

The Cycle of Venus

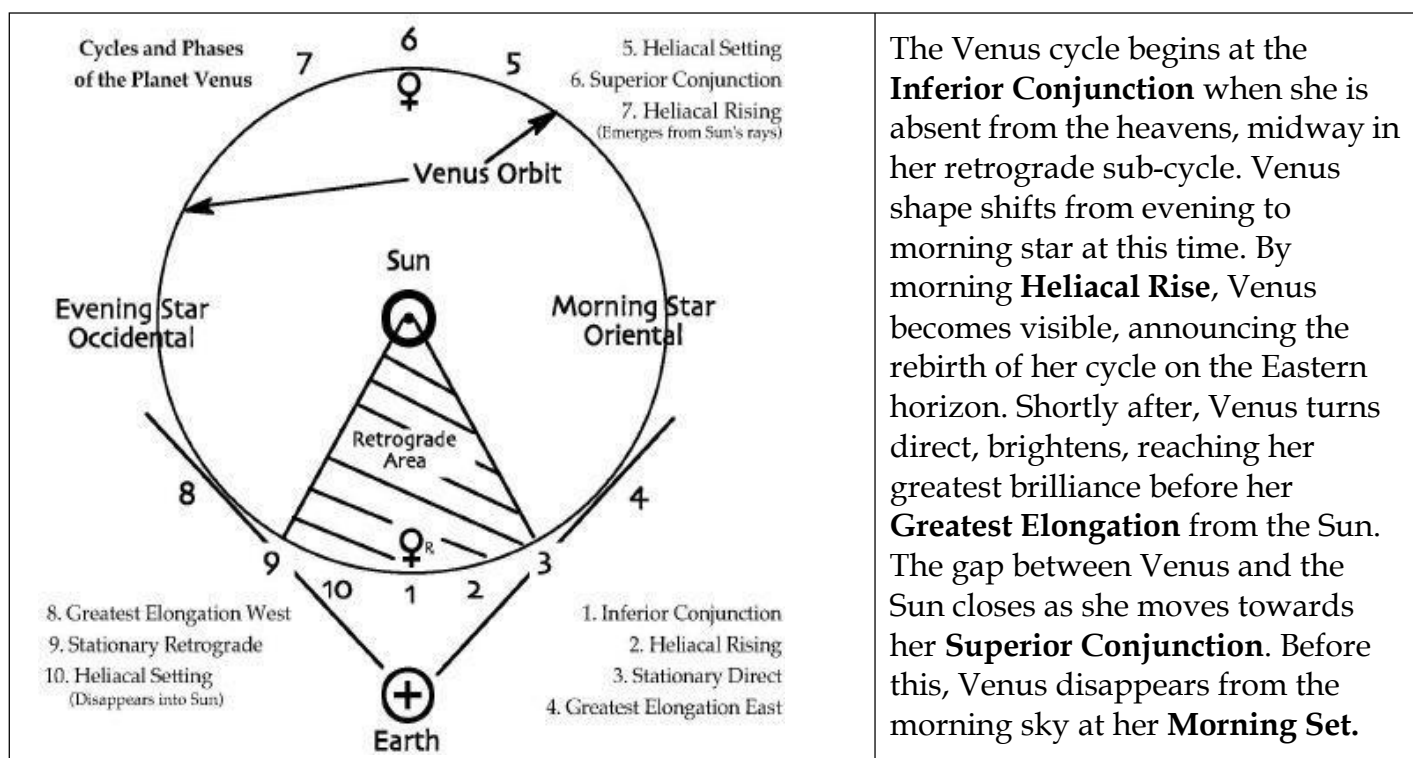
Sequence, Symmetry and Ritual

From our geocentric vantage point, Venus progresses through a series of phases in her 584-day synodic cycle with the Sun; increasing and decreasing in distance, light and speed. Venus is contained within a defined arc of the Sun (48 zodiacal degrees); therefore, they forge a limited number of astrological aspects together (conjunction, semi-sextile and semi-square). The fullness of her cycle is observed in the phases she creates with the Sun. Venus begins her cycle at the 'inferior' conjunction when she is closest to the Earth and retrograde. The cycle's midpoint, the 'superior' conjunction occurs when she is on the other side of the Sun.

Since Venus is between the Earth and the Sun, the planet is seen to conjunct the Sun twice in her cycle – once when on the same side of the Sun as the Earth, and the other when Earth is on the opposite side of the Sun to Venus. Venus's two conjunctions in her cycle are known as 'inferior' when she is retrograde, closest to the Earth and slow, and the 'superior', when she is direct in motion, on the other side of the Sun and moving the fastest in her cycle.

The words 'inferior' and 'superior' are astronomical terms. When applied to planets, they describe the orbits of Mercury and Venus since they are closer to the Sun than the Earth. Therefore, both these planets are contained by the Earth's orbit. Some astrologers use the words interior and exterior to describe the two conjunctions, as they are more descriptive of the situation, but also sounds less judgemental. (1)

The following diagram illustrating the synodic cycle was used by Robert Blaschke. Note that # 4 is listed as Greatest Elongation East, but this is generally referred to as West (GEW), due to the geographical, not heavenly, direction; similarly, # 8 is generally known as Greatest Elongation East (GEE). As these are geographical references to direction, I tend to use the terms **Greatest Elongation Morning Star** and **Evening Star**.



The Venus cycle begins at the **Inferior Conjunction** when she is absent from the heavens, midway in her retrograde sub-cycle. Venus shape shifts from evening to morning star at this time. By morning **Heliacal Rise**, Venus becomes visible, announcing the rebirth of her cycle on the Eastern horizon. Shortly after, Venus turns direct, brightens, reaching her greatest brilliance before her **Greatest Elongation** from the Sun. The gap between Venus and the Sun closes as she moves towards her **Superior Conjunction**. Before this, Venus disappears from the morning sky at her **Morning Set**.

Venus has now changed sect and is the Evening Star, **Hesperus**, at a later zodiacal degree than the Sun. Venus gradually decreases in speed until she reaches her **Greatest Elongation** when the Sun and Venus are now travelling at a similar speed. She continues to her **Retrograde Station**. Shortly after she turns \Re , Venus disappears from the evening sky, ending its cycle to begin anew at the next **Inferior Conjunction**.

Following is a timetable for Venus's cycle which commences on March 23, 2025 at 1.08 UT at $2\Upsilon^{39}\Re$. I encourage you to follow the course of Venus's cycle. 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. The current cycle of Venus is listed on our website www.astrosynthesis.com.au under *Student Resources*. (2)

Venus Cycle –March 23, 2025 to October 24, 2026

Venus Cycle	2025/26 Dates	Venus Degree	Sun/ Venus Separation
Inferior Conjunction - Sun conjunct Venus \Re	2025 Mar 23	$2\Upsilon^{39}\Re$	0° 00'
Morning Rise - Venus as Morning Star Phosphorus	Mar 26	$0\Upsilon^{21}\Re$	5° 57'
Venus Stations Direct	Apr 13	$24\Upsilon^{37}$	28° 23'
Greatest Brilliance as Morning Star	Apr 22	$26\Upsilon^{13}$	36° 13'
Venus Reaches Greatest Elongation Morning	Jun 1	$25\Upsilon^{04}$	45° 50'
Morning Set	Nov 26	$24\Upsilon^{26}$	9° 57'
Superior Conjunction - Sun conjunct Venus Direct	2026 Jan 6	$16\Upsilon^{22}$	0° 00'
Evening Rise - Venus as Evening Star Hesperus	Feb 16	$8\Upsilon^{10}$	9° 54'
Venus Reaches Greatest Elongation Evening	Aug 15	$8\Upsilon^{20}$	45° 52'
Greatest Brilliance as Evening Star	Sep 24	$7\Upsilon^{00}$	35° 46'
Venus Stations Retrograde	Oct 3	$8\Upsilon^{29}\Re$	28° 23'
Evening Set	Oct 19	$3\Upsilon^{23}\Re$	7° 02'
Inferior Conjunction - Sun conjunct Venus \Re	Oct 24	$0\Upsilon^{45}\Re$	0° 00'

Phases of Venus; phases of light

Phase originates from the ancient Greek *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. Psychological phases are periods often delineated 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 $29\frac{1}{2}$ 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 numerous 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 the planet’s 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.

Astrologically phases are catalogued by their synodic cycles with the Sun, with each other or their sidereal cycles denoting one zodiacal revolution. Astrologically significant are also the phases of human maturation and development such as infancy, adolescence, mid-life and later life that are outlined by the slower-moving planetary cycles. As Venus is a faster-moving planet and interior to the Earth’s orbit, it does not complete a full range of aspects with the Sun. Its phases are marked by its conjunctions with the Sun, its stations and its greatest elongations (a turning point in the cycle). Venus’s phases are like the chapters of a good book.

Venus Retrograde

Venus begins her cycle while retrograde; the old cycle ends, the new one begins. Nearly every 19 months for approximately 41 - 43 days, Venus stations retrograde. (3) 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 those eight years ago. Venus stations retrograde through each sign at eight-year intervals, and will complete its retrograde stations in 96 or 104 years. (4)

Venus Station Retrograde UT	Degree of Zodiac	Venus Station Direct	Degree of Zodiac	Days Retrograde	# of Degrees Retrograde
13 May 2020	21♊59♁	25 June 2020	5♊20	43	16°30'
19 Dec 2021	26♋29♁	29 Jan 2022	11♋04	41	15°55'
23 Jul 2023	28♌36♁	4 Sep 2023	12♌12	43	16°24'
2 Mar 2025	10♍50♁	13 Apr 2025	24♍37	42	16°13'
3 Oct 2026	8♎29♁	14 Nov 2026	22♎51	41	15°38'
11 May 2028	19♏41♁	22 Jun 2028	3♏10	42	16°31'

Venus’s retrograde periods signal a time of reorientation, reflecting on values and connections, engaging with creativity and renewing our relationship to the world. Venus retrograde implies time when we may retreat to reflect on our worth, our interactions and to re-consider our commitments. Since every retrograde period connects to an eight-year period, 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.

Venus begins its new cycle at its ‘inferior’ conjunction. The first three weeks of the retrograde period before this conjunction 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.

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 instinctually different to those in their familial and social environment. What appears as

inhibition, shyness or lack of affection may be an acute sensitivity when relating and their vulnerability when interacting. For them, 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.

Venus ♀ is a time when ritual, ceremony and contemplation can be very beneficial. 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; on the other hand, 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
- Set time aside to review and renew your relationships. 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
- 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 (584 days). The six weeks, or forty days and forty nights of its retrograde period, are 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.

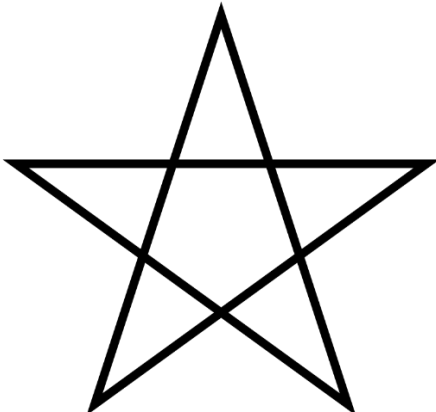
As the synodic cycle of Venus and the Sun lasts 584 days and each solar year is 365 days, the following shows that there are 5 Sun-Venus cycles in 8 years:

$$584 \times 5 = 2920 \qquad 5 \text{ Sun-Venus cycles} = 8 \text{ years} \qquad 365 \times 8 = 2920$$

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 two-day and a 2-degree orb, as in the following table.

Date of Venus/Sun Inferior Conjunction UT	Degree of Zodiac	Date of Venus/Sun Inferior Conjunction UT	Degree of Zodiac
3 June 2020	13♊35♁	1 Jun 2028	11♊26♁
9 Jan 2022	18♋43♁	7 Jan 2030	16♋15♁
13 Aug 2023	20♌28♁	11 Aug 2031	18♌17♁
23 Mar 2026	2♍39♁	20 Mar 2033	0♍21♁
23 Oct 2026	0♎45♁	21 Oct 2034	28♎22♁

When 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.

	<p>The pentagram or five-pointed star is a timeless symbol which appears in the third millennium BCE on Sumerian pottery. To the Pythagoreans it symbolized health and wellbeing. Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man is often encased in a mystic pentagram. Satanists use the image upside down, yet this reversed version has also been used by Christians to imagine the descent of the Holy Spirit. The pentagram has been used to symbolise the five senses, five elements or five virtues. It constellates images of magic and beauty and is an iconic representation of Venus and her Sumerian predecessor Inanna. .</p>
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The Sun-Venus Cycle

Let's review the cycle once again: at the inferior conjunction (March 23, 2025) 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, in a few days (March 26) 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 (April 13), then reaches her maximum distance from the Sun about seven weeks after that (June 1). About a month before the superior conjunction, when Venus is on the other side of the Sun, she disappears from the night sky for over two months (November 26).

At the midpoint of the cycle Venus conjoins the Sun again (January 6, 2026), but this time she is farthest from the Earth, fast in motion and direct. A month later she is visible again (February 16), 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 (August 15) and approaches Earth. A month later she is at her brightest (September 24), and nearly two weeks after this, Venus turns retrograde (October 3). Two weeks after, she disappears from the western sky (October 19) preparing for her inferior conjunction (October 24) 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. 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, of beauty.

Endnotes:

1. The Latin root of the word 'inferior' refers to 'low', like the lower regions, the *inferno*, or an image of the underworld. Venus is lower than the Sun. Inferior is not a judgment; Venus now is closer to the Earth, to matter, moving in a direction converse to custom. Venus on the other side of the Sun, above the Earth, is the superior conjunction; superior is from the Latin, meaning 'above'. Being in the lowlands is akin to being where we are unaccustomed to our habitual ways of knowing. Unsigned pathways, mysterious turns and inevitable returns, not mapped by human hands evoke meaning. We backtrack, returning to deepen our familiarity with the psychic landscape.
2. For a complete listing of the phases of Venus from 1600 – 2102, see <https://www.astro.com/swissep/ae/venus1600.pdf>
3. If Venus turns retrograde in the middle of the sign, it can be transiting this sign for over 4 months. When Venus goes retrograde, the sign it is in can be tenanted for 3 months. Therefore, Venus is focused on a particular sphere of the horoscope when retrograde. In a progressed chart Venus may remain in this sign for the duration of the lifetime.

4. Venus Retrograde Every 8 Years at Similar Degrees

Date Venus Retrogrades	Zodiacal Degree
20 Mar 1961	29° ♈ 05'
18 Mar 1969	26° ♈ 49'
16 Mar 1977	24° ♈ 33'
13 Mar 1985	22° ♈ 17'
11 Mar 1993	20° ♈ 01'
9 Mar 2001	17° ♈ 44'
6 Mar 2009	15° ♈ 27'
4 Mar 2017	13° ♈ 09'
2 Mar 2025	10° ♈ 49'
27 Feb 2033	8° ♈ 31'
25 Feb 2041	6° ♈ 10'
22 Feb 2049	3° ♈ 51'
20 Feb 2057	1° ♈ 32'

Venus retrogrades into Aries on March 20, 1961 and every 8 years returns on the same date (less 2 days) and same degree (less 2°). It completes its retrogradation into this sign in this series on February 20, 2057, 96 years later.