

THE 8 PREFERENCES IN MYERS-BRIGGS

Extraversion (E)

Key words: outer world • people • action • breadth

People who prefer extraversion are energized by active involvement in events, and they like to be immersed in a breadth of activities. They are most excited when they are around people, and they often have an energized effect on those around them. Extraverts like to move into action and to make things happen—extraverts usually feel very at home in the world.

With their orientation to the outer world, extraverts often find their understanding of a problem becomes clearer if they can talk out loud about it and hear what others have to say.

People who prefer extraversion may:

- be seen as "go-getters" or "people-persons"
- feel comfortable with and like working in groups
- have a wide range of acquaintances and friends
- sometimes jump too quickly into activity and not allow enough time for reflection
- sometimes forgets to pause to clarify the ideas that give aim or meaning to their activities

Introversion (I)

Key words: inner world • ideas • reflection • depth

People who prefer introversion are energized and excited when they are involved with the ideas, images, memories, and reactions that are a part of their inner world. Introverts often prefer solitary activities or spending time with one or two others with whom they feel an affinity, and they often have a calming effect on those around them.

Introverts take time to reflect on ideas that explain the outer world. With their orientation to the inner world, introverts truly like the idea of something, often better than the something itself, and ideas are almost solid things for them.

People who prefer introversion may:

- be seen as calm and "centered" or reserved
- feel comfortable being alone and like solitary activities
- prefer fewer, more intense relationships
- sometimes spend too much time reflecting and not move into action quickly enough
- sometimes forget to check with the outside world to see if their ideas really fit their experience

Sensing (S)

Key words: facts • details • experience • present

People who have a preference for sensing are immersed in the ongoing richness of sensory experience and thus seem more grounded in everyday physical reality. They tend to be concerned with what is actual, present, current, and real. As they exercise their preference for sensing, they approach situations with an eye to the facts. Thus, they often develop a good memory for detail, become accurate in working with data, and remember facts or aspects of events that did not even seem relevant at the time they occurred.

Sensing types are often good at seeing the practical applications of ideas and things, and may learn best when they can first see the pragmatic side of what is being taught. For sensing types, experience speaks louder than words or theory.

People who prefer sensing may:

- recall events as snapshots of what literally happened
- solve problems by working through things thoroughly for a precise understanding
- be pragmatic and look to the "bottom line"
- work from the facts to the big picture
- put experience first and place less trust in words and symbols
- sometimes focus so much on the facts of the present or past that they miss new possibilities

Intuition (N)

Key words: symbols • pattern • theory • future

People who have a preference for intuition are immersed in their impressions of the meanings or patterns in their experiences. They would rather gain understanding through insight than through hands-on experience.

Intuitive types tend to be concerned with what is possible and new, and they have an orientation to the future. They are often interested in the abstract and in theory, and may enjoy activities where they can use symbols or be creative. Their memory of things is often an impression of what they thought was the essence of an event, rather than a memory of the literal words or experiences associated with the event. They often like concepts in and of themselves, even ones that do not have an immediate application, and they learn best when they have an impression of the overall idea first.

People who prefer intuition may:

- recall events by what they read "between the lines" at the time
- solve problems through quick insight and through making leaps
- be interested in doing things that are new and different
- work from the big picture to the facts
- place great trust in insights, symbols, and metaphors and less in what is literally experienced
- sometimes focus so much on new possibilities that they miss the practicalities of bringing them into reality

Thinking (T)

Key words: impersonal • truth • cool • tough-minded

People who have a preference for thinking judgment are concerned with determining the objective truth in a situation. More impersonal in approach, thinking types believe they can make the best decisions by removing personal concerns that may lead to biased analyses and decision making.

Thinking types seek to act based on the truth in a situation, a truth or principle that is independent of what they or others might want to believe or wish was true. The thinking function is concerned with logical consistency and analysis of cause and effect. As they use and develop their thinking function, thinking types often come to appear analytical, cool, and tough-minded.

People who prefer thinking may:

- have technical or scientific orientations
- be concerned with truth and notice inconsistencies
- look for logical explanations or solutions to most everything
- make decisions with their heads and want to be fair
- believe telling the whole truth is more important than being tactful
- sometimes miss seeing or valuing the "people" part of situations and may be experienced by others as too task-oriented, uncaring, or indifferent

Feeling (F)

Key words: personal • value • warm • tenderhearted

People who have a preference for feeling judgment are concerned with whether decisions and actions are worthwhile. More personal in approach, feeling types believe they can make the best decisions by weighing what people care about and the points-of-view of persons involved in a situation.

Feeling types are concerned with personal values and with making decisions based on a ranking of greater to lesser importance—what is the best for the people involved. The feeling function places high value on relatedness between people, and feeling types are often concerned with establishing or maintaining harmony in their relationships. As they use and develop their feeling function, feeling types often come to appear caring, warm, and tactful. Remember, in type language, feeling does not mean being "emotional"; rather, it is a way of reasoning.

People who prefer feeling may:

- have people or communications orientations
- be concerned with harmony and be aware when it is missing
- look for what is important to others and express concern for others
- make decisions with their hearts and want to be compassionate
- believe being tactful is more important than telling the "cold" truth
- sometimes miss seeing or communicating about the "hard truth" of situations and be experienced by others as too idealistic, mushy or indirect

Judging (J)

Key words: structured • decided • organized • scheduled

People who have a preference for judging use their preferred judging function (whether it is thinking or feeling) in their outer life. What this often looks like is that they prefer a planned or orderly way of life, like to have things settled and organized, feel more comfortable when decisions are made, and like to bring life under control to the degree that it is possible.

Since they are using either their T or F in their outer world, they want to make decisions to bring things in their outer life to closure. Remember though, this only describes how their outer life looks. Inside they may feel flexible and open to new information (which they are). Remember, in type language, judging means "preferring to make decisions;" it does not mean "judgmental" in the sense of constantly making negative evaluations about people and events.

People who prefer judging may:

- like to make decisions, or at least like to have things decided
- look task oriented
- like to make lists of things to do
- like to get their work done before playing
- plan work to avoid rushing just before deadline
- sometimes make decisions too quickly without enough information
- sometimes focus so much on the goal or plan that they miss the need to change directions at times

Perceiving (P)

Key words: flexible • open • adaptable • spontaneous

People who have a preference for perceiving use their preferred perceiving function (whether it is sensing or intuition) in their outer life. What this often looks like is that they prefer a more flexible and spontaneous way of life, like to understand and adapt to the world, and like to stay open to new experiences.

Since they are using either their S or N in their outer world, they want to continue to take in new information. Remember again that this only describes how the person's outer life looks. Inside they may feel very playful or decisive (which they are). Remember, in type language perceiving means "preferring to take in information;" it does not mean "perceptive" in the sense of having quick and accurate perceptions about people and events.

People who prefer perceiving may:

- like staying open to respond to whatever happens
- look more loose and casual
- like to keep laid-out plans to a minimum
- like to approach work as play or mix work and play
- work in burst of energy, and enjoy rushing just before deadlines
- sometimes stay open to new information so long that they miss making decisions
- sometimes focus so much on adapting to the moment that they do not settle on a direction or plan