

how to read  
body language

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Empower Solutions

**If the eyes are the windows of the soul, then the body is the mirror of our feelings.** If we are feeling great it shows in how we hold and use our body. Conversely, if we look at someone else's body we can often tell how they are feeling by the signals their body is giving.

So when it comes to dating, using/reading body language signals is a great tool. You can observe this by watching a couple flirting with each other.

In case you don't think learning how to read and use body language is not important, here are some statistics about the messages we receive from someone we meet.

- 7% of the information we receive is from what they actually say.
- 38% of information we receive is from the tone, inflection and speed of their voice.
- **A staggering 55% of the information we receive is from their body language.**

These non-verbal signals will help you in dealing with the person but stay focussed on what the person is saying. If you focus too much on their body language signals, you and/or the other person may feel uncomfortable.

It is useful to be able to read people's body language, but it is equally useful to learn how to get your body to send the right signals and eliminate the wrong signals. See below for some body language signals.

**Be warned:** body language is very much open to interpretation. Many signals have different meanings depending on the person/situation. Keep this mind when you assess a body language signal.



**Note: Look for 3 or 4 signals that convey a similar message or the one-off inconsistent signal. Also, consciously practise reading/doing some of the signals as much as you can. Learning, as you practise, what works and what doesn't work for you will help you gain confidence to use body language techniques consciously.**

## How to Read Body Language

### *Body Language Signals:*

- Open arms:
  - Energetically open and possibly feeling vulnerable
  - A good way to show you are approachable, especially when combined with open palms
- Palms up/open hands:
  - Defences down
  - An open heart
- Palms on chest – When a person uses open palms that occasionally touch their chest, they are signalling honesty
- Outward, upward hand movements – This conveys an open and positive message
- Folded arms:
  - A defence mechanism that shows the person is not open to what is being said or done
  - May mean rejection
  - Physically cold
  - Stubborn in their outlook
- Hands closed – A closed heart
- Doodling – Bored
- Fist:
  - Anger and to be avoided
  - Physically cold
  - Very tense
  - Defiant or triumphant when held in air
- Feet under the chair – A sign of eagerness
- Looking around:
  - Wants to get away
  - Thinking about something else
  - Bored with situation/conversation
- Stroking chin – evaluating
- Mirroring – This is evidence of two people getting on really well. Each person copies the other's body language, usually subtly.  
Mirroring occurs with:
  - Breathing
  - Gestures
  - Eye movement
  - Leaning towards each other at the same time
  - Crossed or uncrossed legs

## How to Read Body Language

- Speech pattern
- Arm movement, or no arm movement
- Emotive energy such as being excited, relaxed, etc.

**Note:** If you practice this with somebody the key is to be subtle and not be a copycat. There is a natural rhythm to the process, which is the key.

- Yawning:
  - Bored
  - Tired and that may have nothing to do with the situation/conversation
- Preening – This shows someone knows they are attractive  
For example, flicking or stroking their hair or adjusting a collar and/or a tie.
- Ear Tugging:
  - Indecision
  - Possible deception
- Puffing out chest – this has nothing to do with silicone implants. Men do this when demonstrating their attraction to someone.
- Nodding – The occasional nod from a listener to a speaker is a positive message. It is an indication they are listening and are interested.
- Too much nodding – This indicates the listener has lost interest and may be bored. (Probably where the saying ‘nodding off to sleep’ came from.)
- Chopping hands down – This is an aggressive act, usually used to antagonise.
- Body space – Respect for the other person’s body space is crucial in gaining their trust. Stay at least one arm’s length away from them.
- Striding briskly:
  - An outward display of confidence
  - Anger
- Gentle leg shaking:
  - The person is mildly stimulated
  - May need to go to toilet
- Vigorous leg shaking:
  - Reveals apprehension and nerves
  - Desperate to go to the toilet
- On toes – Eagerness
- Clears throat:

## How to Read Body Language

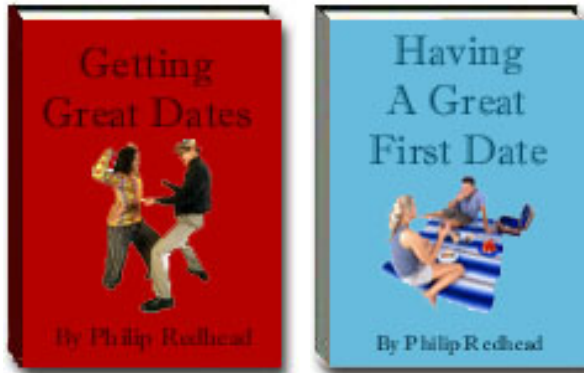
- Anxiety
- Has a cough/sore throat
- Habit
- Pretends to kick imaginary things on ground - frustration
- Open feet – reflecting and giving attention.
- Flushed cheeks:
  - Indicates interest in the other person
  - Embarrassment (usually temporary)
- Dilated pupils:
  - Interested in someone.
  - Focussed
  - High on drugs
- High blink rate:
  - A person who has an interest in someone will have an increased blink rate.
  - Nervousness
  - Assessing
  - Has an eye disorder
- Backwards moving:
  - Rejecting
  - Escaping
- Moving away – Sometimes there is no hidden meaning.
- Slumped posture:
  - Bored
  - Low self-esteem/confidence
- Legs entwined – A woman who is interested in someone will often cross and uncross her legs when seated.
- Gazing – A woman will gaze long enough for someone to notice then will quickly look away. Her mouth may open and lips slightly wet.
- Low voice – When interested in someone a woman may speak in a low voice.
- Running hand along leg – sexually interested in the other person
- Running hands along legs:
  - Really sexually interested in the other person
  - Getting ready to leave
- Directly facing you with open stance – The person is interested and you have their attention.
- Drumming fingers:
  - Impatient

## How to Read Body Language

- May be a drummer
- Open mouth:
  - You have said something outrageous and their jaw has dropped in shock.
  - The person has tried to interrupt the conversation to get a word in, but you haven't paused.
  - May be a sign of attraction
- Tilt of hips – Sign of attraction and a good flirting tool
- Finger pointing:
  - Sign of assertiveness
  - Sign of aggression
- Open legs – Receptive to the other person
- Staring:
  - Defiance
  - Sign of aggression
- Looks you in the eyes without staring – Confident, self-assured.
- Doesn't look you in the eyes:
  - Lack of confidence
  - Is being deceptive
- Standing upright – reflects inner confidence and comfort level.
- Chewing fingernails – Nerves. The person is not feeling secure. If they swallow, there may not be enough calcium in their diet.
- Quick and animated arm and hand movements – Lying  
**Note:** Many honest, passionate people also do this.
- Darting eyes – deception.
- Shifting eyes – At the very least may be a lack of confidence or at worst it is indication of a deception. Definitely means deception when combined with a nose rub and 'umms' and 'ahhs'.
- People tend to look down and to the left when lying.
- Running fingers through hair:
  - Frustration
  - Preening



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