The Luo Shu & He Tu : Numerology in Feng Shui

A Recap on What You Have Learnt So Far.

By now, you should know that classical Feng Shui is a study of Location, Direction and Time vis-à-vis Landforms and Qi. Feng Shui is NOT about placing objects or items `strategically' around your home or office, in the name of ushering in `good luck'. If that were the case, imagine what a house or workplace would look like at the end of the day – something reminiscent of a Chinese antiques' shop, don't you think so?

You have also learnt in great detail about the Five Elements (Wu Xing 五行) that form the core of Feng Shui and Chinese Metaphysics, namely:

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These Elements represent the `Five Transformations' or `Five Phases' of Yin and Yang (Qi) interaction, and are extensively referred to in the study of the Chinese Five Arts (Wu Shu 五術).

In addition, you should at least be familiar – if not well versed yet – with the 3 Cycles that govern the relationships between the Five Elements:

The Productive Cycle

- Water produces Wood
- Wood produces Fire
- Fire produces Earth
- Earth produces Metal
- Metal produces Water



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The Weakening Cycle

- Water weakens Metal
- Metal weakens Earth
- Earth weakens Fire
- Fire weakens Wood
- Wood weakens Water



The Controlling Cycle.

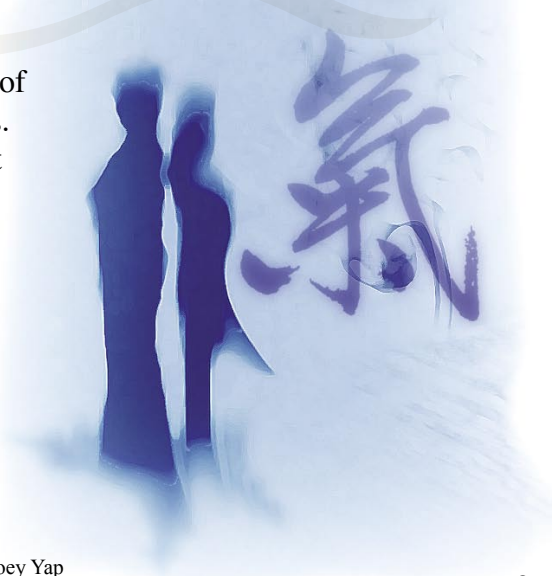
- Fire controls Metal
- Metal controls Wood
- Wood controls Earth
- Earth controls Water
- Water controls Fire



Understanding these Cycles isn't that difficult, once you are able to logically visualize how one element reacts to another, under natural circumstances. Chinese Metaphysics and Feng Shui are logical - albeit technical - fields of knowledge and harmonize in tandem with Nature's laws; just like their pure science counterparts. And nothing that makes sense in the context of Nature can be pre-fabricated or molded by humankind to suit our mere whims and fancies!

Above all, you need to remember that in Feng Shui and the Five Arts of Chinese Metaphysics, we always seek BALANCE between the Elements. The overly predominant presence of an Element - just as something that is overly Yang or Yin - is usually never good for a person or place. As a simple rule of thumb: The Five Elements in Balance=Smooth Qi Flow=Good Feng Shui!

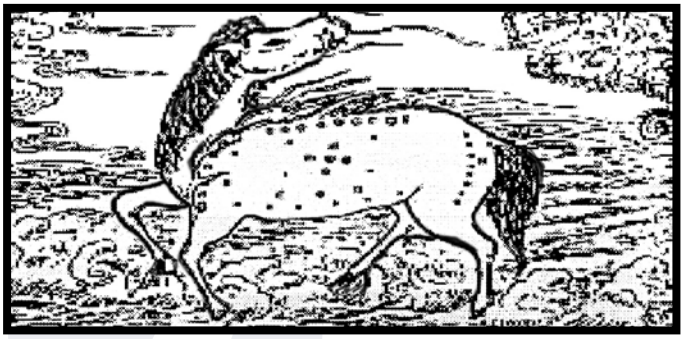
As the Nobel Laureate, Marie Curie (1867-1934) once remarked: "Nothing is this world needs to be feared, only understood."



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The Luo Shu & He Tu

Classical Feng Shui (particularly its ramifications such as Xuan Kong and San Yuan Feng Shui) requires the study of numerology that enables practitioners to just walk into a property, take a look at it, accurately tell what has happened there and predict what will happen to its occupants in the future - before even taking directions with the Luo Pan! This predictive aspect of Feng Shui, more popularly known as `House Judgment' (Zhai Duan) by Feng Shui enthusiasts, adds to this science's versatility and capability.

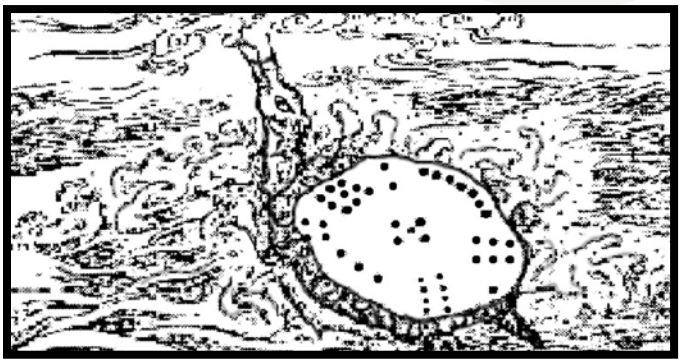


The numerological aspect of Feng Shui is derived from two numerological formations known as Luo Shu and He Tu. Together with Ba Gua formations, they provide the impetus behind the development of Feng Shui formulas and techniques.

Luo Shu

The Luo Shu is a base mathematical model that incorporates the factors of Direction, the Elements and all other pertinent information on the same platform or chart. This is one of the core models of classical Feng Shui studies, with an interesting legend attached to its origins.

It seemed that long, long ago, a great tortoise with a dragon's head emerged from the River Lo in China – and this phenomenon caught the attention of a wise, old man. (Bear in mind that the ancient Chinese regarded the tortoise as a sacred animal, and hence attached much religious or superstitious significance to it. As a student of classical Feng Shui, you now know better!) He noticed the strange, dot-like markings on the tortoise's shell and regarded this incident as a truly out-of-this-world spectacle to behold. Curiosity got the better of him and he duly copied down the pattern on the tortoise's shell. After much pondering and



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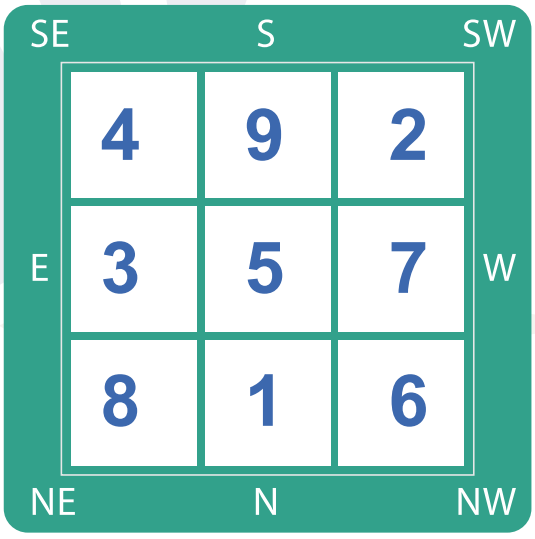
analysis, this wise man understood the dots to represent the numerical pattern of the Luo Shu Chart.

The Luo Shu Chart has nine grids, with each of the grids – including the Center – representing a specific direction. There is also a number assigned to each grid, with each number representing a set of key attributes. The pattern in which the numbers move or rotate (starting from the #5 in the Center) is called the Luo Shu Path. Accordingly, the Luo Shu Path demarcates the dynamic nature and therefore movement of Qi. Bear in mind that the directional sectors for each of the grids are fixed.

In short, the Luo Shu Chart shows the dynamic movement of the Five Elements, the natural changes of the Four Seasons, the progression and passing of time, as well as the flow of Qi within a building.

The Nine Palaces of the Luo Shu

- #9 in the South (top of the Chart)
- #2 in the Southwest
- #7 in the West
- #6 in the Northwest
- #1 in the North (bottom of the Chart)
- #8 in the Northeast
- #3 in the East
- #4 in the Southeast
- #5 in the Central Palace



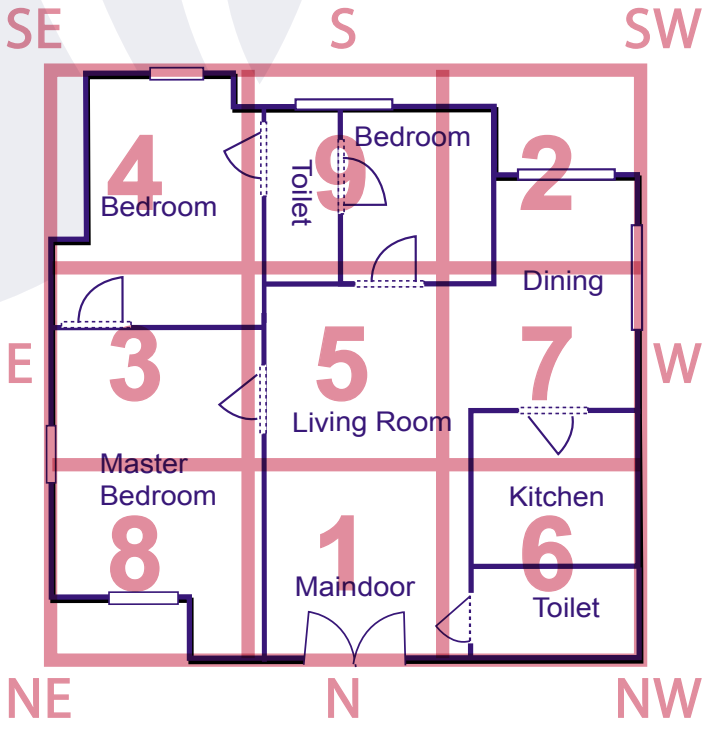
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The Five Elements in the Luo Shu		
Number	**Element**	**Direction**
#1	Water	North
#2	Yin Earth	Southwest
#3	Yang Wood	East
#4	Yin Wood	Southeast
#5	Earth	Center
#6	Yang Metal	Northwest
#7	Yin Metal	West
#8	Yang Earth	Northeast
#9	Fire	South

The Nine Palaces & Their Implications

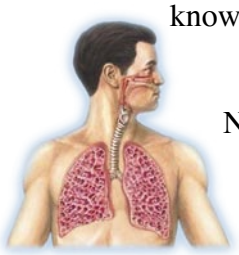
Every building has its own Nine Palaces. After establishing the North-South axis with a magnetic compass, superimpose the Luo Shu Chart onto the building's floor plan. You can now see where the East sector or Southwest sector of your house lies.

For instance, when the South sector (or corner) of your house is overly big compared to the rest of the property, the Fire Element is too strong. Why is that? Remember; South represents Fire! Now, when too much Fire is present, how does this change the dynamics of the other remaining Elements (Hint: Recall what you have learnt about the 3 Cycles earlier).



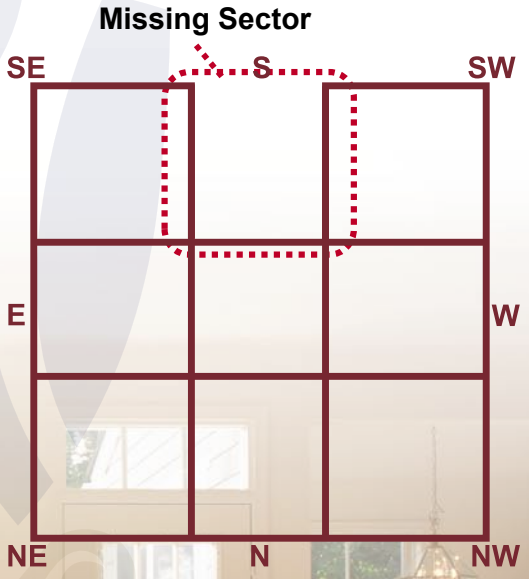
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Fire controls Metal, doesn't it? As such, too much Fire harms the Metal element in the house. Under the study of the Five Elements, we know that Metal represents justice, altruism and decision-making abilities. We therefore know that these qualities – present within the occupants of the house – will be adversely affected!



Nor does it stop there. You will also recall that Metal represents the lungs and our respiratory system. These health aspects will be affected as well.

On the other hand, we should not – or do not wish to – see any `missing' sectors too (as denoted by irregularly-shaped buildings or land plots). For example, should the South sector be missing, we can hence deduce that passion and happiness (represented by the Fire Element) will be missing from or in scarce supply in the house.



It is perhaps safe to state at this juncture that of the Five Elements, Fire and Water are the two most important Elements. Why is this so?

If you relate to the concept of Yin and Yang, Fire and Water ARE the transition points between Yin and Yang. Fire represents passion and life, while Water represents wisdom – all necessary qualities for a well-balanced life (not that the roles of the other Elements may be ignored though!).

Let's take another example to illustrate the preceding point. Let's assume that the East and Southeast sectors of a house are missing. The element of Wood is therefore missing, and Wood represents growth. We can therefore deduce that the occupants of this house will find it difficult to progress in life – or improve themselves. Furthermore, the heads and limbs of these people may also be subject to ailments and injuries.

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Moving along the same tones, if Metal (represented by the West and Northwest sectors) is missing, then the virtues of altruism and loyalty amongst the occupants will also be lacking, to say the least. Likewise, if Earth (represented by the Northeast and Southwest sectors) is missing, stability will not be amongst the qualities occupants will enjoy!

Luo Shu & The 24 Mountains

You know by now that the Luo Shu Chart demarcates the flow of Time and Directions. Of course, as a student (and future practitioner) of classical Feng Shui, you should also know that one of the most important (literal) tools in Feng Shui is the Luo Pan compass. It is a magnetic compass with a ring around it that contains what is known as the 24 Mountains.

The 24 Mountains are, in essence, the 8 Main Directions on a compass, trisected into the 3 Sub-sectors. Each of the 24 Mountains also has a Yin or Yang quality that will be marked out on the Luo Pan. In addition, the 12 Animal Signs (more properly termed as the `12 Earthly Branches') of the 24 Mountains represent the position of Earth in relation to the Sun. After all, as the Earth orbits around the Sun, Time progresses and passes, doesn't it?

Now, what is the significance of the 24 Mountains? The 24 Mountains are used to Fly the Stars in Flying Stars Feng Shui.



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He Tu (River Map)



Another numerological model and the counterpart of the Luo Shu Chart, the He Tu has an equally fascinating legend behind it: The story has it that another mythical creature with the body of a horse and head of a (Chinese) dragon appeared from the depths of China's Yellow River in ancient times. On its body were the dot-like patterns that the sages who saw this creature quickly copied and studied, and voila! We have the He Tu Map today.

As the second most important base mathematical model in Feng Shui theory, the He Tu represents the perfect balance between Yin and Yang. Its counterpart, the Luo Shu, represents the dynamic nature of Yin and Yang – which are in a constant state of flux (or change).

The Five Elements in the He Tu		
Number	**Element**	**Elemental Description**
#2 - #7	Fire	Fire always rises to the top
#1 - #6	Water	Water follows gravity downwards
#3 - #8	Wood	Growth: The Sun rises in the East
#4 - #9	Metal	Receding: The Sun sets in the West
#5 - #10	Earth	Center

In addition, the He Tu can also be found within the Luo Shu:

- #4 - #9 are in the Southeast and South sectors
- #2 - #7 are in the Southwest and West sectors
- #1 - #6 are in the North and Northwest sectors
- #3 - #8 are in the East and Northeast sectors

Just bear one thing in mind, though: The He Tu and Luo Shu are NOT the same as the Eight Trigrams (Ba Gua). The He Tu is a theoretical model of the perfect and ideal condition of the universal forces. In this state of perfect balance or utopia, there is NO movement, NO evolution and time does NOT exist.

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The Luo Shu depicts the constant and cyclical nature of the universe – birth, growth, sickness, extinction... virtually all things that denote movement and evolution. The Luo Shu is hence the base model for Feng Shui applications such as Flying Stars and Eight Mansions, because it represents the actual compass directions in any building. The Luo Shu also contains the base locations for the Five Elements.

How The Luo Shu & He Tu Come Into Application

We know that the South sector represents the Fire Element. What happens then if we see a sharp building or a mountain to the South of a property? As sharp Forms are considered a Fire Element, having such Forms in the South tell us that the Fire Element affecting our property is already too strong!

How about the presence of a round, dome-shaped (Metal) building to the East? Now that we know that the East sector represents the Wood Element – and that Metal and Wood are not harmonious (they counter each other, in fact!) – we can deduce that the Wood attributes (e.g. growth, kindness) of the occupants will be adversely affected.



As you progress into this course, you will even be able to assess WHO in the family will be most affected by a `Metal-and-Wood' clash in the East sector! In this case, an afflicted East sector normally affects the eldest son in the family. You will learn more about this in Lesson 7 of this Online Course, which touches on the Trigram Attributes.

Food for Thought:

Now that you have learnt about how the He Tu and Luo Shu are used in facilitate Feng Shui calculations, what are your thoughts on classical Feng Shui? Hopefully, you would need no further convincing by now that Feng Shui is a methodical, well-structured metaphysical branch of knowledge that is absolutely distinct from superstitious, religious, cultural or hocus-pocus beliefs!

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