

AI-01592 Lie Detection Guidance

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How can I know if a person is lying or not telling the truth or has ulterior motives? List 22 examples.

Detecting lies or hidden motives can be complex, but there are often signs—verbal, non-verbal, and behavioral—that can give clues. Here are 22 examples to help you assess if someone might be lying or has ulterior motives:

Behavioral Clues

1. Inconsistent Stories – Details change each time they tell the story.
2. Overly Defensive – They get defensive or hostile when questioned, even mildly.
3. Too Much Detail – They include excessive, irrelevant details to seem convincing.
4. Avoiding Direct Answers – They deflect or answer with vague or unrelated statements.
5. Frequent Pauses or Hesitation – Long pauses may signal they're crafting a story.
6. Contradicting Evidence – What they say doesn't match facts or prior behavior.

Body Language Clues

7. Lack of Eye Contact – Avoiding eye contact might suggest discomfort or guilt.
8. Too Much Eye Contact – Overcompensating to appear truthful.
9. Fidgeting or Nervous Gestures – Playing with hair, fingers, or objects nearby.
10. Touching the Face or Mouth – Subconscious attempt to cover up the lie.
11. Incongruent Expressions – Smiling when saying something serious, or vice versa.

12. Sudden Stillness – A liar may “freeze” momentarily when fabricating a story.

Verbal Cues

13. Changing the Subject Abruptly – Trying to steer away from the uncomfortable topic.

14. Overuse of Qualifiers – Saying “to be honest,” “believe me,” or “I swear” too often.

15. Speaking in Fragments – Their speech may lack fluency or coherence.

16. Repeating Questions – Buying time to think of a “safe” answer.

17. Avoiding Personal Pronouns – Saying “someone” or “they” instead of “I” or “me.”

18. Exaggerated Denials – Strong, emotional denials that seem disproportionate.

Motivational & Contextual Clues

19. Disproportionate Reactions – Getting angry or sad too quickly without context.

20. Pattern of Manipulation – A history of playing the victim or guilt-tripping others.

21. Too Good to Be True – Promises or claims that seem overly perfect or unlikely.

22. Self-Serving Behavior – Their actions consistently benefit them more than others, especially after showing fake concern or interest.

Want to zoom in on any of these? Or maybe apply it to a specific situation you’re dealing with?