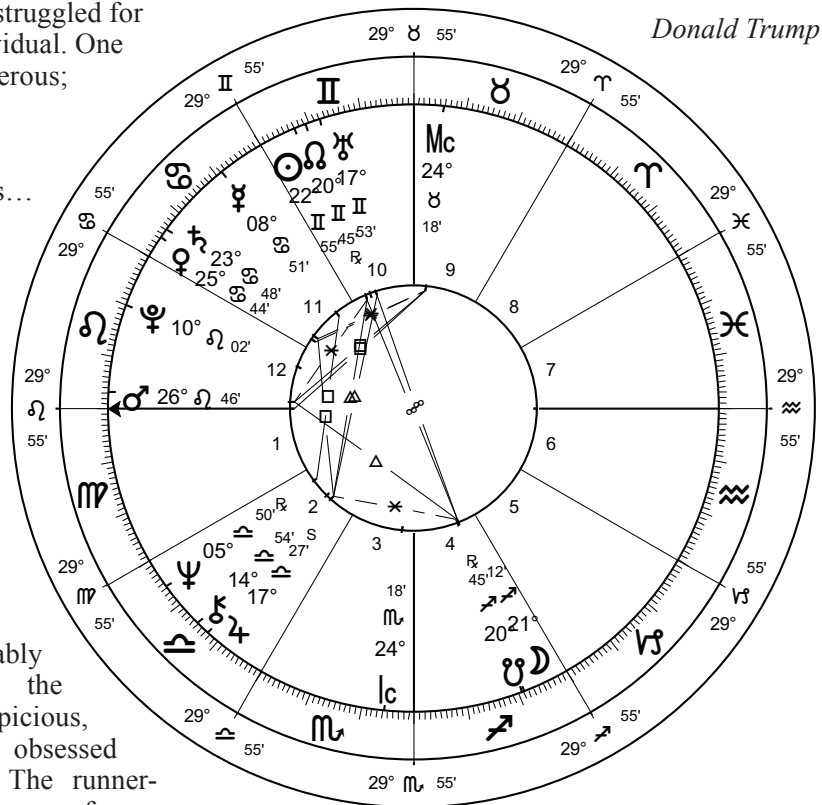
The thoughtful analytical side of Nixon was most in evidence during crises, while periods of calm seemed to unleash the darker passions of his nature... Calm periods seemed to drive him to disequilibrium as if he could find his own balance only in tension.

Nixon's reputation is inextricably linked to Mercury-Pluto: the controlling, conniving, suspicious, tunnel-visioned 'Tricky Dicky' obsessed with power and information. The runner-up who underwent psychotherapy for many years, eventually achieved his ambition to be president (Saturn disposes six planets), and whose clandestine, dirty tricks and Watergate cover-up were unearthed, brought him disgrace, forced his resignation and fueled his paranoia.

A Master of the Deal

Donald Trump's chart (above) has a set of fixed signs on the angles, with the two angles governing one's social persona (the ASC and MC) in Leo and Taurus, respectively. The Leo-Taurus combination can be seen in his confident persona and the flaunting of his glitzy, golden, ostentatious brand of wealth and luxury. The combo is evident in Trump the figurehead, in the energy behind his real estate empire (Mars rises in Leo), and in his drive to become president. He is one of the few celebrity (Leo) businessmen (Taurus) in America.

Leo Rising *appears* to be unplagued by self-doubt. Growing up, Donald took great pride in his appearance and was known as 'The Great I Am'. He never respected authority at school until he began a five-year stint in Military Academy. The Leo-Taurus combination embodies *certainty* – others follow and believe (Leo/Fire) in Trump and see him as a solid investment (Taurus/Earth). His famous name (Leo) brings value (Taurus).



The rulers of the four angles are:

- Sun (Ascendant ruler)
- Saturn and Uranus (Descendant rulers)
- Venus (MC ruler)
- Mars and Pluto (IC rulers)

If any of these rulers are connected by aspect in the natal chart, they immediately link and tie up the affairs of one angle with the affairs of another. The Sun conjuncts Uranus (i.e. the Ascendant ruler is conjunct the Descendant ruler, making it a particularly important conjunction and signifier of his relationships). The second link is the conjunction of the MC ruler with the traditional ruler of the Descendant (Venus conjuncts Saturn in the 11th in Cancer). When the MC ruler aspects the Descendant ruler, partnerships are vital to one's reputation, success and advancement. Not only have Trump's relationships (DSC) been high-profile news (MC) and each wife (DSC) instrumental in his success and public image (MC), they have also been financial assets and, when divorcing, financially costly (Venus-Saturn). Trump learned the hard way (Saturn) and his second wife signed a prenuptial agreement (Venus-Saturn). The importance of Trump's other relationships – those with his financial backers – is

also indicated here, as is his interest and expertise in real estate (a legacy from his father – parental messages are seen in the MC–IC axis), and how precariously close he has come to personally declaring bankruptcy.

Much of Trump’s real estate bears his name (with Leo Rising the person *is* the product, the star of his own business). These buildings are permanent (fixed angles) fixtures around America. Yet, this man is essentially mutable and not overly materialistic by nature: he was born at a mutable Full Moon with the Sun in Gemini opposite the Moon in Sagittarius. For him, it is about *making the deal* (Gemini–Sagittarius) and *being seen as winning* (Mars rising in Leo). As he says, ‘Negotiation is an art, and I have a flair for it.’ Trump is a PR great, a born salesman keen to wheel and deal. He enjoys selling (Gemini) his grandiose visions (Sagittarius) with a persuasive charm that he himself describes succinctly as ‘truthful hyperbole’. The etymology of his surname suggests two meanings, one Gemini, one Leo/Sagittarius: to fabricate, deceive, or cheat (as in ‘trumped up’); and ‘triumph’, to surpass or beat, a playing card that ranks above the others (as in ‘to trump an ace’).

His father – a self-made real estate developer – gave Donald some simple but fittingly mutable advice: ‘Know everything you can about what you’re doing.’ Donald grew up watching his father, a tough negotiator and businessman, on the construction site. Trump Senior benefited from the Baby Boom of 1945–6 and the demand for housing that followed (Donald’s MC ruler is Venus, which conjuncts Saturn in Cancer – a *lack of homes*). He learned practical skills (Taurus MC) from his father and a need to maintain control (Scorpio IC). The secret to success and key motivating factors are often found at the IC. For tycoon Trump, he’s been able to build and accumulate (Taurus) because of the *control* he has by privately owning his empire. This enables his finances to be kept secret and for him to remain free of the demands of shareholders (Scorpio IC).

After obtaining air rights on Fifth Avenue to build an extravagant sixty-eight storey building (Trump Tower, 1983), he later moved into the gambling business (Sagittarius) and bought and opened Trump’s Castle (Leo) in 1985. With Uranus aspecting the mutable Sun and Moon, there’s an electric charisma but also an added unpredictability to the already most unsteady of modes. His fortunes have fluctuated wildly over the years, but he has proven to be a ‘comeback kid’.

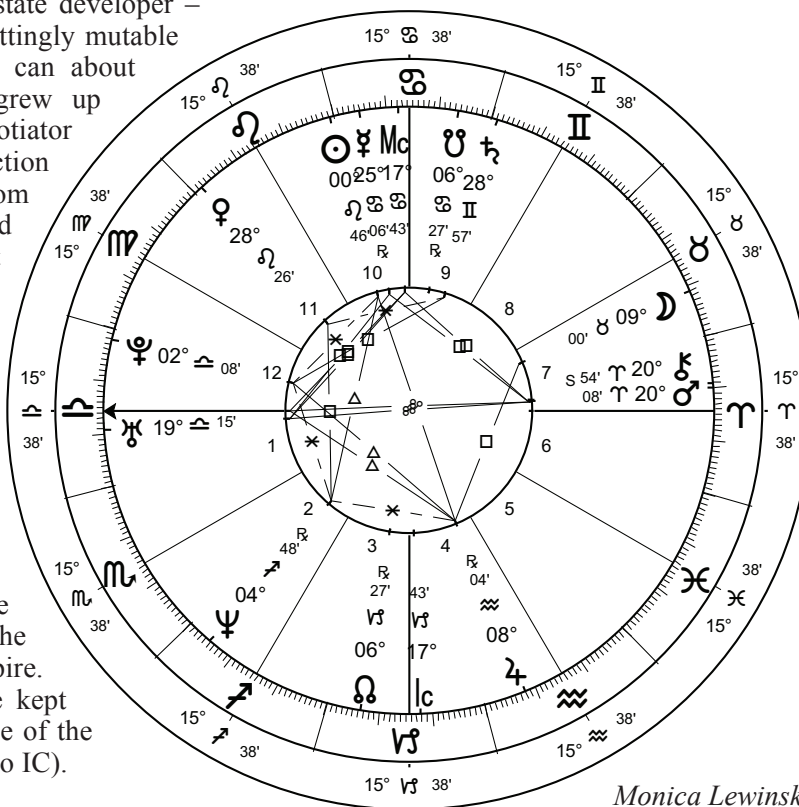
Internally Yours

The chart of infamous intern **Monica Lewinsky** (below) has all four angles in cardinal signs plus a cardinal T-square, suggesting that her ‘orientation’ is one of conflict and confrontation, and a need to assert herself in her environment. Her parents’ acrimonious divorce when she was fourteen was an early sign of the cardinal cross in action.

The rulers of the four angles are:

- Venus (Ascendant ruler)
- Mars (Descendant ruler)
- Moon (MC ruler)
- Saturn (IC ruler)

Are they connected in any way? Venus is closely sextile Saturn, and two of the four ruling planets



are in a house linked to Venus – the 7th – but neither observation uncovers a major statement in the horoscope. There is one emphasis, however. The Descendant ruler (Mars) is conjunct the Descendant and in its own sign (Aries), suggesting that this angle is the one to look out for. Mars in Aries on the Descendant would indicate that much energy is poured into passionate relationships or engaging in conflict (from impetuous, impulsive sexual pursuits to full-scale war). It's a good placement, too, for a personal trainer, motivator or life coach ('You can do it, Bill'). It could also suggest the 'throwing away' (Descendant) of her fighting spirit (Mars) or having others act this out for her (by taking charge or attacking her).

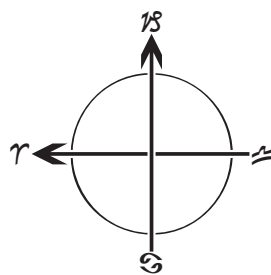
With Libra Rising and the Sun in Leo, her eagerness to please resulted in two on-going relationships with married men: one in college, and the other in the White House. (Note that her 'celebrity' came from an association with a famous, charismatic Leo leader – Sun at 0° Leo in the 10th House.)

What dominates her chart is a cardinal T-square that conjuncts three of the four angles. (We'll be looking at T-squares in detail later.) It is very descriptive of her most famous exploits with

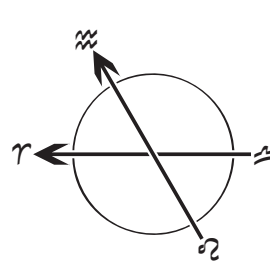
then-President Clinton: Uranus rises in Libra and opposes Mars in Aries, suggestive of the explosive relationship that shook Clinton's second term of office. Both planets square Mercury in Cancer on the MC – the 'improper' relationship was the *talk* of America for well over a year. (Monica's pivotal Mercury is a degree away from the Mercury in the US's 4 July chart.) The T-square describes the news (Mercury) of the shocking truth (Uranus) of her sexual relations (Mars) and her compatibility with a randy president (the pair share the exact Sun–Moon–Ascendant combo). For a long time, she was the punchline of jokes broadcast into American homes (Mercury in Cancer on the MC).

Its mid-cardinal degrees link the horoscopes of the principal players in the scandal. Clinton has Venus at 11° Libra conjunct Chiron at 18°. Linda Tripp, who secretly taped conversations with Lewinsky about the affair for Kenneth Starr, has Neptune at 16° Libra square to Venus at 19° Capricorn. Starr, who led the salacious witch hunt, has Chiron at 16° Libra, Jupiter at 19° Libra, and an Ascendant at 13° Capricorn. When Lewinsky was intimidated by the FBI on 16 January 1998 and the scandal broke nationally five days later, TR Saturn was at 14° Aries, fast approaching her Descendant.

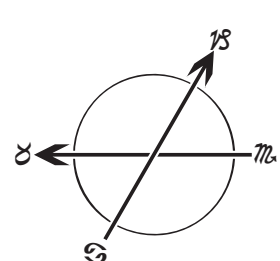
Here's a guide to the 38 angle combinations, listed in Ascendant sign order, starting with MC/IC possibilities for Aries Rising. Some are rare – they occur at extreme latitudes or for a short time. I've omitted combinations that only occur above 60° North or below 40° South.



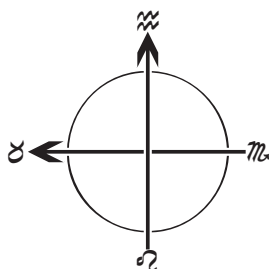
All Cardinal
All four elements
'Natural Zodiac'



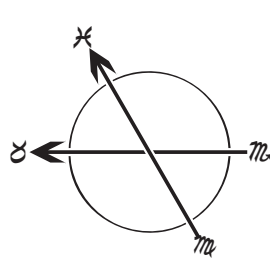
Cardinal and Fixed
Fire and Air



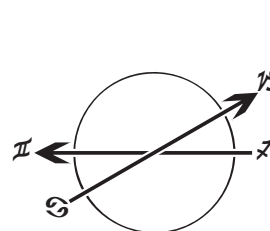
Cardinal and Fixed
Earth and Water



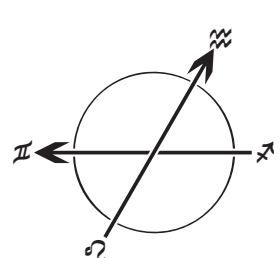
All Fixed
All four elements



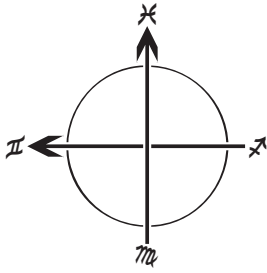
Fixed and Mutable
Earth and Water



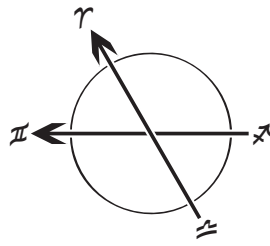
Cardinal and Mutable
All four elements



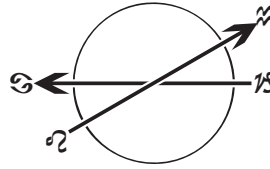
Fixed and Mutable
Fire and Air



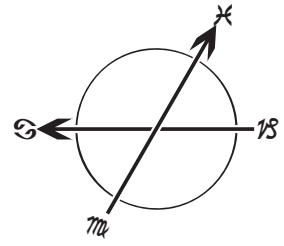
All Mutable
All four elements
Rulers: Mercury, Jupiter



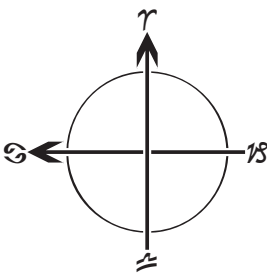
Cardinal and Mutable
Fire and Air



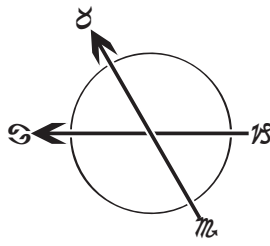
Cardinal and Fixed
All four elements



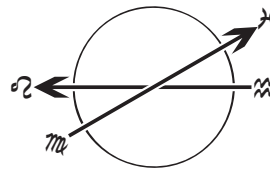
Cardinal and Mutable
Earth and Water



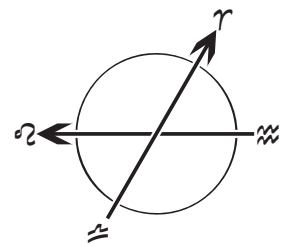
All Cardinal
All four elements



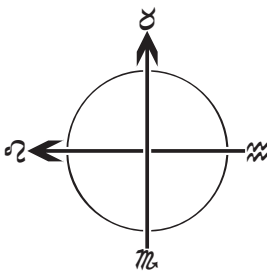
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Earth and Water



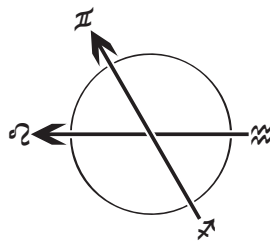
Fixed and Mutable
All four elements



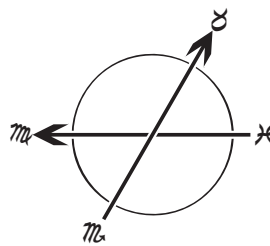
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Fire and Air



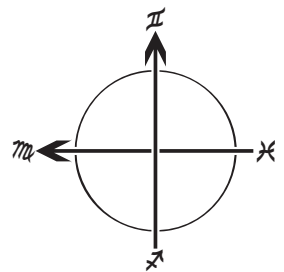
All Fixed
All four elements



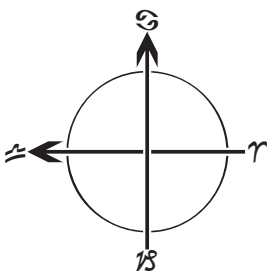
Fixed and Mutable
Fire and Air



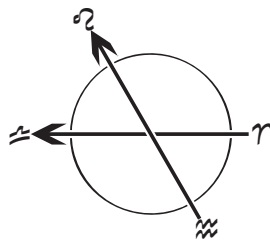
Fixed and Mutable
Earth and Water



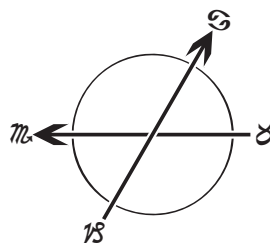
All Mutable
All four elements
Rulers: Mercury, Jupiter



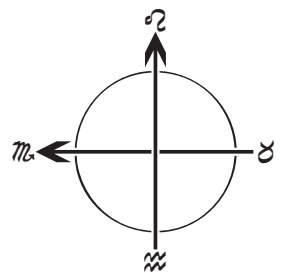
All Cardinal
All four elements



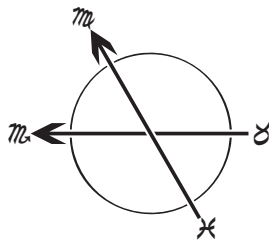
Cardinal and Fixed
Fire and Air



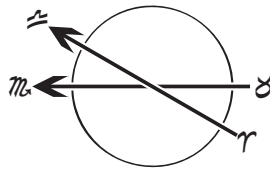
Cardinal and Fixed
Earth and Water



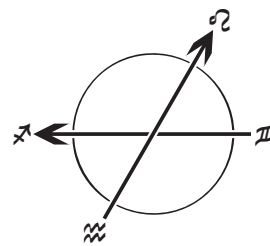
All Fixed
All four elements



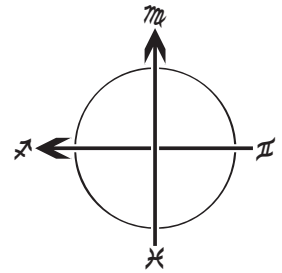
Fixed and Mutable
Earth and Water



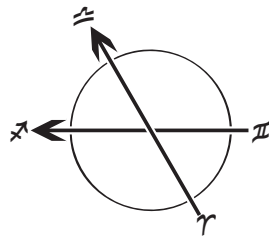
Cardinal and Fixed
All four elements
Rulers: Venus, Mars



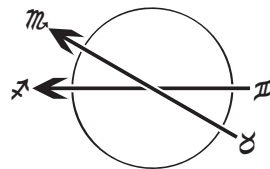
Fixed and Mutable
Fire and Air



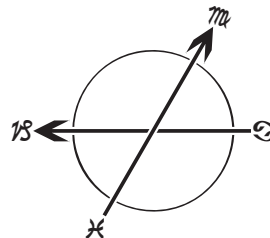
All Mutable
All four elements
Rulers: Mercury, Jupiter



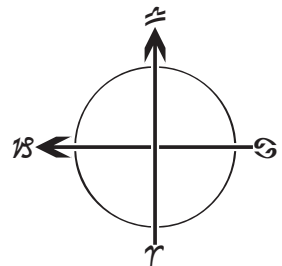
Cardinal and Mutable
Fire and Air



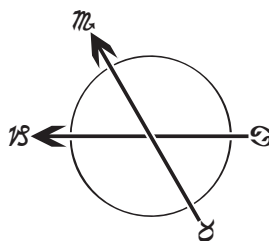
Fixed and Mutable
All four elements



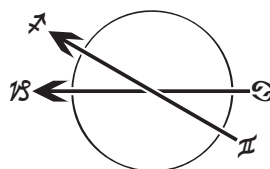
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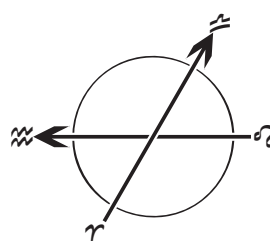
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All four elements



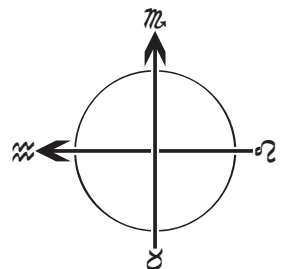
Cardinal and Fixed
Earth and Water



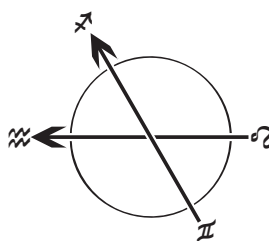
Cardinal and Mutable
All four elements



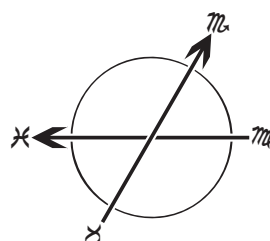
Cardinal and Fixed
Fire and Air



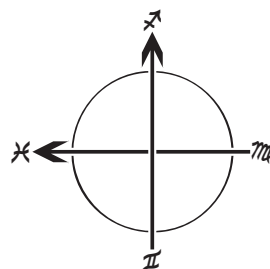
All Fixed
All four elements



Fixed and Mutable
Fire and Air



Fixed and Mutable
Earth and Water



All Mutable
All four elements
Rulers: Mercury, Jupiter

For an in-depth look at the angles, various ASC-MC combos, and interpretations of the signs and planets on the MC-IC axis, please see my mini-book *The Midheaven: Spotlight on Success* (Flare, 2016), which can also be found in the ebook entitled *The Astrology Quartet*.