

Nonverbal Messages



Movement

Scale of Message Possibilities

Consider a variety of interpretations. Always ask clarifying questions.

Head scratching	Thinking	Confusion
Face rubbing	Thinking, Soothing	Overwhelmed
Fingers on mouth	"I have something to say"	Holding back
Pulling ear	Listening, interested	Lack of understanding, "I didn't hear"
Winking	Playful, flirtatious	Twitch, criticize
Nose rubbing	New thought, decision	Deception, disbelief, doubt
Chin in hand	Dreaming, thinking	Not interested
Head & chin drop	Reverence, introspection	Shame, guilt, grief
Chin pulling	Pulling idea / message out	Indecision
Eye rolling	Searching for info	Coming up empty, not of value
Covering tummy	Thinking, collecting energy	Guarding self
Arms wide	Accepting, gathering	Questioning, separating
Arms crossed	Comfort, thinking, reverent	Closed off
Carrying motion (Hands out, palms up)	Accepting, sharing	Too heavy, burdened
Hunched shoulders	Determined	Hurt, burdened, feel small
Hands behind back	Comfortable, relaxed, open	Hiding something
Fig leaf hands	Relaxed	Protection, covering gender

Nonverbal Messages, Continued...



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Hands in pocket	Casual, comfortable, warmth	Hiding identity, scarcity
Push / shove	Protection	Stay away, rejection
Fingers fidgeting (like playing piano)	Excited, thinking	Scheming, impatient
Chopping	Precise, exact	Cutting, separating
Arm rubbing	Self-comforting	Insecurity
Arm brushing	Cleansing, clearing	Brushing off
Slapping thigh	Excited, ready to start	Giving up
Wide feet stance	Grounded, firm	Being pushed back
On one leg	Shift of thought	About to quit, push over
Holding knee	Authority	Issues with authority
Feet pointed different directions	Assessing, secure	Confusion
Twisted body	Releasing energy	Wants to get away, escape, hide
Feet balanced	Secure	Rigid
Fidgeting feet	Excited, loosening up	Nervous, uncertain, shifty
Rocking on toes	Nurturing	Ungrounded, not firm
Rocking side-to-side	Soothing	Unstable, disconnected

REMEMBER TO ASK QUESTIONS:

Reading body language is a very powerful tool to help communicate and understand people better, but it is not mind reading.

The key to truly understanding someone's body language is asking more clarifying questions.

Don't tell people that you are reading their body language. It can seem overly intimate or intimidating.