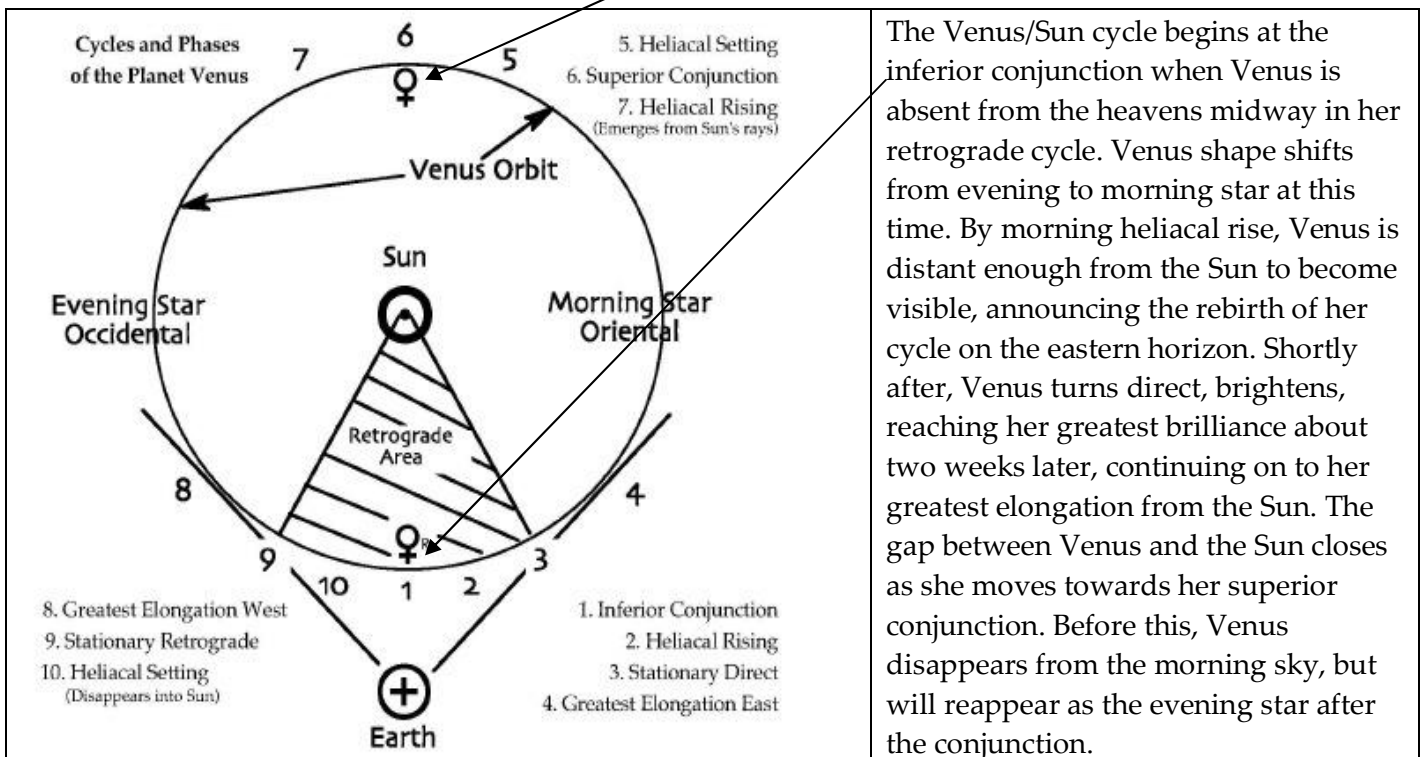


The Cycle of Venus

Venus orbits between the Earth and the Sun and from our vantage point it progresses through a series of phases in its relationship to the Sun; increasing and decreasing in distance, light and speed. Because Venus is always within a defined arc of the Sun from our point of view, she only forges a limited number of aspects with the Sun (conjunction, semi-sextile and semi-square). However the full range of her cycle can be seen in the developing phases she creates with the Sun.

Venus begins her cycle at the inferior conjunction with the Sun while retrograde and closest to the Earth. At the cycle's midpoint, the superior conjunction occurs on the far side of the Sun. The words 'inferior' and 'superior' are astronomical terms, not judgements. The inferior conjunction refers to the Earth and Venus being on the same side of the Sun, while the superior conjunction refers to the Earth and Venus being on opposite sides of the Sun; hence some astrologers use the idiom interior and exterior to describe the two conjunctions, as they are more descriptive of the situation, sounding less judgemental.

Since Venus is between the Earth and the Sun, the planet is seen to conjunct the Sun from our perspective when on the same or opposite sides of the Sun. Therefore, Venus forms two conjunctions in her cycle around the Sun: at the inferior conjunction she is retrograde, closest to the earth and slow, while at the superior conjunction she is direct in motion, on the other side of the Sun and moving the fastest in her cycle.



This diagram was designed by Robert Blaschke and published in the Mountain Astrologer. Please note that 4 is listed as Greatest Elongation East and should be West (GEW), while 8 is Greatest Elongation East (GEE). These are astronomical names referring to direction of Venus. I tend to use the terms Greatest Elongation as Morning Star and Evening Star. Follow the cycle around as Venus is seen in different light and phase from our perspective here on Earth

Venus then decreases in speed until it reaches its greatest elongation once again, continuing to her station retrograde. Shortly after her retrograde station Venus disappears ending its cycle at the next inferior conjunction. A new cycle emerges at the midpoint of the retrograde period.

Following is a timetable for Venus's current cycle which commences on June 4, 2020 AEST at 3.43 am at 13 Π 35. I have attached some further information and descriptions of this cycle which I encourage you to follow over the course of the next 19 months. Take note of the dates in the cycle to help reflect on developmental changes in Venusian concerns of relating, resources, values, self worth, pleasure etc.

Venus Cycle <i>from 4/06/20 to 9/01/22</i>	2020-22 Dates (AEST)
Inferior Conjunction; Sun conjunct Venus Retrograde	2020 June 4
Morning Rise; Venus as Morning Star Phosphorus	June 10
Venus Stations Direct	June 25
Greatest Brilliance <i>as Morning Star</i>	July 8
Venus Reaches Greatest Elongation <i>Morning Star (GEW)</i>	Aug 13
Morning Set	2021 Feb 14
Superior Conjunction: Sun conjunct Venus Direct	Mar 26
Evening Rise; Venus as Evening Star Hesperus	May 4
Venus Reaches Greatest Elongation <i>Evening Star (GEE)</i>	Oct 30
Greatest Brilliance <i>as Evening Star</i>	Dec 8
Venus Stations Retrograde	Dec 19
Evening Set	2022 Jan 3
Inferior Conjunction; Sun conjunct Venus Retrograde	Jan 9

Phases of Venus; *phases of light*

Phase originates from the ancient Greek word *phasis*, suggesting 'bringing to light', an 'appearance' or 'showing'. In the ancient world, a planet appearing after being absent from the heavens was a time of reverence, a time of annunciation.

The word is now used in many ways; when referencing time, it suggests distinct periods in an ongoing process of change. Psychologically these perceptible periods are often defined as life cycle transitions, such as childhood, adolescence, mid-life or older age. Astrologically we also refer to phases of time, most commonly in reference to the phases of the Moon. The Moon is illuminated by its reflection of solar light; its phases being formed by its changing relationship with the Sun throughout their 29½ day cycle. All planets in their relationship to the Sun have different phases of illumination, marking out transitions in their cycle as they become visible and also as they disappear from sight. But of all the planets (not including the luminaries) it is Venus who is the brightest planet, whose heavenly cult has been acknowledged through many cross cultural deities, like the Sumerian deity, Ninsi'anna, the 'holy torch who fills the heavens'.

A planetary phase describes distinct stages of change in a planet's aspects, speed, brightness and distance as it orbits the Sun. The planets moving slower than Earth (Mars – Pluto) will disappear into the Sun beams approaching their conjunction with the Sun and brighten at their opposition, when retrograde and closest to the Earth. Mercury and Venus, in between the Earth and the Sun, are brightest when they are also retrograde and closest to the Earth, but this is at their 'inferior' conjunction.

Astrologically phases are catalogued by their synodic cycles with the Sun, each other or their sidereal cycles of one zodiacal revolution. Significant too are the phases of human maturing and development such as infancy, adolescence, mid-life and later life that are synchronous with slower-moving planetary cycles. Venus is a faster-moving planet and its interiority to the orbit of the Earth means it does not complete a full range of aspects with the Sun; therefore its phases can be marked by its conjunctions with the Sun, its stations and its greatest elongations with the Sun (a turning point in the cycle). Venus's phases are like the chapters of a good book that slowly unveil the plot and develop its characters over the course of a 19-month period.

Venus Retrograde

As mentioned Venus begins her cycle while retrograde; an old cycle ends, a new one begins. Nearly every 19 months for approximately 41 - 43 days, Venus stations retrograde. In a period of 8 years, Venus will retrograde 5 times. After 8 years it returns to the similar zodiac degree (less 2 degrees) on the approximate date (less 2 days) where it was in the previous cycle. Venus retrograde stations through each sign at eight year intervals will be complete between 96 and 104 years.

Venus Station Retrograde	Degree of Zodiac	Venus Station Direct	Degree of Zodiac	Days Retrograde	# of Degrees Retrograde
13 May 2020	21♅50	25 June 2020	5♅20	43	16°30'
19 Dec 2021	26♄59	29 Jan 2022	11♄04	41	15°55'
22 Jul 2023	28♃36	3 Sep 2023	12♃12	43	16°24'
1 Mar 2025	10♂50	12 Apr 2025	24♁37	42	16°13'
3 Oct 2026	8♄29	13 Nov 2026	22♄51	41	15°38'

Venus's retrograde period signals a time of reorientation, reflecting on values, considering our connections, engaging with our creativity and renewing our relationship to the world. Venus retrograde implies the time in the cycle when we may retreat to reflect on our worth, our relationships and to re-consider our commitments. Since every retrograde period reconnects to a similar time eight years ago, themes such as self worth, resources and relationship may link back to a previous period eight or a multiple of eight years ago. What was incomplete or left unresolved in an important relationship may surface again for consideration.

At the midpoint of the retrograde period, Venus begins its new cycle at its 'inferior' conjunction with the Sun; therefore the first three weeks of the retrograde period closes the previous 19-month cycle. These weeks focus on letting go of what is no longer of value or resourceful. The three weeks following the 'inferior' conjunction, Venus integrates and appreciates the best of the past preparing for the emergent new cycle. This is an insightful and visionary period for

contemplating resources, re-visioning relationships and reflecting on personal self worth and values. This is the period we have just completed.

Natal Venus retrograde occurs less frequently in horoscopes than any other planet. It suggests that an individual's values, preferences, styles of relating, likes and dislikes are different to those in their familial and social environment. What appears as inhibition, shyness or lack of affection may be their acute perception of the difficulty in relating and their vulnerability when interacting. Relationships are often non-traditional, unconventional, private and/or unique in their own special way. Often this individual develops their artistic, aesthetic, creative side, as their relationship to creativity and/or spiritually is a priority. Venus retrograde suggests refining and redefining relating. It often manifests as distancing oneself from the fashions, trends and values of consumerism and popular trends. Venus retrograde has highly developed values and individualistic likes and dislikes. During a retrograde period there may be some similarities.

When Venus is retrograde it suggests that an important period is available to reflect on relationship patterns and possibilities. It is also a great time to plan retreats and time out. Over time students have suggested these activities while Venus is retrograde:

- Schedule a retreat
- Make an appointment for a massage, beauty treatment
- Review your wardrobe, clear out what is no longer your style and shop for what is
- Buy yourself a gift; however if you are an impulsive buyer try to constrain your spending
- Redecorate the bedroom
- Visit an art gallery or a life-style exhibition
- Review your investment portfolio
- Prepare a financial and savings budget for the next nineteen months
- Reflect on your relationship patterns: how are you not being valued? Where do you not feel equal? Do you feel you deserve more?
- Consider more effective ways to feel valued at work
- Reflect on what needs to be re-introduced into your relationships with others
- Set time aside to review and renew your relationships
- Plan a holiday for only you and a significant other
- Finish the novel, complete the painting, focus on your creativity

The Five-pointed Star

Venus will travel direct for just over 17 months before it turns retrograde once again for about six weeks, completing its full synodic cycle in just over 19 months. The six weeks, or *forty days and forty nights* of its retrograde period, is part of our folklore, religious stories and observances. This timepiece is often depicted as the time of wanderings, retreats and soul searching. During these retrograde periods Venus will transit a zodiacal zone three times, affecting a specific area of your horoscope. During this period, the zodiacal zone of Venus Retrograde is between 5♊20 and 21♊50, spending near 16 weeks in this zone. As the synodic cycle of Venus and the Sun lasts 584 days and each solar year is 365 days, the following harmonic shows that there are exactly 5 Sun-Venus cycles in 8 years:

$$584 \times 5 = 2920$$

$$5 \text{ Sun-Venus cycles} = 8 \text{ years}$$

$$365 \times 8 = 2920$$

In reality the solar cycle is 365.25 years; therefore when the Sun-Venus inferior conjunction repeats after 8 years, it will be within a 2 degree orb, as in the following table.

Date of Venus/Sun Inferior Conjunction	Degree of Zodiac ☾	Date of Venus/Sun Inferior Conjunction	Degree of Zodiac ☾
4 June 2020	13♊35	2 Jun 2028	11♊26
9 Jan 2022	18♋43	7 Jan 2030	16♋15
13 Aug 2023	20♌28	10 Aug 2031	18♌17
22 Mar 2026	2♍39	20 Mar 2033	0♍21
23 Oct 2026	0♎45	21 Oct 2034	28♎22

If we join together the five zodiacal positions of the inferior conjunction, a five-pointed star or pentagram is created. This pentagram pattern also occurs with the superior conjunctions as well as the positions when Venus turns retrograde and direct

The Sun-Venus Cycle

Let's review the cycle once again: at the inferior conjunction (June 4, 2020) Venus is invisible as she is 'under the Sun's beams'. Venus is in between the Earth and the Sun, closest to the Earth, travelling slowly and retrograde. However, the following week (June 10) she reappears as Venus Phosphorus (or Lucifer, her Latin name), the morning star or the 'light bringer'. She turns direct three weeks after the inferior conjunction (June 25), then reaches her maximum distance from the Sun about seven weeks after that (August 13). About a month before the superior conjunction, when Venus is on the other side of the Sun, she disappears from the night sky for nearly two months (February 14, 2021).

At the midpoint of the cycle Venus conjoins the Sun again (March 26, 2021), but this time she is farthest from the Earth, fast in motion and direct. A month later she is visible again (May 4), but now in the western sky after sunset; now known as Hesperus. Seven months after the superior conjunction she reaches her maximum distance from the Sun (October 30) and approaches Earth. A month later she is at her brightest (December 8), and then two weeks after this, Venus turns retrograde (December 19). Two weeks after, she disappears from the western sky (January 3, 2022) preparing for her inferior conjunction (January 9) to begin the cycle anew.

If, like me, you find visualizing this cycle difficult, draw a circle and mark out the significant times and phases of Venus's cycle over the 19 months starting from the inferior conjunction. It is a significant cycle to work with. Perhaps note these phase times in your journal and follow your story of Venus through her unfolding process – it is both personal and collective, so besides being our own story, it tells the story of collective feminine narratives, of relating, of women, of values.