



Mercury Retrograde Periods in 2010

Change the Pace

Mercury was known as the Messenger, an honored wing-footed traveler. According to mythology, he was the only god granted permission to traverse between the worlds to deliver messages. Mercury soared in the Celestial Upper World, could land in the Middle World known as Earth and drop down just as easily into the depths of the Underworld. In archetypal symbolism, the Underworld can be thought of as our inner self where we hope to integrate our shadows with our light.

Mercury is the ruling planet for the signs Gemini and Virgo. They often understand better than most a time span referred to as Mercury Retrograde. Retrograde means “steps backward.” Even people who are not familiar with astrological cycles have heard of Mercury Retrograde.

Typically, Mercury transits happily along at a fast clip around the Sun. The Retrograde indicates Mercury is about step backwards or change speed. Mercury’s movement begins to s-l-o-w down. By all appearances, Mercury seems to stop. Through the viewing lens on Earth, Mercury has slowed down to such a degree that it looks like it is traveling backwards. It is at the ‘stop’ point that astrologers say Mercury turns “Retrograde.” When movement is about to reverse back, Mercury is said to “Station Direct” and then begins to quicken a pace back into its usual fast speed. Other planets also go through Retrograde periods although less frequently than Mercury.

Planetary themes Mercury has governance over are all forms of communication, transportation, travel and the intellect. It is these very areas that seem to be most affected in the changing transitions of this planet’s travels. For example, Mercury is also said to rule surgeon’s hands. Traditionally, the thinking has been to avoid surgeries during Mercury Rx (Retrograde) and not to schedule medical procedures. During this time period other no-no’s have been declared: not to sign contracts, purchase or repair cars, and avoid trips. All said because of what has been observed during these periods. There is a likelihood of misunderstanding. Reverse decisions are the norm. Repeated actions occur because of what you thought or understood was perfectly clear, simply wasn’t clear. Computer crashes seem to occur more often during these sensitive times. I went along with all this thinking. I would tell people, if you are traveling during Mercury Retrograde, be prepared for planes being delayed, luggage being lost. Doesn’t this happen all the time now? Or if someone had to sign a contract during this time, I would suggest reading it over again and again to avoid misunderstandings and surprises down the road. Enlist another set of eyes to peruse the document to double check everything. In our haste and rush, aren’t we finding we often miss the fine print, so to speak? Or I would suggest not getting your car worked on. If you did, there most likely would need to be another visit made to the garage because of something not having been

fixed quite right. These days, cars are engineered with many complexities and mechanics need lots of expertise to find the problem and fix it correctly. During Mercury Retrogrades, I would make my own calendar adjustments finding clients would miss appointments or come at the wrong times. And on and it on it goes.

It has struck me for a while now, we live in a Mercury Retrograde period **all the time**. As the ways we communicate become more complicated, miscommunications are more frequent. As we have been introduced to more ways of communicating worldwide, our ability to express clearly has decreased. Isn't that interesting? What we think we hear gets mixed up with what actually was said. Even though we are technologically "wireless" people seem to be more wired (stressed). It is harder to avoid technology. We now have 24/7 access. Between pressures in work environments, trying to stay connected with social networks and meeting family needs, life has an escalating momentum. We move faster and faster just to keep up. Now finding ways to unplug has become more of a challenge.

I suggest we begin to view a Mercury Retrograde period differently. Mercury's less commonly known name is the Trickster. At this evolutionary point in time, I believe, the Trickster flies to our Middle World to deliver a different message. Perhaps to bring in a shape-shifting energy to suggest we use a Mercury Retrograde period as a time to disconnect, take a pause, inhale, exhale, and slow life down.

Now more than ever, Mercury Retrograde provides a model on when to slow down from our fast paced lives. In following the natural cycle Mercury travels, we resonate with the on-going movement of a quick pace. We can then adjust to the natural slow down movement that happens three to four times each year during retrogrades. Shifting our thinking to welcome a Mercury Retrograde period as a chance to change the pace feels like a shift we can all make to follow a more natural cycle.

Step back to ask "What is the message for me at this time?" Be intentional. Use these periods wisely instead of the old way of thinking that this is the time when disruptive havoc is wreaked upon our lives. In 2010, Mercury Retrograde periods are in Earth signs. The most sensitive points are the exact days when Mercury transitions into retrograde and then back into direct movement. You might want to take note of the few days before Mercury enters into retrograde and a few days after Mercury Stations Direct. What do you observe in these time frames?

Retrograde Phase	Stations Direct	Sign
12/26/09	1/15/10	Capricorn
4/18/10	5/11/10	Taurus
8/20/10	9/12/10	Virgo
12/10/10	12/30/10	Capricorn

The Earth element suggests practical tasks to help ground in deeper ways of being present.

Strengthen communication habits...do what ought to be a habitual practice anyways – back up your computer. Check your back up. Make sure it works.

Be clear. Don't say things you don't mean. If there is a miscommunication, check within yourself as to your own clarity.

Connect within. Spend time journaling or meditate. Allow time for inner reflection.

Enjoy the surprise of re-connections. Friends from long ago might suddenly check in with you or you may bump into someone you haven't seen in a long time. Your past re-appears in your present day. You might realize a desire to connect with someone you don't see regularly.

Restore balance. Find the middle way between your need for your own nurturance as well as the duties that call to you each day. Establish a balance. Listen to the longing of your body and spirit for quiet and less stimulation.

Complete the tasks that aren't finished. It is a great time to tie up loose ends. After Mercury goes direct, you will feel the rev to begin new projects. If need be, optimize this time to look at what isn't working in your life and re-configure a plan.

Trickster Mercury turns us around and delivers a new spin on a message. Our consciousness can embrace a new thought pattern around Mercury Retrograde. Retrograde has been and is still appropriately linked to the "re" words. It's still a great time to re-think, re-visit, re-invigorate, re-do, re-inspire, re-set and re-resource yourself on the path that aligns you most with the Creator and your divine self.

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