

16 Personality Factors: Decode Your Hidden Traits

Authored by
mohammad looti

June 17, 2026

RECOMMENDED CITATION

mohammad looti (2026). *16 Personality Factors: Decode Your Hidden Traits*.
PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=38554>

The 16 Personality Factors, measured by the 16PF Questionnaire, were derived using factor-analysis by psychologist Raymond Cattell.

Raymond Cattell's 16 Personality Factors

Factor - 1

Descriptors of Low Range: Impersonal, distant, cool, reserved, detached, formal, aloof (Schizothymia)

Primary Factor: Warmth (A)

Descriptors of High Range: Warm, outgoing, attentive to others, kindly, easy-going, participating, likes people (Affectothymia)

Factor - 2

Descriptors of Low Range: Concrete thinking, lower general mental capacity, less intelligent, unable to handle abstract problems (Lower Scholastic Mental Capacity)

Primary Factor: Reasoning (B)

Descriptors of High Range: Abstract-thinking, more intelligent, bright, higher general mental capacity, fast learner (Higher Scholastic Mental Capacity)

Factor - 3

Descriptors of Low Range: Reactive emotionally, changeable, affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset (Lower Ego Strength)

Primary Factor: Emotional Stability (C)

Descriptors of High Range: Emotionally stable, adaptive, mature, faces reality calmly (Higher Ego Strength)

Factor - 4

Descriptors of Low Range: Deferential, cooperative, avoids conflict, submissive, humble, obedient, easily led, docile, accommodating (Submissiveness)

Primary Factor: Dominance (E)

Descriptors of High Range: Dominant, forceful, assertive, aggressive, competitive, stubborn, bossy (Dominance)

Factor - 5

Descriptors of Low Range: Serious, restrained, prudent, taciturn, introspective, silent (Desurgency)

Primary Factor: Liveliness (F)

Descriptors of High Range: Lively, animated, spontaneous, enthusiastic, happy go lucky, cheerful,

expressive, impulsive (Surgency)

Factor - 6

Descriptors of Low Range: Expedient, nonconforming, disregards rules, self indulgent (Low Super Ego Strength)

Primary Factor: Rule-Consciousness (G)

Descriptors of High Range: Rule-conscious, dutiful, conscientious, conforming, moralistic, staid, rule bound (High Super Ego Strength)

Factor - 7

Descriptors of Low Range: Shy, threat-sensitive, timid, hesitant, intimidated (Threctia)

Primary Factor: Social Boldness (H)

Descriptors of High Range: Socially bold, venturesome, thick skinned, uninhibited (Parmia)

Factor - 8

Descriptors of Low Range: Utilitarian, objective, unsentimental, tough minded, self-reliant, non-nonsense, rough (Harria)

Primary Factor: Sensitivity (I)

Descriptors of High Range: Sensitive, aesthetic, sentimental, tender minded, intuitive, refined (Premsia)

Factor - 9

Descriptors of Low Range: Trusting, unsuspecting, accepting, unconditional, easy (Alaxia)

Primary Factor: Vigilance (L)

Descriptors of High Range: Vigilant, suspicious, skeptical, distrustful, oppositional (Protension)

Factor - 10

Descriptors of Low Range: Grounded, practical, prosaic, solution oriented, steady, conventional (Praxernia)

Primary Factor: Abstractedness (M)

Descriptors of High Range: Abstract, imaginative, absent minded, impractical, absorbed in ideas (Autia)

Factor - 11

Descriptors of Low Range: Forthright, genuine, artless, open, guileless, naive, unpretentious, involved (Artlessness)

Primary Factor: Privateness (N)

Descriptors of High Range: Private, discreet, nondisclosing, shrewd, polished, worldly, astute, diplomatic (Shrewdness)

Factor - 12

Descriptors of Low Range: Self-Assured, unworried, complacent, secure, free of guilt, confident, self satisfied (Untroubled)

Primary Factor: Apprehension (O)

Descriptors of High Range: Apprehensive, self doubting, worried, guilt prone, insecure, worrying, self blaming (Guilt Proneness)

Factor - 13

Descriptors of Low Range: Traditional, attached to familiar, conservative, respecting traditional ideas (Conservatism)

Primary Factor: Openness to Change (Q1)

Descriptors of High Range: Open to change, experimental, liberal, analytical, critical, free thinking, flexibility (Radicalism)

Factor - 14

Descriptors of Low Range: Group-oriented, affiliative, a joiner and follower dependent (Group Adherence)

Primary Factor: Self-Reliance (Q2)

Descriptors of High Range: Self-reliant, solitary, resourceful, individualistic, self sufficient (Self-Sufficiency)

Factor - 15

Descriptors of Low Range: Tolerates disorder, unexacting, flexible, undisciplined, lax, self-conflict, impulsive, careless of social rules, uncontrolled (Low Integration)

Primary Factor: Perfectionism (Q3)

Descriptors of High Range: Perfectionistic, organized, compulsive, self-disciplined, socially precise, exacting will power, control, self-sentimental (High Self-Concept Control)

Factor - 16

Descriptors of Low Range: Relaxed, placid, tranquil, torpid, patient, composed low drive (Low Ergic Tension)

Primary Factor: Tension (Q4)

Descriptors of High Range: Tense, high energy, impatient, driven, frustrated, over wrought, time driven. (High Ergic Tension)

Primary Factors and Descriptors in Cattell's 16 Personality Factor Model (Adapted From Conn & Rieke, 1994).

Relationship to the Big Five

Cattell referred to these 16 factors as primary factors. He factored these primary factors (i.e., performed a second-order factor analysis) and derived a smaller number of factors which he labeled global factors. In the Fifth Edition of the 16PF, there are five global factors that correspond fairly closely to the "Big Five" (BF). BF Openness => 16PF tough-mindedness (reversed); BF Conscientiousness => 16PF Self-Control; BF Extraversion => 16PF Extraversion; BF Agreeableness => 16PF Independence (reversed); and BF Neuroticism => 16PF Anxiety (Conn & Rieke, 1994). One technical difference between Cattell's five global factors and popular five-factor models was Cattell's insistence on using oblique rotations, whereas Goldberg and Costa & McCrae use orthogonal rotations. On an interpretive basis, Cattell's model counts dominance (Factor E) as a facet of Independence (i.e., Agreeableness reversed) whereas other popular big five models consider dominance as a facet of Extraversion (Cattell & Mead, 2008).

Origins

In 1936 Gordon Allport and H.S. Odbert hypothesized that:

" Those individual differences that are most salient and socially relevant in people's lives will eventually become encoded into their language; the more important such a difference, the more likely is it to become expressed as a single word. "

This statement has become known as the Lexical Hypothesis.

Allport and Odbert had worked through two of the most comprehensive dictionaries of the English language available at the time, and extracted 18,000 personality-describing words. From this gigantic list they extracted 4500 personality-describing adjectives which they considered to describe observable and relatively permanent traits.

In 1946 Raymond Cattell used the emerging technology of computers to analyse the Allport-Odbert list. He organized the list into 181 clusters and asked subjects to rate people whom they knew by the adjectives on the list. Using factor analysis Cattell generated twelve factors, and then included four factors which he thought ought to appear. The result was the hypothesis that individuals describe themselves and each other according to sixteen different, independent factors.

With these sixteen factors as a basis, Cattell went on to construct the 16PF Personality Questionnaire, which remains in use by universities and businesses for research personnel selection and the like. Although subsequent research has failed to replicate his results, and it has

been shown that he retained too many factors, the current 16PF takes these findings into account and is considered to be a very good test. In 1963, W.T. Norman replicated Cattell's work and suggested that five factors would be sufficient.

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