

Translate Emotions Into Written Body Language

Emotions	Possible Body Language
Anticipation	Rub hands together, lick lips, unable to sit still, grin
Awe	Slack-jawed, unable to move, fixed gaze
Amusement	Throw head back, slap thighs, clap hands, shake with laughter
Anger or Aggression	Shake fist, point finger, stab finger, slam fist on table, flushed face, throbbing veins in neck, jutting chin, clench fists, clench jaw, lower eyebrows, squint eyes, bare teeth, a wide stance
Annoyance	Press lips together, narrow eyes, roll eyes, exasperated sighs
Anxiety	Fidget, twist a ring, chew a pencil, bite lip, swallow constantly, quickened breathing, hold breath, darting eyes, sweat, clammy palms, high-pitched laughter, hunched posture, pace, stutter
Attentiveness	Furrowed brow, lean forward, sit up, take notes, mimic body language
Boredom	Yawn, avoid eye contact, tap feet, twirl a pen, doodle, fidget, slouch
Confidence	Clasp arms behind body, lift head, push chest out, stand tall, make firm and precise movements
Confusion	Tilt head, narrow eyes, furrowed brow, shrug
Contempt	Lift chin, purse lips, sneer, stretch or turn away, dismissive hand-waving
Cynical	Twist lips, half-smile, shake head, press lips with a slight frown, roll eyes
Deception	One-sided shoulder shrug, look down, scratch nose/ear/neck, feet kick out or shuffle involuntarily, sudden change in demeanor, hesitation in speech, shifty eye contact, long blinks, shrug, unwarranted smiles or laughter, shake head 'no' while saying 'yes', lick lips, cover/touch mouth
Defensive	Cross arms or legs, arms out with palms forward, hands up, place anything in front of body, hands in pockets
Desire	Flirtatious behavior, wink, look up through lashes, glance over the shoulder, make eye contact, touch hair or clothing, straighten spine, dilapidated pupils, arch, stretch

Emotions	Possible Body Language
Disbelief	Wide-eyed (shock), narrow-eyed (skeptical), twist mouth, crinkle nose, crease brow
Disgust	Crinkle nose, curled lip, flinch, turn away, cover nose, gag, squint eyes shut, protect body by turning shoulder (cold)
Displeasure	Fake smile, pout, frown, cross arms
Distress	Stroke/rub nape of neck, wide eyes, shallow rapid breathing, beat walls, huddle in a corner, clasp hands over head, rock, wring hands through hair, adjust cuffs, men hold hands together in front of crotch
Embarrassment	Blush, stammer, cover face with hands, bow head, trouble maintaining eye contact, look down and away, blink back tears
Fatigue	Rub eyes, stare into space, yawn and/or stretch, nod off and jerk awake, grit teeth, close eyes, move slowly, slouch
Grief	Curl into fetal position, face contorts, slump, cover face or head with hands or arms or pillow, stare, shake with sobs, tremble, turn away, difficulty swallowing
Happiness	Smile, laugh, hum a tune, crinkle eyes and nose, swing arms, spin loosely, dance, jump, hug, giggle
Honesty	Maintain eye contact, smile with eyes and mouth, look up, palms up, open arms
Impatience	Nod quickly, tap fingers, sigh, check the time, tap feet, increase pitch in voice, look away
Jealousy	Tight lips, sour expression, narrow eyes, crossed arms
Overwhelmed	Palms to forehead, splayed fingers cover eyes with one hand, eyes wide and staring into space, hands grip onto something
Passion or Eagerness	Lean forward, nod, wide eyes, steady eye contact and raised eyebrows, hand on heart, double-handed handshake, feet pointed inward
Playfulness	Wink, waggle eyebrows, nudge, smile, tickle
Pleasure	Tilt head back, part lips slightly, eyes wide or closed, languorous movements, stretch, arch neck or back, flush, quick breath and pulse

Emotions	Possible Body Language
Possessiveness	Handshake with arm clasp, place hands on or around someone's shoulders/neck/waist, place hands on wall near them, stand in personal space with body positioned toward person, run a knuckle down someone's cheek, stare others down if they get too close
Pride or Dominance	Chin up, chest out, shoulders back, hard handshake, lean back with hands behind head and feet up, unblinking focused eye contact, hands on hips, straddle chair
Reluctance	Cross arms, make fists, drag feet, pinch nose, put hands over ears
Sadness	Droopy body, bowed, wrap arms around self, hesitating movements, bottom lip jutting out, lip quivers, cry, sob, shake, drag feet
Secretiveness	Tight-lipped smile, hands in pockets, look away, cover face, look down
Shame	Slump shoulders, look down or away, bury face in hands, bow head, straight mouth
Shock	Hands over mouth, mouth open, gasp, freeze and stare with wide eyes and raised eyebrows, smack palm against forehead, step back
Shyness	Blush, avoid eye contact, keep distance from others, back away if others come too close, fold arms, bend head
Smugness	Slight close-lipped smile, one raised eyebrow, slightly tucked chin, enigmatic smile, raise eyebrows, steeple fingers
Suspicion	Narrow eyes, glance sideways, raise eyebrow, rub eyes, shake head, blow out cheeks, frown, tighten lips
Thoughtfulness	Steeple fingers, pinch nose, close eyes, tug ear, stroke a real or imaginary beard, furrow brow, narrow eyes, tilt head and press lips together, rest chin on hand, lean back and look up
Triumph	Clench hands above head, tilt head back and yell, pump fist in air, jump, roar, whoop

Source: Writer's Write