

KEIRSEY'S DESCRIPTIONS OF TEMPERAMENTS

Directions: Read the descriptions of the four temperaments below. Choose the one temperament that best describes you. Circle it. Then highlight all the words in the circled temperament that describe you personally. For more detailed information about your personality type, visit: www.keirsey.com

DESCRIPTION OF THE ARTISAN TEMPERAMENT

Artisans tend to be fun-loving, optimistic, realistic, and focused on the here and now. Artisans pride themselves on being unconventional, bold, and spontaneous. Artisans make playful mates, creative parents, and troubleshooting leaders. Artisans are excitable, trust their impulses, want to make a splash, seek stimulation, prize freedom, and dream of mastering action skills.

Artisans are the temperament with a natural ability to excel in any of the arts, not only the fine arts such as painting and sculpting, or the performing arts such as music, theater, and dance, but also the athletic, military, political, mechanical, and industrial arts, as well as the "art of the deal" in business.

Artisans are most at home in the real world of solid objects that can be made and manipulated, and of real-life events that can be experienced in the here and now. Artisans have exceptionally keen senses, and love working with their hands. They seem right at home with tools, instruments, and vehicles of all kinds, and their actions are usually aimed at getting them where they want to go, and as quickly as possible. Thus Artisans will strike off boldly down roads that others might consider risky or impossible, doing whatever it takes, rules or no rules, to accomplish their goals. This devil-may-care attitude also gives the Artisans a winning way with people, and they are often irresistibly charming with family, friends, and co-workers.

Artisans want to be where the action is; they seek out adventure and show a constant hunger for pleasure and stimulation. They believe that variety is the spice of life, and that doing things that aren't fun or exciting is a waste of time. Artisans are impulsive, adaptable, competitive, and believe the next throw of the dice will be the lucky one. They can also be generous to a fault, always ready to share with their friends from the bounty of life. Above all, Artisans need to be free to do what they wish, when they wish. They resist being tied or bound or confined or obligated; they would rather not wait, or save, or store, or live for tomorrow. In the Artisan view, today must be enjoyed, for tomorrow never comes.

There are many Artisans, perhaps 30 to 35 percent of the population, which is good, because they create much of the beauty, grace, fun, and excitement the rest of us enjoy in life.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GUARDIAN TEMPERAMENT

Guardians pride themselves on being dependable, helpful, and hard-working. Guardians make loyal mates, responsible parents, and stabilizing leaders. Guardians tend to be dutiful, cautious, humble, and focused on credentials and traditions.

Guardians are concerned citizens who trust authority, join groups, seek security, prize gratitude, and dream of meting out justice.

Guardians are the cornerstone of society, for they are the temperament given to serving and preserving our most important social institutions. Guardians have natural talent in managing goods and services--from supervision to maintenance and supply -- and they use all their skills to keep things running smoothly in their families, communities, schools, churches, hospitals, and businesses.

Guardians can have a lot of fun with their friends, but they are quite serious about their duties and responsibilities. Guardians take pride in being dependable and trustworthy; if there's a job to be done, they can be counted on to put their shoulder to the wheel. Guardians also believe in law and order, and sometimes worry that respect for authority, even a fundamental sense of right and wrong, is being lost. Perhaps this is why Guardians honor customs and traditions so strongly -- they are familiar patterns that help bring stability to our modern, fast-paced world.

Practical and down-to-earth, Guardians believe in following the rules and cooperating with others. They are not very comfortable winging it or blazing new trails; working steadily within the system is the Guardian way, for in the long run loyalty, discipline, and teamwork get the job done right. Guardians are meticulous about schedules and have a sharp eye for proper procedures. They are cautious about change, even though they know that change can be healthy for an institution. Better to go slowly, they say, and look before you leap.

Guardians make up as much as 40 to 45 percent of the population, and a good thing, because they usually end up doing all the indispensable but thankless jobs the rest of us take for granted.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IDEALIST TEMPERAMENT

Idealists are enthusiastic, they trust their intuition, yearn for romance, seek their true self, prize meaningful relationships, and dream of attaining wisdom. Idealists pride themselves on being loving, kindhearted, and authentic. Idealists tend to be giving, trusting, spiritual, and they are focused on personal journeys and human potentials. Idealists make intense mates, nurturing parents, and inspirational leaders.

Idealists, as a temperament, are passionately concerned with personal growth and development. Idealists strive to discover who they are and how they can become their best possible self -- always this quest for self-knowledge and self-improvement drives their imagination. And they want to help others make the journey. Idealists are naturally drawn to working with people, and whether in education or counseling, in social services or personnel work, in journalism or the ministry, they are gifted at helping others find their way in life, often inspiring them to grow as individuals and to fulfill their potentials.

Idealists are sure that friendly cooperation is the best way for people to achieve their goals. Conflict and confrontation upset them because they seem to put up angry barriers between people. Idealists dream of creating harmonious, even caring personal relations, and they have a unique talent for helping people get along with each other and work together for the good of all. Such interpersonal harmony might be a romantic ideal, but then Idealists are incurable romantics who prefer to focus on what might be, rather than what is. The real, practical world is only a starting place for Idealists; they believe that life is filled with possibilities waiting to be realized, rich with meanings calling out to be understood. This idea of a mystical or spiritual dimension to life, the "not visible" or the "not yet" that can only be known through intuition or by a leap of faith, is far more important to Idealists than the world of material things.

Highly ethical in their actions, Idealists hold themselves to a strict standard of personal integrity. They must be true to themselves and to others, and they can be quite hard on themselves when they are dishonest, or when they are false or insincere. More often, however, Idealists are the very soul of kindness. Particularly in their personal relationships, Idealists are without question filled with love and good will. They believe in giving of themselves to help others; they cherish a few warm, sensitive friendships; they strive for a special rapport with their children; and in marriage they wish to find a "soulmate," someone with whom they can bond emotionally and spiritually, sharing their deepest feelings and their complex inner worlds.

Idealists are relatively rare, making up no more than 15 to 20 percent of the population. But their ability to inspire people with their enthusiasm and their idealism has given them influence far beyond their numbers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RATIONALS TEMPERAMENT

Rationals tend to be pragmatic, skeptical, self-contained, and focused on problem-solving and systems analysis. Rationals pride themselves on being ingenious, independent, and strong willed. Rationals make reasonable mates, individualizing parents, and strategic leaders. Rationals are even-tempered, they trust logic, yearn for achievement, seek knowledge, prize technology, and dream of understanding how the world works.

Rationals are the problem solving temperament, particularly if the problem has to do with the many complex systems that make up the world around us. Rationals might tackle problems in organic systems such as plants and animals, or in mechanical systems such as railroads and computers, or in social systems such as families and companies and governments. But whatever systems fire their curiosity, Rationals will analyze them to understand how they work, so they can figure out how to make them work better.

In working with problems, Rationals try to find solutions that have application in the real world, but they are even more interested in the abstract concepts involved, the fundamental principles or natural laws that underlie the particular case. And they are completely pragmatic about their ways and means of achieving their ends. Rationals don't care about being politically correct. They are interested in the most efficient solutions possible, and will listen to anyone who has something useful to teach them, while disregarding any authority or customary procedure that wastes time and resources.

Rationals have an insatiable hunger to accomplish their goals and will work tirelessly on any project they have set their mind to. They are rigorously logical and fiercely independent in their thinking -- are indeed skeptical of all ideas, even their own -- and they believe they can overcome any obstacle with their will power. Often they are seen as cold and distant, but this is really the absorbed concentration they give to whatever problem they're working on. Whether designing a skyscraper or an experiment, developing a theory or a prototype technology, building an aircraft, a corporation, or a strategic alliance, Rationals value intelligence, in themselves and others, and they pride themselves on the ingenuity they bring to their problem solving.

Rationals are very scarce, comprising as little as 5 to 10 percent of the population. But because of their drive to unlock the secrets of nature, and to develop new technologies, they have done much to shape our world.