

Mercury Retrograde

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What is Mercury Retrograde? If you know a bit about astrology, you probably heard the term, "Mercury Retrograde." Now, what the heck is that, you ask. It's no big mystery and the term pretty much says it -- it just means that **Mercury appears to slow down** and temporarily reverse direction. It doesn't actually do that, but seems to -- cosmic sleight of hand!

Is the Planet in Reverse Gear? More specifically, retrograde simply means that a planet looks like it is going backwards in its longitudinal direction. It is only an apparent motion as the planet really keeps making its orbit around the Sun at a steady speed as does Earth. However, from our position and perspective on Earth it seems as if Mercury is going backwards.

How Often Does a Retrograde Happen? This phenomenon occurs three times a year on average and each time it lasts around three weeks of going backwards. The next time is in September 2008 and then January 2009.

Even though there are many different theories out there what a retrograding planet may mean in itself, in my experience, the only thing of importance is that its speed slows down. This enables any connections or aspects between planets to last for a longer time.

Aspects - The name for this connection of two planets is called an **aspect**. Aspects are angular relationships between two planets. When two planets are making a certain angle between themselves, they are said to be

making an aspect. More on aspects at:
www.luckyastrology.com/aspects.htm

Length of Retrograde - As stated above, Mercury goes retrograde every few months. Aspects formed during the retrograde increases the duration of the event. Because an aspect lasts for a longer period of time during retrograde, we can pick out and identify the vibration or flow the aspect points to more easily and have more chances to use it, because the time window is longer. Mercury's usual aspect with another planet lasts only a day, but when it slows down during a retrograde period, the aspect can last up to a week and a half!

For example, in January 2008, Mercury, correlating with mental energy, was retrograde and making a harmonious aspect correlating with energetic, physical Mars. The indicated a time when we *could* have wanted to DO something, to get a project going, or take on some activity that would produce some tangible end product. As a result, if we were tuned into this, we could have had lots of enthusiasm, very efficiently accomplished our goals and felt good about ourselves. This Mercury/Mars aspect lasted a whole six days! This is six times longer than Mercury's usual aspect to Mars and so six times the opportunity to take advantage of the indicated time period of doing more efficient work.

Retrograde Times & Behaviors for Other Planets - It is normal for all planets go retrograde except the Moon and Sun. Usually, at least one planet is retrograde at any given time. Mercury is the most common one.

When any planet goes Retrograde it gradually slows down until it reverses. Then it slowly picks up speed before it begins to slow again and stop. Then once again it starts moving in a forward direction. It picks up speed until it regains its normal speed.

It's the ride, not the destination! To have a longer ride with the retrograde there must be a good aspect formed with another planet. Then we have more chances to put our energy into the type of activities the planets indicate will be successful. It's like a wave that flows towards the shore and then slows and stops. It then ebbs, going backwards where it slows down again and then starts moving forward towards the shore again. This slowing down action means that the wave takes longer to get to shore so we *could* have a longer ride on our surfboard.

So what? Mercury Retrograde's gift is in its *slowing* down. This affords us an opportunity for aspects that form to last for a much **longer** period of time. If there are aspects with the retrograde, it is imperative to **choose and align our activities** to be in harmony with what flow the aspects indicate. Thus, we can take advantage of going with the flow by learning what the aspects say can potentially happen. And the longer the aspect's duration, the more chance we have to manifest what we want.