

# MYSTICISM TEST

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## Introduction to the Psychometric Classification System

The psychological instrument described here, which focuses on the classification of individuals based on expressive preferences, was initially proposed and developed by **Isabel Briggs Myers** (1897-1980), a prominent U.S. personologist, in collaboration with her mother, **Katharine Cook Briggs** (1875-1968). Their foundational work sought to render the complex psychological theories of Carl Jung accessible and practically applicable. This system posits that humans exhibit consistent, measurable preferences across several fundamental dimensions of psychological operation. The core methodology involves classifying individuals based on their expressed choices between contrasting alternatives in key categories of traits, thereby providing a structured framework for understanding individual differences in cognitive processing and behavioral orientation.

The development of this tool was driven by a practical need, particularly during the mid-20th century, to align individual strengths and preferences with appropriate vocational roles. Myers and Briggs believed that understanding one's inherent psychological type could lead to greater personal satisfaction, improved efficiency, and enhanced communication. The resultant system operates by identifying where an individual naturally focuses their energy, how they gather information, how they make decisions, and how they structure their external life. This preference-based model emphasizes that while all individuals utilize all psychological functions, they possess a natural, effortless inclination towards one side of a binary pair, which becomes the defining characteristic of their psychological type.

The structure of the classification relies on four distinct dichotomies, each representing a contrast between two opposing psychological approaches. These four categories are: **extraversion-introversion** (E-I), defining the source and direction of energy; **sensing-intuition** (S-N), defining the preferred method of information gathering; **thinking-feeling** (T-F), defining the preferred method of decision-making; and **judging-perceiving** (J-P), defining the preferred lifestyle orientation. By determining the individual's preference on each axis, the instrument synthesizes a unique four-letter code, which represents one of 16 distinct personality types, offering a highly detailed, if sometimes reductionist, picture of the individual's psychological architecture.

## The Historical Foundation and Development

The intellectual roots of this classification instrument trace directly back to the seminal work of Swiss psychiatrist **Carl Gustav Jung**, specifically his 1921 publication, *Psychological Types*. Katharine Cook Briggs, deeply impressed by Jung's theories regarding the structure of consciousness, began observing and documenting the personality differences in her own family and social circle. Her early research laid the groundwork for simplifying Jung's complex theoretical constructs into observable, measurable categories. It was Isabel Briggs Myers, however, who took

the decisive step of transforming these theoretical concepts into a standardized questionnaire, driven by the desire to make these insights practically useful for career guidance and self-development.

The formal creation process began in the 1940s. Myers meticulously crafted the initial items, refining them through iterative testing and empirical observation. A key contribution made by Myers and Briggs was the introduction of the **Judging-Perceiving dichotomy**, which is not explicitly defined in Jung's original framework. Jung described the orientation of the functions (Sensing, Intuition, Thinking, Feeling) and the attitudes (Extraversion, Introversion), but the J-P axis was added to describe the external manifestation of an individual's dominant function--whether they use a judging function (T or F) or a perceiving function (S or N) when interacting with the outside world. This addition provided the necessary structure to distinguish the 16 types and made the instrument highly practical for describing observable behavior.

The instrument gradually gained recognition, moving from an internally developed tool to a widely distributed commercial and educational assessment. Its adoption was bolstered by collaborations with educational and research institutions, ensuring a degree of standardization and formalized administration. The historical trajectory demonstrates a consistent effort to translate abstract psychological theory into an accessible, user-friendly system, focusing specifically on identifying innate, lifelong preferences rather than learned skills or momentary states. This emphasis on fundamental psychological preferences cemented its role as a pervasive tool in non-clinical settings globally.

## Extraversion and Introversion: The Direction of Energy

The first and perhaps most recognized dichotomy, **Extraversion (E) versus Introversion (I)**, defines the attitude or direction in which an individual primarily invests and derives their psychic energy. This dimension is crucial because it dictates the primary orientation of the individual's attention. Individuals preferring **Extraversion** are energized by the external world of people, actions, and events. They typically process thoughts externally, often needing to speak or interact to clarify their ideas. They are characterized by a breadth of activity and engagement, drawing stimulation and vitality from the environment and focusing their energies outward toward tangible results and social connection.

In contrast, individuals preferring **Introversion** focus their energy inward, drawing vitality from their internal world of thoughts, reflections, and ideas. Introverts require solitude and quiet time to recharge and consolidate their thoughts, preferring depth over breadth in their experiences and relationships. Their thinking process is typically internal and reflective before external articulation. It is vital to distinguish this psychological definition from common societal connotations of being shy or reserved; the E-I axis measures the source of energy and the primary direction of mental focus,

not necessarily social skill or reclusiveness. Both orientations are recognized as healthy and necessary for comprehensive psychological functioning.

The E-I preference acts as the foundational attitude that modifies the expression of the other three functions. For example, an Extravert will typically use their dominant function in the outer world, making that preference highly visible and readily observable. Conversely, an Introvert will use their dominant function internally, making their core psychological strength less immediately apparent to outsiders, while presenting their auxiliary function to the external environment. This interplay between attitude and function hierarchy is what generates the complexity and descriptive power of the 16-type system.

### **Sensing and Intuition: The Perception of Information**

The second dichotomy, **Sensing (S) versus Intuition (N)**, describes the preferred method by which an individual gathers information, or the manner in which they perceive the world. This function determines what kind of data is deemed relevant and trustworthy. Individuals with a preference for **Sensing** rely heavily on immediate, concrete information gathered directly through the five senses. They focus on facts, details, and verifiable data, preferring practical applications and being grounded in the present reality. Sensing types are pragmatic, methodical, and trust experience and established procedures. Their attention is acutely tuned to the specifics of a situation, ensuring a realistic and detail-oriented approach to tasks.

Conversely, those with a preference for **Intuition** focus on the abstract, the theoretical, and the potential implications of information. Intuitive types look beyond the immediate facts to discern underlying patterns, connections, and possibilities. They are comfortable with complexity and ambiguity, often relying on hunches or insights to form conclusions. Their attention is directed toward the future and conceptual innovation, sometimes prioritizing the "big picture" over meticulous detail. This preference dictates a tendency toward abstract thought, theoretical frameworks, and seeking novelty and change rather than maintaining the status quo.

This perception axis is crucial for understanding how an individual learns, solves problems, and approaches novelty. A robust Sensing preference ensures that necessary resources and details are accounted for, providing stability and reliability. An equally robust Intuitive preference drives creativity, strategic thinking, and the ability to foresee long-term consequences. The forced-choice format of the instrument aims to isolate the inherent, automatic preference--the default cognitive filter that an individual utilizes when first encountering new data or forming initial impressions about the world.

### **Thinking and Feeling: The Mechanism of Judgment**

The third dichotomy, **Thinking (T) versus Feeling (F)**, defines the preferred method an individual

uses to make decisions, or their primary judging mechanism. This axis focuses on the criteria used to evaluate options and reach conclusions. Individuals preferring **Thinking** approach decisions through objective logic and impersonal analysis. They prioritize consistency, truth, and fairness, striving to apply universal principles without being swayed by personal sentiments or extenuating circumstances. Thinking types often use a detached, cause-and-effect approach, analyzing the pros and cons to arrive at the most rational conclusion. They value clarity and intellectual rigor, sometimes at the expense of interpersonal harmony.

In contrast, individuals preferring **Feeling** base their decisions on subjective values, focusing on the impact the decision will have on people and the maintenance of harmony. They prioritize empathy, compassion, and alignment with their personal or group value system. Feeling types seek consensus and strive to understand the unique perspectives of all parties involved before judging, often prioritizing relationships over strict adherence to impersonal logic. Their decision-making process is highly personalized, guided by an internal moral or ethical compass that values human connection and relational well-being above objective efficiency.

It is a critical misunderstanding to equate the Thinking preference with intelligence or the Feeling preference with irrationality; both are valid and necessary modes of judgment. The preference simply highlights the mechanism used most frequently and comfortably under pressure. For instance, in a corporate environment, T-preferences often excel in areas requiring critical analysis, system design, and objective performance evaluation, while F-preferences are typically strong in motivation, team leadership, and handling sensitive human resource issues. The assessment seeks to identify which of these two core judging functions is the individual's natural psychological default.

## Judging and Perceiving: The External Lifestyle Orientation

The final dichotomy, **Judging (J) versus Perceiving (P)**, describes the individual's orientation toward their outer life, specifically concerning structure, organization, and closure. This dimension reflects how a person manages their time, deals with deadlines, and approaches the necessity of making decisions. Individuals with a **Judging** preference prefer to live in a decisive, planned, and orderly manner. They gain satisfaction from completing tasks, establishing schedules, and reducing ambiguity. Judging types prefer closure and organization, often setting goals and adhering strictly to established plans. They appear decisive and systematic, preferring to manage their environment rather than simply react to it, thereby minimizing unexpected changes and ensuring predictability in their daily routine.

Conversely, individuals with a **Perceiving** preference prefer flexibility, spontaneity, and adaptability. They enjoy keeping their options open, often delaying final decisions to ensure they have access to the latest information or to allow for unexpected opportunities. Perceiving types are

comfortable with ambiguity and improvisation, preferring to experience and understand life rather than tightly control it. They view deadlines and schedules as flexible guides, often thriving in dynamic environments that require immediate responsiveness. Their external life tends to be more fluid and less structured than that of their Judging counterparts.

The J-P dichotomy is crucial because it indicates which of the individual's internal functions (Perceiving: S or N; or Judging: T or F) is primarily oriented toward the outside world. This distinction resolves the complex dynamics of the 16 types. For an Extravert, the J or P letter indicates the attitude of their dominant function (e.g., an ESTJ is a dominant Extraverted Thinker, a judging function). For an Introvert, the J or P letter indicates the attitude of their auxiliary function, as their dominant function is always introverted and thus hidden (e.g., an ISTJ is a dominant Introverted Sensor, a perceiving function, but presents their auxiliary Thinking function--a judging function--externally, hence the 'J').

## Applications in Organizational and Personal Development

The resulting four-letter type framework provides a powerful heuristic for applications across numerous non-clinical fields. The primary utility lies in **personal development and self-awareness**, offering individuals a common language to articulate their internal processes and understand their natural strengths and vulnerabilities. Recognizing one's type can alleviate pressure to conform to unnatural behavioral patterns and encourage reliance on innate psychological preferences.

In **organizational psychology and corporate training**, the system is widely employed for team building and leadership development. Understanding the type diversity within a team allows managers to optimize task distribution, ensuring that strategic planning (often preferred by N-types) is balanced with execution and attention to detail (often preferred by S-types). Furthermore, it aids in conflict resolution by reframing disagreements as inevitable differences in preference--such as a Thinking type prioritizing objective policy versus a Feeling type prioritizing relational impact--rather than personal antagonism, thereby fostering empathy and mutual respect among colleagues.

The tool's descriptive power also extends to **educational and vocational guidance**. By aligning an individual's cognitive preferences with the demands of a profession, the system aims to predict areas of highest potential job satisfaction. For example, roles requiring meticulous data analysis and structured environments may suit SJ (Sensing-Judging) types, while roles requiring visionary leadership and complexity management may be better suited to NT (Intuitive-Thinking) types. This extensive application across human capital management highlights its enduring utility as a practical, descriptive tool.

## Academic Critique and Psychometric Limitations

Despite its vast popularity and commercial success, the psychological classification system described faces substantial and persistent academic critique regarding its fundamental scientific validity and psychometric properties. A core objection centers on the reliance on **dichotomies** (binary categories) rather than the statistically more robust model of continuous trait distribution. Empirical research consistently shows that personality traits generally follow a normal bell-curve distribution, meaning most people fall near the midpoint, not clustered at the extremes. By forcing individuals into one of two categories, the instrument often sacrifices measurement accuracy for simplicity of classification.

This forced categorization leads to significant issues with **test-retest reliability**. Individuals scoring close to the dividing line on any dichotomy may shift to the opposite category upon retesting, even with minor changes in mood or circumstance, thereby receiving an entirely different four-letter type. This phenomenon undermines the claim that the instrument reliably measures stable, lifelong preferences. Furthermore, independent academic studies have struggled to demonstrate strong **construct validity**, finding that the instrument's 16 types do not consistently predict vocational success or behavioral outcomes any better than simpler, empirically validated models, such as the widely accepted Five-Factor Model (Big Five) of personality.

Critics also point out that the instrument's functional model--the complex hierarchy of dominant, auxiliary, tertiary, and inferior functions--lacks consistent statistical support. They argue that the test primarily measures four independent scales, and the resulting 16 types are descriptive constructs rather than reflections of a verifiable, integrated psychological system. Consequently, while the tool is generally accepted as a valuable instrument for promoting self-reflection and communication in corporate settings, mainstream personality psychology largely regards it as a helpful heuristic or introductory framework rather than a definitive, scientifically validated measure of personality structure.