

## Understanding the Orb of Influence

Two planets will be in aspect with one another even when the distance between them is a few degrees more or less than the exact number of degrees in a given aspect.

**When you find aspects in a chart they are rarely exact (partile).** For example, the Sun in 5° degrees Aries and the Moon in 5° degrees Aries would be an exact conjunction. Saturn at 7° degrees Aires and Mars at 7° degrees Libra would be an exact opposition.

The closer two planets are to being partile (especially when applying) the stronger the aspect. But usually you find one planet at 5° degrees and the other at 7° degrees or one planet at 16° degrees and the other at 12° degrees, so an **orb of influence** is calculated.

**Calculate the Orb of Influence between any two planets in aspect using this method:**

1. Determine the Orb of Influence below for each Planet involved in an Aspect
2. Add the Two Orbs of Influence Together and Divide by Two
3. The result is the **Orb of Influence** between those Two Planets in Any Aspect

### Planetary Orbs of Influence

**7° Degree Orb of Influence** – for **Sun, Moon,** and larger planets **Jupiter** and **Saturn**

**5° Degree Orb of Influence** – for **Uranus** and **Neptune**

**3° Degree Orb of Influence** – for smaller planets: **Mercury, Venus, Mars** and **Pluto**

An examples might be helpful. If the planets involved were the Moon and Pluto, you first find the orb of influence for the Moon which is 7° degrees and the orb of Pluto which is 3° degrees. Adding them together you get 10° degrees. Dividing that by two gives you a 5° degree Orb of Influence (**for any aspect**) between the Moon and Pluto.

If the planets involved were Mars and Uranus, you first find the orb of influence for Mars which is 3° degrees and the orb of Uranus which is 5° degrees. Adding them together you get 8° degrees. Dividing that by two gives you a 4° degree Orb of Influence (**for any aspect**) between Mars and Uranus.

If the planets involved were Mercury and Venus, you first find the orb of influence of Mercury which is 3° degrees and the orb of Venus which is 3° degrees. Adding them together you get 6° degrees. Dividing that by two gives you a 3° degree Orb of Influence (**for any aspect**) between Mercury and Venus.

**Remember an orb of influence is a plus/minus factor.** The orb of influence between the Sun and Jupiter is 7° degrees, so if Jupiter is at 15° degrees Pisces it's considered to be conjunct the Sun, if the Sun is anywhere between 8° degrees Pisces and 22° Pisces.

If the Sun is between 8° and 14° of Pisces it is **applying** to a conjunction of Jupiter. If the Sun is 15° degrees Pisces the Sun is in a **partile** (exact) conjunction with Jupiter. If the Sun is between 16° and 22° degrees of Pisces it's **separating** from the conjunction.

**The closer two planets are to being in partile (exact) the stronger the aspect will be!**

The larger the orb of influence between two planets the weaker the aspect becomes.

It's also important to determine if an aspect is **Applying, Separating or Partile.**

**An aspect that's applying is more intense** and can be given a larger orb of influence than an aspect that is separating.

**A separating aspect is weakening,** unless the faster moving planet involved in the aspect is retrograding.

**Always ask yourself if an aspect is applying or separating, and remember the tighter the orb, the stronger the force of an aspect; the wider the orb, the weaker it becomes.**