

## The “Epoch 2000 Zodiac”

<b>Constellation</b>	<b>Dates when Sun is in Constellation</b>	<b>Days Sun spends in each Constellation</b>
Pisces	Mar 11 – Apr 18	38
Aries	Apr 18 – May 13	25
Taurus	May 13 – Jun 22	40
Gemini	Jun 22 – Jul 21	29
Cancer	Jul 21 – Aug 10	20
Leo	Aug 10 – Sep 16	37
Virgo	Sep 16 – Oct 31	45
Libra	Oct 31 – Nov 23	23
Scorpius	Nov 23 – Nov 29	6
Ophiuchus	Nov 29 – Dec 18	19
Sagittarius	Dec 18 – Jan 21	34
Capricornus	Jan 21 – Feb 16	26
Aquarius	Feb 16 – Mar 11	24

Explanation: When the Zodiac was first established, about 2000 years ago, the Sun was in the relevant constellation around the dates shown in modern horoscopes. The apparent path of the Sun through the sky is known as the Ecliptic and it passes through all the Zodiac constellations.

Due to an effect known as Precession of the Equinoxes (which takes about 26,000 years to do a full cycle), the Sun is no longer in the astronomical constellations at the ‘right time’ according to the astrologers - the whole system is out by one month, or one constellation.

Also, since the International Astronomical Union agreed on the positions of formal boundaries around all the constellations (as opposed to the stick-figure associations used up until then), a portion of the constellation Ophiuchus now lies across the Ecliptic.

The dates shown above are the dates when the Sun is really in each constellation. Note also that the Sun does not spend equal lengths of time in each. The table is labelled “Epoch 2000” because, due to Precession, astronomers have to update their maps every 50 years. In around 2025, new maps will become available and new dates will need to be determined!

A fact sheet from Starrylady Astronomy Services

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