

---

# How Men and Women Use the Different Types of Nonverbal Communication

A study at UCLA revealed that 93% of communication effectiveness is determined by nonverbal communication (Heathfield). When interacting with one another, men and women can sense how one feels by noticing their actions. While men are typically known for their dominance and assertiveness in the workplace, women are more submissive and tend to feel intruded on by males (Heathfield). These stereotypes about men and women's nonverbal communication can also be applied to flirting and dating.

There are multiple types of nonverbal communication that men and women use to express their thoughts and emotions, which can vary in different settings and around the opposite gender. Understanding the various types of nonverbal communication is essential to everyday life, as it is the first thing people notice when interacting with others (Cherry). Facial expressions play a huge part in reading someone, mainly because it is the first thing we notice (Cherry). A smile is naturally associated with happiness, while a frown is typically thought of as disapproval and anger (Heathfield).

Different facial expressions are illustrated using the eyes, eyebrows, and mouth (Heathfield). While facial expressions are a major key in reading someone, body language and postures can tell much more about someone than words (Cherry). For example, slouching can be perceived as a sign of boredom, but a person who sits up straight may be labeled as attentive and interested (Heathfield). Eye contact is also one of the most powerful means of conveying a message (Cherry). The way one looks, blinks, and stares at something can deliver a strong impression about what that person is thinking (Cherry). When someone encounters something they like, their rate of blinking increases and the pupils will dilate (Cherry).

Staring at someone—depending on how long you hold a stare—can cause them to become angry or attracted (Cherry). If one is lying, they will typically start shifting their glances, while someone who is being truthful will hold a steady gaze (Cherry). Holding a stare is considered a sign of dominance and avoiding it is typically a sign of submission (Riggio). Although eye contact is one of the most common uses of nonverbal communication, haptics—more commonly referred to as “touch”—can be used to signify affection, familiarity, sympathy, or other emotions (Cherry).

In Harry Harlow's monkey study, it was demonstrated that deprived touch and contact with baby monkeys, who were raised by wire mothers, experienced hindered development, which also caused permanent deficits in behavior and social interaction (Cherry). While every one may

---

## Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)

---

perceive an individual's actions differently, some actions are generally more negative or positive than another.

For example, slouching, rolling eyes, frowning, and glares are typically viewed as negative to most people. Positive forms of nonverbal communication are sitting up straight, steady eye contact, smiling, and high fives (Cherry). All the different types of nonverbal communication—whether it's with the same gender or the opposite gender—can be used differently by men and women. The types of nonverbal communication are used differently among men and women. Personal space between the two are typically completely different. For example, men have a greater amount of personal space, meaning that one must come far into their "bubble" to intrude upon them. A man's personal space is so large that — when someone approaches them— it can possibly cause arousal or discomfort (Riggio). Women, however, have a smaller amount of personal space, which makes it easier for one to feel intruded on when an individual enters their surroundings. A woman's personal space is often invaded by men more than the other way around (Riggio). A man's posture is usually very spread out and they tend to convey dominance and power. Women take up less space and hold their legs tightly together, which can convey submissiveness. Men use these spread out stances because it is commonly known that a confident person will hold a "forceful" posture, while someone who is shy will usually be more confined (Riggio). While men and women differ greatly with posture, touch between them can be complicated and misinterpreted very easily (Riggio).

When a dominant person touches someone, it may be an intrusion, especially if the action was not wanted. Men are usually the ones who initiate touch, and studies have shown that men will walk with a woman side-by-side with their dominant hand next to her. It is not common for a woman to initiate touch, but when a woman does, it is typically viewed by men as a sexual interest; even though a woman's touch is usually to show concern and nurture others (Riggio and Cherry). While nonverbal communication differs between men and women, it also varies depending on the scenario it is used in. Not only does nonverbal communication differ with gender, but it can also vary in different situations. In the workplace, using nonverbal communication is important because it can tell other employees and visitors what kind of an employee someone is (Heathfield). For example, something as small as office décor can be a form of nonverbal communication. When people enter an office, they will notice the desk placement, the distance between the desk and chairs, and if any furniture separates one from other coworkers (Heathfield). The distance between desks and chairs are significant because most people appreciate a generous amount of physical space. Most people in the United States prefer at least 18 inches of space around others while being too close can seem too intimate for a professional setting (Heathfield).

Physical space can convey a lot about someone, but the tone of voice, loudness, inflections, and pitch— known as paralinguistics— can be critical when speaking to customers and coworkers

---

## Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

**GET HELP**

---

(Heathfield). When someone speaks, humans pay close attention to their tone. For example, if someone uses a strong tone, we associate that with approval or enthusiasm, but when one uses a hesitant tone, it conveys disapproval or a lack of interest (Cherry). As mentioned before, eye contact is a major indicator of someone who is trustworthy and has an interest (Heathfield). Not only is eye contact a huge sign of interest, so is an individual's posture (Heathfield). When an employee is standing upright and has a sturdy posture, they more than likely are more professional than an employee who drags themselves around (Heathfield).

The clothing an employee wears can also convey how one wants others to view them. For instance, someone who wears conservative suits and outfits will portray someone who is professional, trustworthy, and dependable. Women who go to work with low-cut blouses or dresses may seem like they want others to find them "sexy" (Heathfield). While nonverbal communication is important at work, it is also crucial when dating and flirting. In an article by Brendan Lynch from The University of Kansas, he describes how men and women used nonverbal communication to flirt with each other on dates. Brendan describes the several different kinds of flirts as physical, traditional, sincere, polite, and playful.

The physical flirt touched the other person frequently and tends to be better off in an open environment, rather than being close and personal with the other individual (Lynch). As traditional flirts, the men took the lead—which is how most people think dating should work—and the women were more reserved. Women who were traditional flirts also showed their wrists and hands, also known as "palming". The sincere flirts, who were mainly women, didn't fidget around the man and used alluring looks, along with laughing and smiling at the man, to flirt; the sincere flirts make they are flirting more noticeable (Lynch). Unlike the sincere flirts—who make their flirting obvious to the other individual—the polite flirts are complete opposites to the sincere flirts; polite flirts are generally more distant and not as flirtatious. These flirts tended to lean back, lower the pitch of their voices and lacked intimacy altogether. The men who were polite flirts nodded and didn't tease their dates (Lynch).

The final type of flirt Lynch mentioned was a playful flirt. These flirts shrugged frequently and protruded their chests, along with the women using gazes and the men crossing their legs (Lynch). Aside from identifying how the different types of flirts used nonverbal communication, it is important to recognize how most people use it in general to flirt. Eye contact, as mentioned previously, is a major sign someone is showing interest or trying to flirt; flirtatious glances, quick eye contact, and looking away coyly are all signs people should watch out for (Lynch). Red flags to be cautious of on dates and flirting with others are crossing legs and arms, individuals distancing themselves, and shrugging shoulders (Lynch). When trying to identify if a man is interested, he will typically use his gaze and possibly deepen his voice to show his interest.

A woman will usually show happiness and have an all-around good attitude when she is

---

## Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)

---

interested in someone (Lynch). Because people apply nonverbal communication in several ways, they find themselves confused if someone is interested in them or not (Lynch). It is key to understand the several different nonverbal communication styles and how men and women perceive them. People use these to convey how they feel and what they think without vocally expressing themselves (Cherry). People will normally use the styles differ depending on the setting and which gender they are in the presence of. Knowing the negative and positive forms of nonverbal communication can be important because one can easily read an individual and know what to do based on the signals that the individual gives off (Heathfield).

gradesfixer.com

---

### **Need help with the assignment?**

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

**GET HELP**