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Most Personality Quizzes Are Junk Science. Take One That Isn't.

Compare your results to those of your friends and family.

By Maggie Koerth and Julia Wolfe

What's your personality, and what can it tell you about your true self? Those questions have launched a thousand online personality quizzes. But you can do better than those specious — yet irresistible — quizzes. You can take a personality quiz backed by science.

Meet the Big Five, the way most psychologists measure and test personality. It's a system built on decades of research about how people describe one another and themselves. (You can read more about it in [this article](#) we published last year.) There are a couple of things that make it — and this quiz — different.

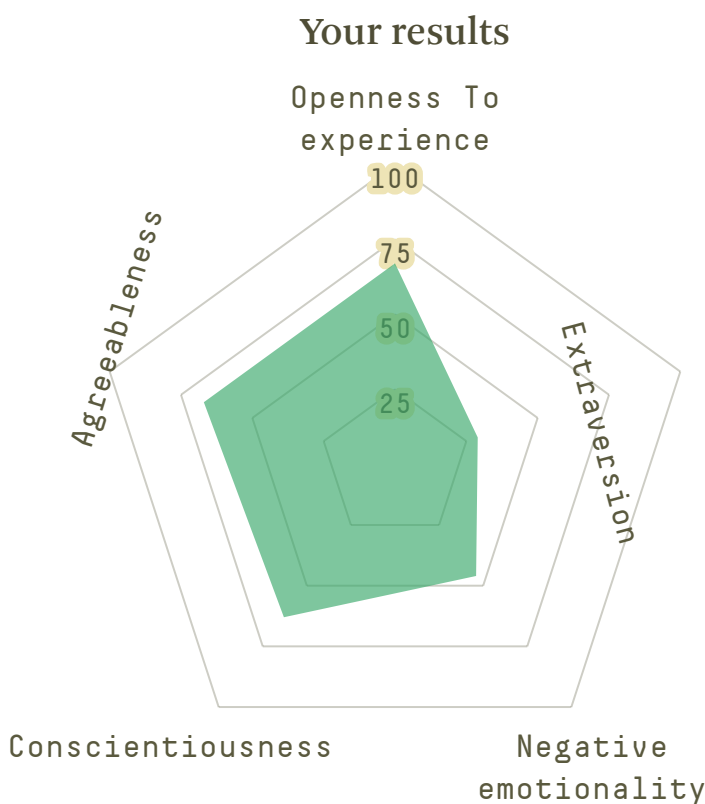
First, the Big Five doesn't put people into neat personality "types," because that's not how personalities really work. Instead, the quiz gives you a score on five different traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, negative emotionality and openness to experience. For each of those traits, you're graded on a scale from 0 to 100, depending on how strongly you

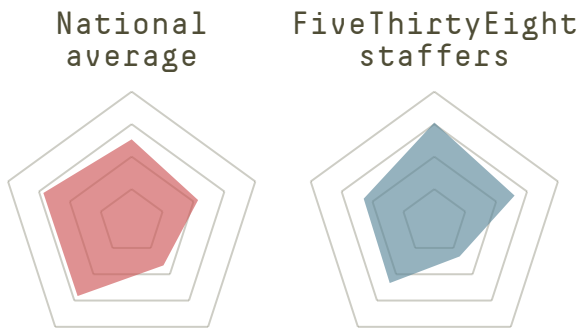
you're an extrovert or an introvert — instead, it tells you your propensity toward extraversion. Every trait is graded on a spectrum, with a few people far out on the extremes and a lot of people in the middle.

The other thing that makes the Big Five different is it lets you easily compare your score to others'. We're going to show you how your personality compares with that of the average American. And once you get your results, you can invite friends and relatives to compare your personality to theirs. (In the meantime, you'll be stuck comparing yourself to the average FiveThirtyEight staffer.)

So what are you waiting for? Find out who you really are — take the quiz for yourself!

YOUR BIG FIVE SCORES





Openness to experience

67 out of 100

Agreeableness

67 out of 100

Conscientiousness

63 out of 100

Negative emotionality

46 out of 100

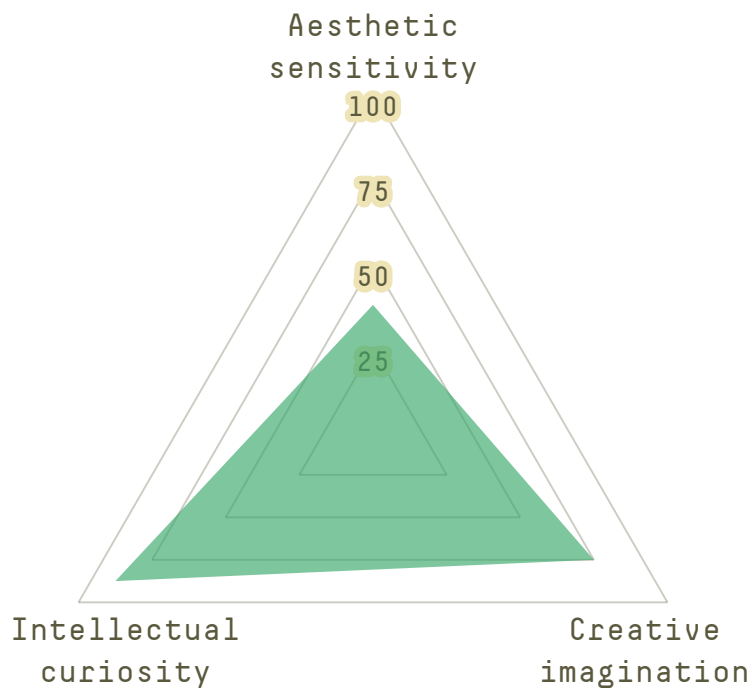
Extraversion

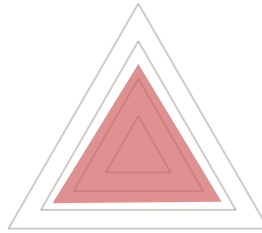
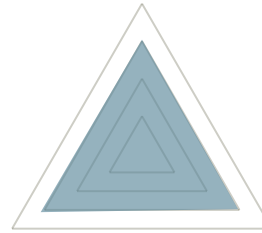
29 out of 100

But wait — there's more! Each of the Big Five traits has something different to tell you about your life, and all five break down into subtraits. For example, someone can be highly extraverted because they're really social or because they're super assertive. We're going to show you those subtraits too. Although scientists generally agree on the Big Five traits, the specific subtraits are still being debated. We're using [the ones that have been identified by Christopher Soto](#), a professor of psychology at Colby College in Maine. Soto and his colleague Oliver John developed a major Big Five test, the BFI-2. (You can read more about it on [the website for Soto's lab](#).) We've used questions from that quiz with their permission and consulted with Soto in the development of our quiz. Read on to see what each trait reveals about who you really are.

High openness to experience: You've probably tried on several personal styles and hobbies during your life, and your curious brain is actively seeking new things to explore. Your identity may be flexible and open to change, but you're likely to find success in careers that value that — the arts, for instance. Don't trap yourself in a "Theater Kid" box, though. People with high openness also do well in careers that involve investigation and discovery. They might become scientists, lawyers or investigative journalists — basically weaponizing their intellectual curiosity and willingness to try new things and explore new ideas. Be aware, though, that dangerous drugs are among the things you're more likely to be willing to try. Substance use disorders are a serious risk.

Your openness to experience subtraits

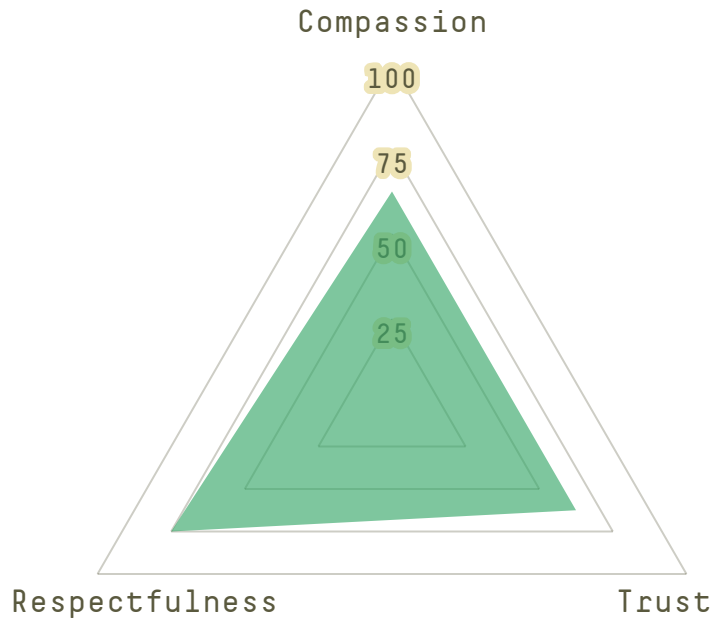


National
averageFiveThirtyEight
staffers

AGREEABLENESS

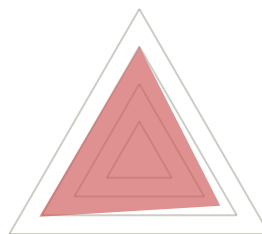
67 out of 100

High agreeableness: You may feel a deep identification with the possibly-too-trusting, unfailingly polite and relentlessly helpful [Ned Flanders](#). High agreeableness is associated with religiousness and with compassion. The highly agreeable aren't merely the people feeding the hungry and building community — they're often the ones leading the organizations that do those things. And the benefits of being agreeable start early. Highly agreeable kids are less likely to be bullied and are more likely to have strong relationships with peers. They do better in school. And some studies that have followed agreeable kids into adulthood found that their youthful good nature appears to be predictive of success in school, work and relationships. Things look pretty goodily-woodily for you, neighboreeno.



How you compare

National
average



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CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

63 out of 100

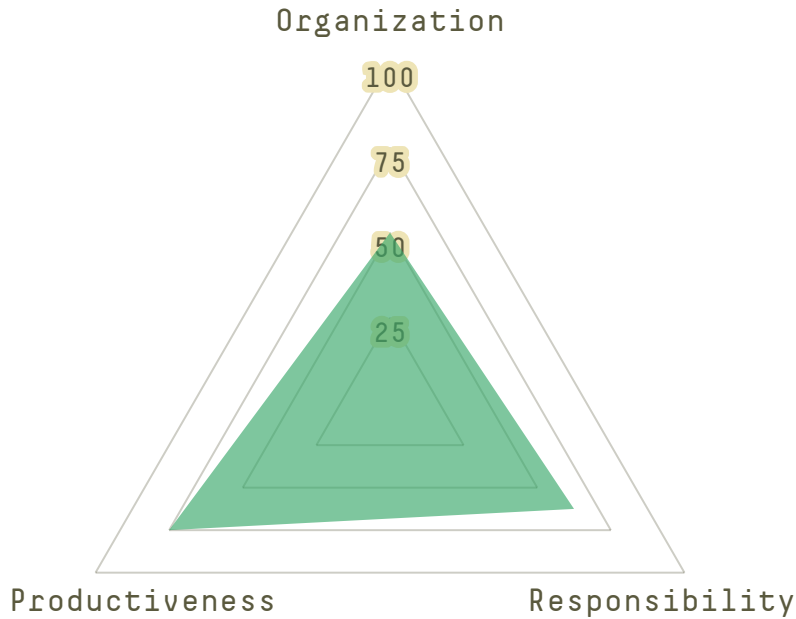
Moderate conscientiousness: The highly conscientious are detail-oriented goal-setters who dot their i's, cross their t's and keep detailed spreadsheets of all the times they did that. They tend to do well at work, be productive at home and lean toward being religious. People

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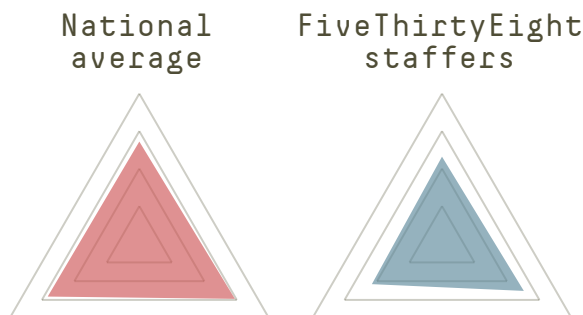


and tend to not finish the chores they said they'd get done. There are benefits and drawbacks to people on both ends of the spectrum, but if we had to choose a roommate, we'd pick you — someone in the middle.

Your conscientiousness subtraits

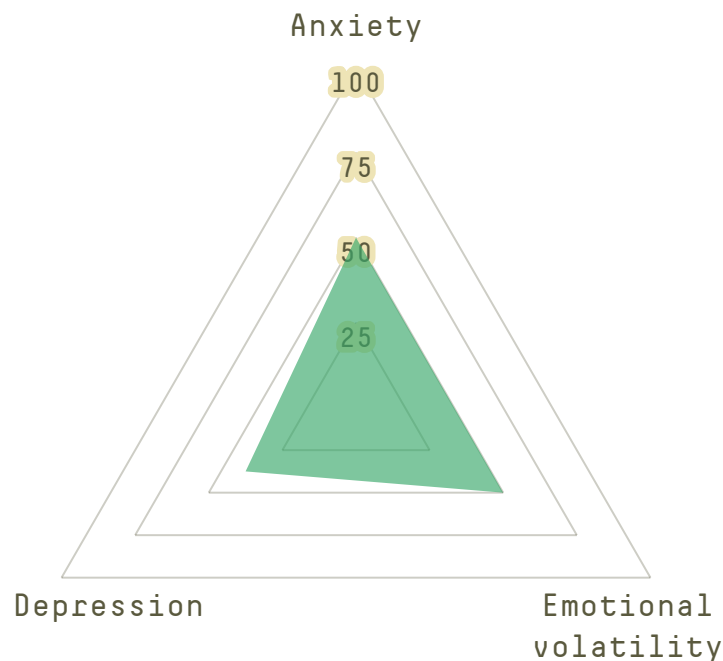


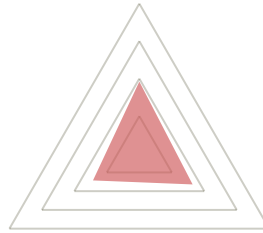
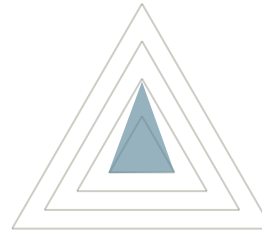
How you compare



Moderate negative emotionality: You don't exactly have a propensity toward sadness, anger and anxiety. But you also aren't exactly lacking those tendencies, either. All the Big Five traits operate on a spectrum — the people in the middle tend to experience a little of what both poles feel to the extreme. And that means you're also likely getting a taste of the outcomes correlated with both those poles, too. People who score high on negative emotionality have rocky relationships — maybe you've had one relationship that brought that side out more than others. The low negative emotionality folks will cheerfully work the same job for decades with no burnout — maybe you take a little longer to reach burnout stage (even if you eventually do). If you're reading this and thinking, "Hey, doesn't that just make me a normal human?" Well, statistically, yes, that would be how bell curves work, wouldn't it? Don't worry. There's probably another personality trait where you're more extreme.

Your negative emotionality subtraits

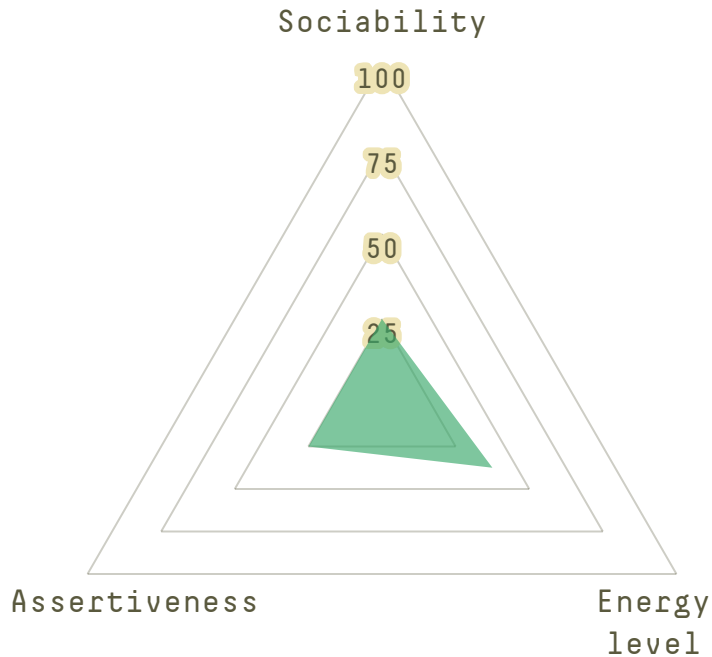


National
averageFiveThirtyEight
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EXTRAVERSION

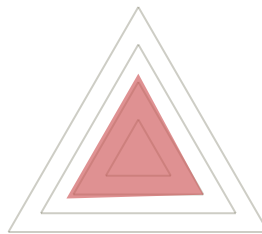
29 out of 100

Low extraversion: We live in a society that generally values and rewards extraversion, and that can make life tough for a more withdrawn person. Science tends to emphasize the downer aspects of your personality — you probably have difficulty making friends and finding people to date, for instance. You might also have a low opinion of your own looks. But being an introvert isn't all bad. Some scientists think low extraversion has protected humans from disease — [you can't pick up a bug from people if you avoid people](#). And [one study even found](#) a lower prevalence of extraversion in places where contagious diseases were historically common. One of the best bits of advice for the less extraverted is to find spaces where they get to live the way they want and where their personalities are valued. That's probably why being less extraverted is correlated with choosing, and excelling at, jobs that require working alone. And there is a higher prevalence of introverts [in the American West](#). Have you considered a career in ranching?

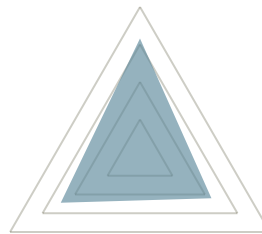


How you compare

National
average



FiveThirtyEight
staffers



SHARE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

No matter how extraverted you are, this quiz is more fun when you can compare yourself with people you know! To start sharing your results, create a group below.

My annoying co-workers

Create group

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Illustration by [Sonnie Kozlover](#)

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