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What Your PDA-Style Says About Your Relationship

12 different gestures decoded by the experts



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By Natasha Burton

Every couple has its own ideas about how affectionate they should (or want) to be in public—from tame hand-holding to full-on making-out. Each gesture, according to relationship and sex experts, can signify important qualities about you and your main squeeze. Whether you and your significant other are avid PDA-ers or tend to be more conservative, you'll learn what your level of love can reveal about your relationship.

1. Linked Arms

Typically, this gesture involves the woman of a couple linking her arm into a man's and it signifies an "us against the world" mentality showing that the couple is a unit, says [marriage and family therapist Allen Wagner](#). Psychotherapist [Tina B. Tessina, Ph.D.](#), author of *Money, Sex and Kids: Stop Fighting about the Three Things That Can Ruin Your Marriage*, adds that linking arms indicates a "more traditional relationship and the inter-reliance of the couple on each other."



2. Arms Around Waists

Couples who sling their arms around each other's hips and waists are, "sensual people who probably also touch strangers on the arms when they speak for emphasis," says relationship expert [April Masini](#). However, this gesture can also be seen as territorial, she explains. "If your significant other is someone who slings his arm around your body, he's announcing to the world that you belong to him—and vice versa."

3. Holding Hands

While this gesture could seem juvenile, Wagner says, "holding hands can create a closeness in sharing the subjective experience of the moment with one another, and seeing beauty through one set of eyes." A couple that grips hands with purpose is incredibly connected while a weaker grip, says New York City-based matchmaker [Michelle Frankel](#), can mean a lack of passion and commitment in the relationship. "Someone in the relationship might not be emotionally involved, or maybe they just need a little more space," she says.

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