

Men's Health

WHAT HER SHOES SAY ABOUT HER

What You Can Tell about a Woman from Her Shoes

Want some insight about her personality? Look at her feet

BY SARAH JACOBSSON PUREWAL

Most guys don't even attempt to understand the profound relationship between a woman and her shoes. That's fair. But if you're looking for insights about her personality—whether she's extroverted or introverted, fiery or laid-back—her feet are exactly where you want to be glancing.

Skeptical? Science has our back: A 2012 study from the University of Kansas found that people are able to accurately judge 90 percent of a stranger's personality, including their emotional stability, simply by looking at their most-worn pair of shoes. For example, "agreeable" people tended to wear "practical, functional" shoes, while "aggressive" personalities had an affinity for ankle boots.

According to the study authors, shoes can—and do—carry individual difference information, because there's so much variety. "The way a woman dresses telegraphs many messages about her," says relationship expert April Masini, author of *Date Out of Your League*. "It's wise to check out her shoes for clues about who she is, and how she'll behave."

So let your eyes make a beeline for her kicks. Here are three things you can tell about a woman from her footwear.

Her confidence level

The style of her shoes can tell you whether she'll be confident-verging-on-cocky, or a little more down to earth. "Women in revealing, high-heeled sandals are more likely to be confident

naked than women in closed-toe heels,” Masini says. “You can tell a lot about how a woman grooms the rest of her body by how she takes care of her feet. If there’s a neat, sexy pedicure going on, expect neat and sexy grooming elsewhere. No pedicure? No grooming elsewhere.”

Meanwhile, wedges and low, wide heels—not flats—may indicate insecurity, according to psychiatrist Carole Lieberman, MD. “Women wearing wedges want to appear taller without the discomfort of high heels,” she says. “They may be a little more middle-of-the-road. Also, the wider and shorter the heels on a woman’s shoes, the more insecure she might be.”

Her personality type

Not surprisingly, women sporting brightly colored shoes tend to be more playful, bigger risk takers, and more extroverted, according to Lieberman. But if she’s wearing hot pink sandals or neon yellow pumps, you may be looking at a woman who’s just a little high maintenance. “Peacock tendencies mean she’ll be more challenging, and may even expect to be put on a pedestal,” says Masini. “If this is your thing—and for many guys, it is—go for it.”

If you’re looking for someone more laid-back, Lieberman suggests checking out women in flats or flat boots. “Ballerina flats mean she’s a woman who puts comfort above style,” Lieberman says. “She’s literally down to earth.” According to Lieberman, women wearing flip-flops—if they’re not at the beach—may be too laid-back. “She’s just grabbing something to put on her feet because she has to, and she could be pretty free-wheeling about other aspects of her life as well.”

Also, women in sneakers may not be as low maintenance and laid-back as you’d expect. “A woman in sneakers is on the go,” Lieberman says. “She may be getting ready to jog or play tennis, or just wearing them for the walk to work, but she’s ready for action.”

Her personal branding

Do her shoes look like they cost \$80 or \$800? If she’s wearing

designer pumps—and you can usually tell this by seeing if they stand out from the rest of the outfit, says celebrity stylist Christa Scherck—you're looking at a woman who invests in herself and values personal style and comfort. "If she's wearing an expensive pair of work shoes—closed-toe, conservative pumps—she probably values her work a lot," Scherck says. "If she's got on a pair of expensive riding boots, she's the kind of person who likes to splurge on luxuries."

"Expensiveness" also factored into the University of Kansas study. Researchers found that liberals tended to wear shabbier, cheaper shoes than conservatives. Bottom line: A woman who spends half a month's rent on a pair of shoes is likely to have a more demanding personality, but the good news is that she can probably afford all her luxuries on her own.

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