

your true colors

The secret behind the smooch

From a perfunctory peck to a passionate embrace, the way you and your man pucker up reveals a lot about your relationship. And it's not just the lip action that counts—how you hold onto your honey also tells a secret or two about your bond, says Atlanta-based body-language expert Patti Wood. Here, she analyzes a few star smooches to figure out the true feelings behind their camera kisses.

What do your kisses communicate?

To get a reading on your relationship, grab a photo of you and your man locking lips and match it to one of the kissing couples shown here.

health



Postpartum passion

Could it be that baby James has reignited the spark between **Sarah Jessica Parker** and **Matthew Broderick**? Their mouth-around-each-other lip lock and faces pressed together certainly say so. Another sign: Matthew's closed eyes, which say that even though he's in public, he's only focused on his sweetie(s). His right hand, which cradles Sarah's head, reinforces his feelings. And by extending her neck and chin toward him, Sarah shows she's also totally into the moment.

Swept-away swoon

"Transported" is the best way to describe **Sarah Michelle Gellar's** response to hubby **Freddie Prinze Jr.'s** kiss. How so? She arches her head so that she doesn't miss out on any of it, closes her eyes and falls into him trustingly with all her body weight. Notice, too, her relaxed arm and gentle grasp. And it's clear Freddie's just as smitten: His arms are wrapped low and tenderly around her so that he can press her whole body against his.



Relaxed romance

Phil Bronstein may not be as demonstrative as **Sharon Stone**, but he's just as into the kiss as she is, says Wood. His relaxed hand on the small of her back shows tenderness, and his chin and nose pressed into her face and closed eyes indicate passion. In true movie-star style, Sharon closes her eyes, arches her back and does a full-body press against him.





I'm-the-boss buss

From the way the usually boyish **Ben Affleck** leans in toward **Jennifer Lopez** and puffs up his shoulders (in that preening, prehistoric way a man does when he's ready for action), it looks like he's trying to assert his masculinity, says Wood. But it's difficult to see how J.Lo—usually the power player in the relationship—reacts to his bold moves. What's significant is what she doesn't do: wrap her arms around him or raise her shoulders toward her man.



Pushy power play

Public displays of affection aren't unusual for guys who are married to more famous dames. That's how they get to prove their dominance over a powerful woman, explains Wood. Want to spot the ownership in **Debra Messing's** man's body language? His lifted eyebrows and straight-on gaze at the camera say "Look at us." Meanwhile, his heart(!) is angled away from her. Debra's head, which is leaned away from him, her pursed lips and collapsed chest and shoulders show she's not thrilled. The reason? It deflects attention from her, says Wood.



Bubble-gum love

Hilary Swank and hubby **Chad Lowe's** mirrored body language—eyes closed, noses touching, lips similarly puckered, heads facing each other—says their love is mutual and equal. This may also explain why they feel relaxed and comfortable enough to act like little kids together in front of the camera: See the air in both their cheeks? It looks like they're about to blow it out into each other's faces before they burst out laughing.

4 wacky breath fresheners that really work

Chomp on seeds

"Chewing fresh coriander or cardamom seeds is an established method of preventing bad breath," says C. Norman Shealy, M.D., Ph.D., author of *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Healing Remedies* (Element Books Ltd., 2002). The seeds discourage halitosis by speeding digestion, he explains. Plus, cardamom's ability to stimulate your saliva production, especially when stress makes your mouth dry, helps keep odor-causing oral bacteria at bay.

Sip peppermint tea

"Peppermint is best known as a remedy for digestive problems, and whenever you sidestep indigestion, you naturally improve your breath," says Janet Zand, O.M.D., coauthor of *Smart Medicine for Healthier Living* (Avery Penguin Putnam, 1999). Plus, peppermint is mildly deodorizing and has antiseptic properties that kill bad-smelling bacteria in your mouth.

Turn to herbs

Try watercress, which is rich in chlorophyll, a natural breath deodorizer, recommends Dr. Shealy. Its high vitamin C content also aids tooth and gum health, another fresh-breath boon. Or if it's bad breath brought on by burping, go for rosemary leaves, he suggests. Their relaxing properties reduce stomach spasms.

Swish with clove water

Put two shakes of ground cloves in a half cup of water. Then swish in your mouth for 20 seconds, suggests Dr. Zand. The secret: Cloves have powerful antiseptic properties that cleanse the mouth, plus their sweet odor freshens breath.

Smudge-proof-your-lipstick trick

Here Shalini Strawn, makeup artist to stars like Cybill Shepherd, shares the secret to smudge-free smooching: Line your lips and then fill in the whole area with lip liner to create a primer that helps lipstick really stick. Apply lip color as usual and blot with a tissue. (Tip: Opt for matte or semimatte lipsticks over glossy or creamy ones—they last longer and are more smear resistant.) Next, use your concealer brush to line the outside of your lips with a drop of foundation: You'll create a seal around your lips that keeps color contained.

Photos, clockwise from left: Lawrence Schwartz/Splash News; OK! Syndication; Ramey Photo Agency; Lawrence Schwartz/Splash News; Lawrence Lucier/Getty Images; Steve Finn/Alpha/Globe Photos. Text: Nicola Nisberg.