

The Process of Qualifying Yogas

Yogas vary in their impact upon a person's life. It is important to determine how effectively each yoga is going to operate. I am calling this qualifying yogas.

After finding yogas in a person's chart, we then need to assess to what degree each yoga will manifest by examining additional conditions. There are many different factors to evaluate. In most cases, what makes a good yoga more fortuitous is the opposite of what makes a bad yoga more difficult. E.g. if a good yoga is formed by strong planets, it becomes more auspicious; while if a bad yoga is formed by weak planets, it becomes more harmful.

Principles for Qualifying Yogas:

A. Relationship of Yoga-Forming Planets to the Specific Ascendant of the Chart

Vedic astrologers understand that planets perform differently for each Ascendant. In fact, this is the basis of the concept of functional or temporal benefics and malefics. E.g. Jupiter does not function well for Libra and Taurus (Venus) Ascendants because of the houses it rules for each Lagna. For Taurus rising, Jupiter rules the 8th and 11th houses; for Libra rising, Jupiter rules the 3rd and 6th houses. Positive yogas formed by Jupiter for these Ascendants have less potency. This illustrates how important the Ascendant's influence is upon the effectiveness of yogas. The following table shows the most productive and least productive planets for each Ascendant.

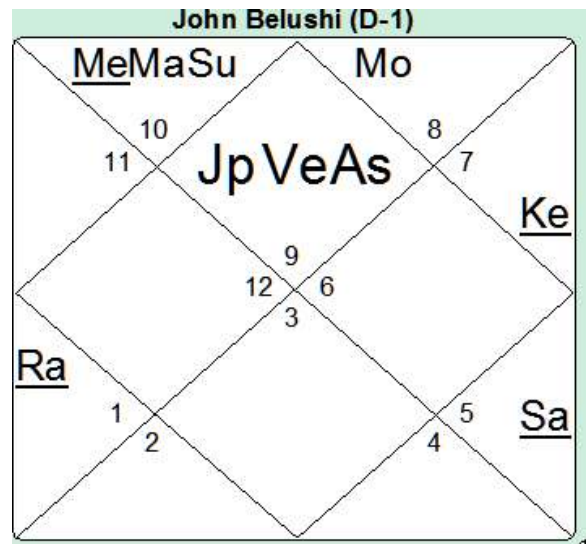
Best and Worst Planets for Each Ascendant (Yogakarakas are shown in **bold**.)

Ascendant	Best Rulerships	Worst Rulerships
Aries	Sun, Moon	Mercury
Taurus	Saturn , Mercury	Jupiter, Moon
Gemini	Mercury, Moon	Mars, Sun
Cancer	Mars , Moon, Sun	Mercury
Leo	Mars , Sun	Moon
Virgo	Mercury, Venus	Mars, Sun
Libra	Saturn , Moon	Jupiter
Scorpio	Moon, Sun, Jupiter	Venus, Mercury
Sagittarius	Sun, Jupiter	Venus, Moon
Capricorn	Venus , Saturn, Moon	Jupiter, Sun
Aquarius	Venus , Sun	Moon
Pisces	Moon, Jupiter, Mars	Venus, Sun

In John Belushi's chart, at the right, his powerful Dhana yoga, formed by Jupiter as lord of the 1st and Venus as lord of the 11th, is weakened by Venus' unhappy rulership of the 6th house.

His Venus not only kept the yoga from giving him as much wealth as it would have, but indicated (as the 6th lord) his insecurities, health issues, and eventually fatal drug addiction.

(His Moon, debilitated, dark, waning, and in a dusthana as ruler of the 8th, also contributed to his addiction patterns and emotional angst.)



A planet having challenging rulerships for a specific Ascendant noticeably weakens its ability to uplift a life through the positive yogas it forms (and magnifies the challenges in a person's life through the negative yogas it forms). It does not, however, nullify a positive yoga completely; and one must always take all of the relevant factors into account.

B. The Strength of Yoga-Forming Planets

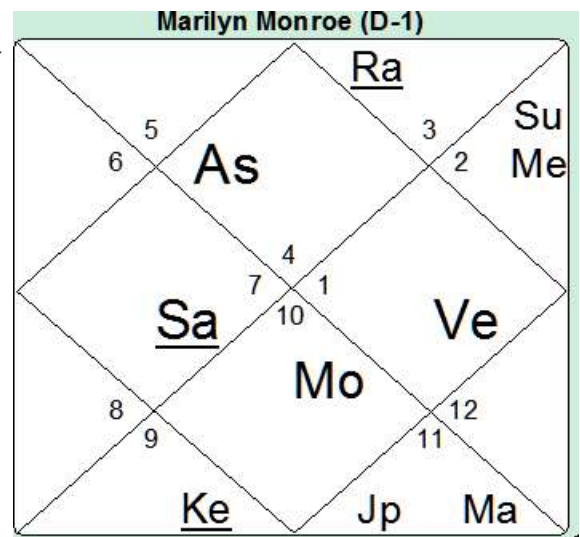
Many yogas, by definition, require at least one of the yoga-forming planets to be in its own sign or exalted. Nevertheless, for any positive yoga to have a notably uplifting effect upon a person's life, at least one of the yoga-forming planets should be strong. If none of the yoga-forming planets is strong, then the yoga may still be beneficial to a lesser degree.

Planets gain strength by being in their own sign, or exalted (or even in own nakshatra,), by direction (dig bala), by brightness (Bright Moon or retrograde planet), in the same sign as in the Navamsha (Vargottama), or in Parivartana Yoga (mutual exchange) with another planet. The more types of strength a yoga-forming planet has, the more powerful the yoga.

For a negative yoga to be seriously problematic in a person's life, the yoga-forming planets should be weak. Weakness can be by sign (the sign of debilitation), by dimness (combustion or Dark Moon), or by proximity to another planet (planetary war).

In Marilyn Monroe's chart, one of the major reasons why the Sasa Yoga formed by Saturn is powerful is because Saturn is doubly strong (retrograde and exalted).

It brought her, along with many other things, very powerful life partners (since, as lord of the 7th, Saturn represents her spouses). These men definitely added to her fame and fortune.



C. Yogas Reproduced from Chandra or Surya Lagnas

For most of the yogas commonly found in charts, such as the Maha Purusha Yogas (where a true planet -- Mercury through Saturn -- is in an angle and either in its own sign or exalted), the presence of the same yoga in the Chandra Lagna or Surya Lagna chart gives it significantly greater influence.

In the chart of Marilyn Monroe, above, Saturn is also in an angle from the Moon; therefore her Sasa yoga is even more significant.

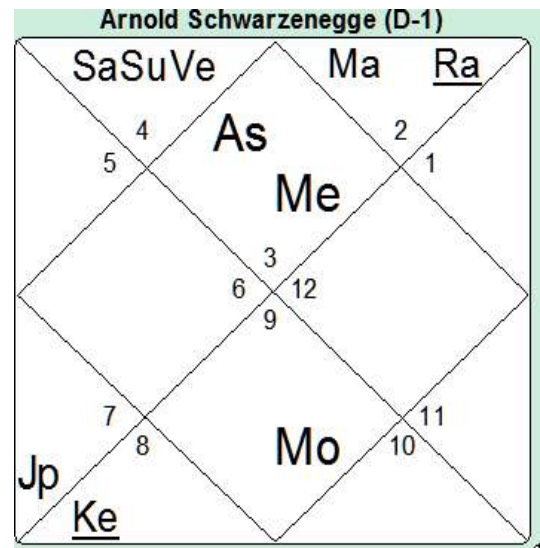
D. Aspects to Yoga-Forming Planets

When planets forming a positive yoga receive no aspects or only aspects from benefics, then the yoga is much better able to function. The aspect of even one malefic can impair the expression of a positive yoga.

When planets forming a negative yoga are aspected by one or more malefics, the yoga becomes more arduous. If a strong benefic aspects a planet participating in a challenging yoga, significant amelioration of that yoga will occur.

In Arnold Schwarzenegger's chart, his Bhadra yoga has only the aspects of Jupiter and the Bright (and waxing) Moon and no malefic aspects ; and it repeats from the Chandra Lagna.

His Mercury, in other words, is completely well-supported in his chart, and has brought him great success and prosperity.



E. Placement by House

While many yogas, by definition, must occur in kendras (angular houses), others do not. When positive yogas occur in houses 6, 8, or 12 (the dusthanas) or in Dagdha Rashis, they still can deliver benefits, but often not as easily nor as prominently as yogas occurring in positive houses. When negative yogas occur in dusthanas, their challenging effects are amplified.

Again, in Arnold's chart, above, Mercury is in the best house it could be in, because the Lagna (First House) is a very positive house, and because Mercury rules the Lagna, and because it gets directional strength (dig bala) in the First House. All of these further contributed to his phenomenal rise in life.

F. The Connection of Yogas to the Lagna

Since the Lagna (First House) and its lord represent the person, for an individual to be able to fully utilize the gifts represented by a yoga, the yoga-forming planets need to have a relationship with either the First House or the Lord of the First House (or both). Yogas without any connection to the First House or its Lord are more difficult for the person to access, and therefore less likely to transform a person's life.

In Arnold Schwarzenegger's chart, Mercury is both in and lord of the First House.

G. Reinforced Yogas.

When a yoga-forming planet participates in more than one yoga, the yogas augment each other. In other words, there is a synergistic effect.

In Arnold's chart, Mercury forms two Bhadra Maha Purusha yogas (in its own sign in a kendra from both Lagna and Moon), a Dhana Yoga with the Moon (Lords of the First and Second in mutual aspect), a Shubha Vosi yoga (Mercury in the house before the Sun), and a Chamara Yoga (First House and Lord only influenced by benefics). Therefore, Mercury is an incredibly powerful yoga-forming planet and will bring great blessings to Arnold even during its bhuktis.

A much subtler but noteworthy example of reinforced yogas exists in Marilyn Monroe's chart. The association of Mars and Jupiter in her chart doesn't, at first glance, look very promising. Neither has strength, they are in the 8th house, and neither has any relationship with the Lagna or Lagnesha. While neither planet receives any aspects from malefics, and both are friends of the Lord of the First (the Moon), these factors are not enough to explain her huge celebrity.

However, Mars and Jupiter together create two of the most important Raja yogas. Mars and Jupiter are Lords of the Ninth and the Tenth, and Lords of the Fifth and the Ninth. The combined effect of two such incredibly important Raja Yogas more than compensates for the lack of other distinguishing factors.

H. Running the Relevant Dashas and Bhuktis

A yoga will reach full fruition when a person runs the dasha (and/or the bhukti) of one or more of the yoga-forming planets. Marilyn Monroe achieved great fame during her Jupiter dasha, when the above-mentioned yogas became activated.

Even if one doesn't run the dasha of a positive yoga-forming planet during one's lifetime, the bhuktis of that planet can also give fine results.

I. Orbs

Most Vedic astrologers use Whole Sign aspects, where every planet affects every other planet in the same house or opposite house. Even Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, by their special aspects, influence the whole sign of the houses they aspect, and all of the planets therein.

Nevertheless, Vedic astrologers, just like Western astrologers, do pay attention to orb, and know that planets with tighter aspects (smaller orbs) are more potent. Therefore, in the formation of yogas, the stronger the connection -- by orb -- between the yoga-forming planets, the stronger the yoga.

In John Belushi's chart, on page [2](#), his Jupiter and Venus are very close, which strengthened his Dhana yoga.

Two situations where closeness of connection weakens the yoga are when a yoga-forming planet is combust (within 6° of the Sun) and when the planet forms a planetary war (two true planets within 1° of each other).

The serious evaluation of yogas must take into account these considerations. Otherwise, Jyotishis will over-emphasize yogas that cannot deliver their full promise, or pay too little attention to yogas that may significantly affect a person's life. Being able to distinguish which yogas are the most important adds life and depth to each chart reading