

- Thought and thinking

HUMANS // REALITY

People think in five ways

Not only do we see the world differently, we also think in fundamentally different ways. Researchers have identified a total of five types of thinking, each with their own characteristics.

KEN IKEDA MADSEN / SHUTTERSTOCK



VERBAL THINKING

THE BRAIN TALKS TO ITSELF

- **DESCRIPTION:** Many people think by using an inner voice verbally expressing their thoughts in their own tone of voice. This may be an ongoing dialogue in which the person expresses thoughts, questions, and answers, almost like having a conversation with themselves.
- **SCIENCE:** Studies have shown that the inner monologue activates language areas in the brain such as the Broca's and Wernicke's areas, which are involved in language processing and speech.
- **MEANING:** According to studies, people with a strong inner monologue have an easier time with language tasks such as reading and communicating clearly. They analyse problems by 'talking them through' with themselves.



VISUAL THINKING

THOUGHTS ARE SHOWN LIKE A FILM

- **DESCRIPTION:** Some people think primarily via internal images, which can be very detailed and vivid. This is particularly common for people with high spatial intelligence, such as artists and engineers.
- **SCIENCE:** Visual thinking activates visual brain areas, particularly the centre of vision in the occipital and parietal lobes, which helps us understand shapes, distances and relationships between objects in space.
- **MEANING:** Visual thinking allows you to plan and understand complex ideas in the shape of images or mental movies. It can be beneficial in connection with tasks that require creativity and visualisation, such as art, design, and architecture.



EMOTIONAL THINKING

MEMORIES ARE BASED ON EMOTIONS

- **DESCRIPTION:** Some people think in emotions and moods. They process information through emotional states and often remember events based on the emotions they experienced.
- **SCIENCE:** Emotional thinking activates limbic systems in the brain such as the amygdala and hippocampus that are involved in processing and remembering emotions.
- **MEANING:** Emotional thinkers are often empathetic, i.e. they understand other people's feelings and are good at building relationships. They often make decisions based on their gut instinct, which can be an advantage in personal relationships.



BODILY THINKING

THE BRAIN THINKS THROUGH THE BODY

- **DESCRIPTION:** Kinesthetic thinkers process information through physical sensations and motions. For instance, they imagine how it would feel in their hands when they pick up a piece of wood from the ground.
- **SCIENCE:** Bodily thinking activates motor areas of the brain such as the motor centre and cerebellum, as well as sensory areas that process touch and body position.
- **MEANING:** Kinesthetic thinkers are good at activities that require physical coordination and motion, such as sports, dancing, or crafts. They often learn best by completing tasks through hands-on or full body work.



UNSYMBOLISED THINKING

ABSTRACT THINKING SOLVES PROBLEMS

- **DESCRIPTION:** Unsymbolised thinking refers to thoughts that are not expressed in words, images or other symbols: a direct form of thought that you are aware of without seeing, hearing or feeling it in your mind.
- **SCIENCE:** The phenomenon involves complex mental processes that are not linked to specific sensory areas of the brain, suggesting that the brain processes the thoughts in a very abstract way.
- **MEANING:** People who think in an unsymbolised way often solve problems intuitively and without knowing how they arrived at the result. This way of thinking is suitable for solving complex and abstract problems or making quick decisions.