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## Action Unit Combination – 15+23

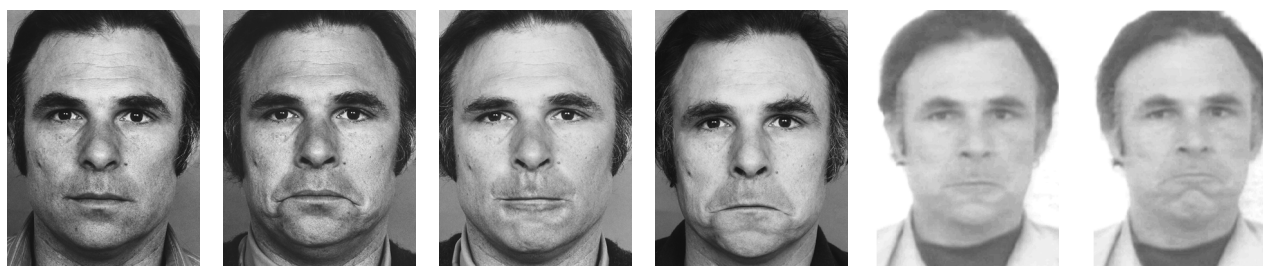
### A. Appearance Changes due to AU Combination 15+23

The combination of these two AUs tends to attenuate some of the signs associated with each alone.

1. Pulls the corners of the lips down.
2. Changes the shape of the lips such that they are angled down at the corners, but not as much as they can be in 15 alone, because the downward pull of 15 is counteracted by 23.
3. A strong 15 produces some pouching, bagging, or wrinkling of skin below the corners of the lips, but it may not be as much as in 15 alone, since it is counteracted by 23.
4. May flatten or cause bulges/wrinkles to appear on the chin boss. (This change is shared by 15 and 23.)
5. If the nasolabial furrow is permanently etched, it is pulled down or lengthened, and may appear less deep.
6. Tightens the lips, making the lips appear more narrow.
7. Causes the red part of the lips to roll inwards and almost disappear from view.
8. May produce small wrinkles in the skin above the lips and a muscle bulge below the lower lip, although the action of 15 makes these cues less evident.

Compare images 15ii and 23 with 15+23. Note how appearance change 8 is more evident in 23 than in 15+23. Inspect the video of 15+23. A video of 15+17+23 is also provided to study in conjunction with AU combination 17+23, previously discussed on [page 259](#), and the relation of these combinations to 15+23.

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0 <a href="#">page 465</a>	15ii <a href="#">page 476</a>	23 <a href="#">page 492</a>	15+23 <a href="#">page 496</a>	<a href="#">video 15+23</a>	<a href="#">video 15+17+23</a>
<a href="#">page 381</a> for score	<a href="#">page 391</a> for score	<a href="#">page 407</a> for score	<a href="#">page 411</a> for score	<a href="#">page 428</a> for score	<a href="#">page 427</a> for score

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### B. How to do AU Combination 15+23

Follow the instructions for making AU 15 and AU 23, repeated below. Pull the corners of your lips down (AU 15), then tighten your lips, narrowing them (AU 23). Be careful not to push up with your lower lip, that would be 15+17+23.

**AU 15** (repeated from [page 101](#)): Pull your lip corners downwards. Be careful not to raise your lower lip at the same time with AU 17. If you are unable to do AU 15, place your fingers above the lip corners and push downwards, noting the changes in appearance. Now, try to hold this appearance when you take your fingers away.

**AU 23** (repeated from [page 237](#)): This movement is not easy to make. Tighten your lips. Make them thin and tense. Be careful not to press them together (AU 24). Concentrate just on your lips. If you have difficulty, try tightening your lips and pressing them, then release the press holding the tightening action. You may have done or seen this movement when using the phrase “Zip your lip.”

### C. Intensity Scoring for AU Combination 15+23

The criteria for AU 15 alone and AU 23 alone are the same in combination 15+23 and are repeated below.

**AU 15A**

The appearance changes for AU 15 are sufficiently present to indicate AU 15, but are insufficient to score 15B (e.g., a *trace* of the lip corners moving down).

**AU 15B**

1. If the lip line is straight or *slightly* up in neutral the lip corners move *slightly* down.  
or
2. If lip line is *slightly* or barely down in neutral, then the lip corners move down *slightly* more than neutral and it is not due to 17 or 20.

**AU 15C**

The appearance changes 1 (lip corners pulled down), 2 (lip shape angled and stretched down), and 3 (bulging, wrinkling) in 15secA are all present and the downward movement of the lip corners is at least *marked*, but the evidence is less than the criteria for 15D.

**AU 15D**

The appearance changes 1 (lip corners pulled down), 2 (lip shape angled and stretched down), and 3 (bulging, wrinkling) in 15secA are all present and the downward movement of the lip corners is at least *severe*, but the evidence is less than the criteria for 15E.

**AU 15E**

The appearance changes 1 (lip corners pulled down), 2 (lip shape angled and stretched down), and 3 (bulging, wrinkling) in 15secA are all present and all at least *marked* and the downward movement of the lip corners is in the *extreme* to *maximum* range.

**AU 23A**

The appearance changes for AU 23 are sufficiently present to indicate AU 23, but are insufficient to score 23B (e.g., *slight* tightening of the lips alone).

**AU 23B**

1. The lips appear *slightly* tightened,  
and,
2. The red parts are narrowed *slightly* and the narrowing is not due just to 12, 17, 20, 24, or 28.

If you did not see the movement, then the additional criteria must be present:

3. *Slight* wrinkles or bulges in skin above or below at least one lip,  
or,
4. *Marked* change on either criteria 1 or 2 for 23B and *slight* change on the other.

**AU 23C**

The lip tightening and narrowing described for 23B are both *marked*, but the evidence is less than the criteria for 23D.

**AU 23D**

The lip tightening and narrowing described for 23B are both *severe*, but the evidence is less than the criteria for 23E.

## AU 23E

The lip tightening and narrowing described for 23B are both in the *maximum* range.

If the criteria for 23 are present on one lip, but totally absent on the other lip, score as T23 or B23. You can score 23 as occurring on only one side of the face, but you cannot score unilateral 23 on a single lip.