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# It's in HIS KISS

A man's mouth action tells you more than he'll ever realise

**W**hether it's a peck on the cheek or a knee-trembling snog, to celebrate Valentine's Day we reveal the important role kissing plays in human behaviour, courtship and the state of your relationship.

## The chemical KISS

A simple act it may be, but the kiss is one of the most intense gestures of intimacy there is (which is why prostitutes won't do it and you never see it in pornography). Lip skin is super-thin and is all that stands between millions of nerve endings that are similar to those in the clitoris. A passionate embrace sends neural messages to the brain that instruct the sex organs to fire up and the body to release chemicals such as heart-quickeners adrenaline and mood-boosting serotonin and dopamine to make

you feel bold, sexy and excited.

Saliva also contains libido-boosting testosterone, and research has found that men love wet, sloppy kissing because they can effectively ply you with more of this get-you-in-the-mood juice.

"A good kiss can be better than bad sex," says kissing expert Andréa Demirjian, author of *Kissing*. And women clearly agree. In a survey for the book, 63% said they would – if forced to choose – give up sex before smooching.

And this is why kissing is a fantastic potential partner test (and way easier than asking your date to fill in an 'Are you rubbish in bed and unreliable?' questionnaire).

## Suss his STYLE

"Kissing is essentially information gathering," says Lana Citron, author of *The Compendium Of Kisses*. "Every kiss contains

chemical information that conveys subconsciously, via saliva and pheromones, ones suitability as a mate." According to one theory, kissing as we know it evolved from the not-particularly-romantic practice of cavemen tasting the saliva of a potential mate to check out her fertility. "Women are particularly attuned to this cocktail," adds Lana. "So 'feeling' a kiss is more important to them than men, who assume it's a precursor to sex. In fact, 46% of men always expect kissing to end up in bed." Who knew?

Apparently it's our genetic coding that determines who we share kiss compatibility

with. "It all comes down to the innate need to produce healthy offspring," explains Lana. And the sign of a successful match? "That amazing, electrifying full-body zing!"

But does a so-so snog mean a relationship is doomed to failure? "No," assures Lana, "But it can delay things getting off the ground. If a kiss doesn't 'feel' right, it may indicate the relationship isn't right, but if you feel drawn to that person, don't write him off. You can't fake the chemistry, but you can cultivate it. Throughout life, body chemistry changes and so if a relationship is strong, lots of kissing and growing together can create kiss compatibility." In other words, practice makes perfect.

Technique is also very revealing. "Kisses expose the hidden," explains Andréa. "A guy who seems macho might kiss tenderly, suggesting underlying shyness. Kissing is also an effective barometer for long-term relationships – it's so intimate, you can pick up on problems via shifts in attention or enthusiasm." That said, kissing can also be the perfect remedy for a tired relationship. "A truly loving kiss fixes bonds and is a beautiful bandage when a relationship starts to show cracks," says Lana. "You have to keep kissing as fresh as sex: an unexpected peck on the forehead, eye contact, a flirty one on the inner wrist at the bus

stop... Research shows that couples who kiss more stay together longer."

### Tweak your TECHNIQUE

If you're unlucky enough to have a great man whose kiss resembles a mouthful of mashed potato, here's how to let him know gently. "Never reinstruct mid-kiss," warns

Andréa. "Say you've been thinking about kissing him all day and want to try something new. There's always a driver in kissing; this sets you up as the driver and gets him excited.

When he hits the jackpot, reinforce his success by stroking and rubbing his face and body."

So how can you *really* know if you're a good kisser. Andréa says the recipient will grasp you tightly and pull you towards him. Watch out for deep sighs and remember that any kiss that leaves you feeling empowered will have been amazing for him too – it means you've let go.

And finally, ever wondered why we tend to close our eyes when we kiss? "Because removing one sense heightens the others – in this case, touch," says Andréa. "Closed eyes also signify trust. Going in 'blind' means you're physically and emotionally surrendering. Having said that, kissing you with eyes open doesn't mean he isn't into you – it can mean real passion. Try eye gazing as you kiss deeply. Phew!"

ON AVERAGE, WOMEN  
KISS 79 PEOPLE  
BEFORE THEY  
MARRY

## MY BEST (AND WORST) KISS EVER...



"The best was on the roof of this guy's house one night. The wind tossed our hair as the city glittered around us. It was exciting and beautiful! The worst was drunk in my kitchen. He kissed like a washing machine that stank of fags, squashing me against a broken cabinet." **HANNAH, 22, STUDENT, LONDON**



"The best was my first kiss with my girlfriend. I felt vulnerable and excited. Then she lifted our shirts and touched our bare tummies together – amazing! The worst had a moustache and I could feel it scratching my top lip, but it would have been rude to stop..." **CLIVE, 29, DRIVING INSTRUCTOR, NEWPORT**



"The best was on a bridge in Prague on Valentine's Day. We were huddled together in the cold – totally Hollywood! The worst was with this Turkish waiter who wrote me a song about how he missed his dead mother and how much he loved me. I snogged him so he'd leave my apartment!" **KATHY, 25, BANKER, NORWICH**

## THE PERFECT KISS

How you use your tongue depends on the situation, says Andréa. "If he's driving the kiss, respond to his tongue action. If it's you, tease him by flicking the tip of your tongue between his lips and licking his bottom lip." Here are five more of her tips for a pukka pucker-up:

### 1 Brush, floss and moisturise

"Nothing kills a kiss like a mouth from a

dentist's nightmare. Always prep, always smile before kissing... and bin the lipstick – men hate sticky lips."

### 2 Prep your head space

"Blank out everything else and think 'sexy' before you begin. You'll both feel it!"

### 3 Physically shut the world out

"Kissing is enhanced by small, intimate spaces – so get a corner table, shelter under an umbrella or simply wrap your arms around each other."

### 4 Less is more. At first

"Stroke him near the lips and neck, and brush his hair out of his face. Men love having the back of their neck stroked too. Start your kisses with your mouth closed and move gently around his eyes, chin or neck."

### 5 Skin to skin

"As the passion builds, touch a bare part of your skin to his. Kiss with enthusiasm but kiss with respect. Remember, the tongue is a strong muscle – keep it in check!"

## YOUR KISSING MANUAL

Andréa gives us four killer techniques

### THE COCKTAIL

"Take a sip of champagne or a liqueur (ideally something fizzy or creamy) leaving a little bit on your lips. Gently kiss him so he gets a tiny taste and sensation of the drink. Now, gently run your tongue over his lips from bottom to top to middle before going in for a deeper, open-mouthed kiss. By throwing in taste, texture and smell, it's a unique way to emphasise kissing sensations."

### THE TWILIGHT

"When French kissing, gently but firmly bite your partner's tongue. While it's between your teeth, start lightly sucking – it'll drive him wild!"

### THE ANGEL KISS

"Gently and ever-so lightly kiss him on the outside eye corners, slowly moving to his eyelids. This feels so sweet, intimate and comforting."

### THE RAIN KISS

"Grab your lover in the street when it's pouring down and kiss him through the rain running over his mouth. Suck at the drops and lick them from his jawline and eyelashes. When both your mouths are really wet, go in for the big open-mouthed snog! The water has the same effect as lubricant during sex – ramping up sensations and making everything slippery and super-sensual. And it works just as well in the shower."