

How honest are you really?

Being honest sounds simple, right? We can tell right from wrong. But do we always do what's right? If we find a lost thing, do we hand it in or not? Is leaving work 30 minutes early OK or is it stealing time? Our values and beliefs shape our understandings of truth and honesty. Have a go with these questions and see if there's a difference between your walk and your talk.



QUESTIONS

1 You see a wallet fall out of the pocket of a man walking in front of you on the street. What do you do?

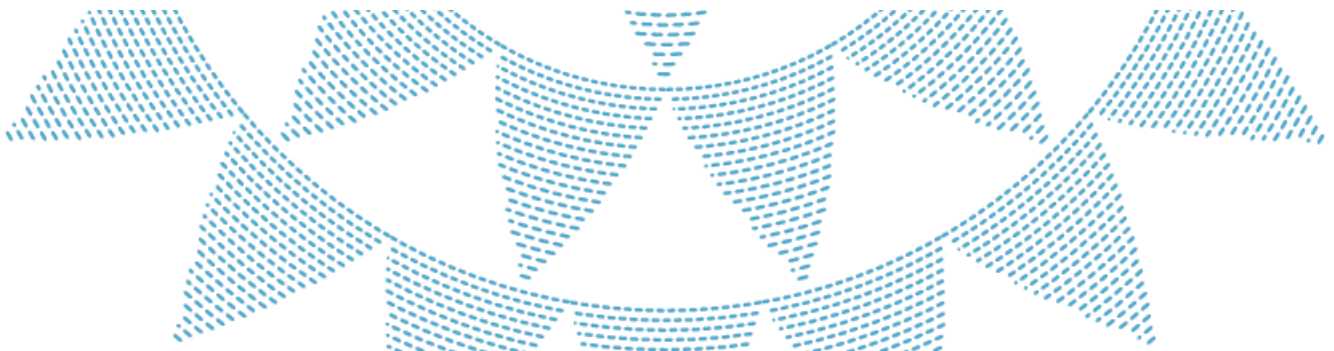
- a) Pick it up and give it back to him immediately.
- b) Depends on if the man looks rich or not. If yes, keep it. If not, give it back.
- c) Take it and decide what to do about it later.
- d) Pick it up, look through it, take out the cash, then dump it.

2 Your mate offers you the answers to a test you are going to sit the next day. What do you do?

- a) Say 'no thanks.'
- b) Depends on whether or not you need the answers.
- c) Take the answers, then decide later whether or not you'll use them.
- d) Take the answers and cheat on the test.

3 You've just bought some KFC. When you get your change, you see that the girl at the counter has given you an extra \$10 by accident. What do you do?

- a) Give it back straight away.
- b) Depends on how broke you are.
- c) Take it to the table and think about it.
- d) Take it. It's not stealing if she gives it to you.



4 Your car is broken into and your laptop stolen. When you claim insurance, the woman asks if there was anything else in the car. What do you say?

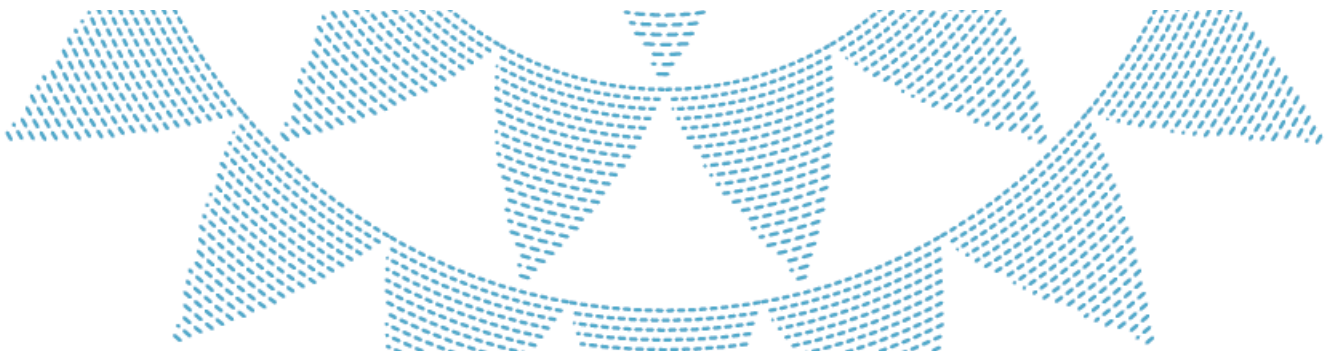
- a) Just the truth — no, there wasn't anything else.
- b) Tell her there were a couple other things, like a cell phone and clothes, in the car. Hey, the insurance company can afford it.
- c) Tell her you haven't had time to have a good look yet and will get back in touch once you have.
- d) Lie and claim your laptop was a much more expensive version.

5 You've arranged to spend the afternoon at the mall with your girl/boyfriend, but then your mate rings and says he and your other mates are planning a game of touch at 2pm. This is your favourite sport. What do you do?

- a) Thank him but say you've promised to go to the mall with your girl/boyfriend.
- b) Talk with your girl/boyfriend to see if they'd mind you changing plans.
- c) Put off contacting either your girl/boyfriend or your mate back so you don't have to upset anyone.
- d) Tell your girl/boyfriend that you've changed your mind about going to the mall with them and that you're going to play touch with your mates instead.

6 Your dad has left his wallet on the table, and you can see a stack of \$20 notes in it. You're about to go out for the afternoon with your mates, and you've only got \$15 in your wallet. What do you do?

- a) Leave it. You would never steal from your parents.
- b) Ask your dad if you can have some money.
- c) Take it but tell yourself you will return it next time you get paid.
- d) Take \$40. There's so much cash; he won't even notice it's gone.



7 You are playing cricket with your mates in the park. You hit a six over the fence, smashing a window of the neighbour's house. What do you do?

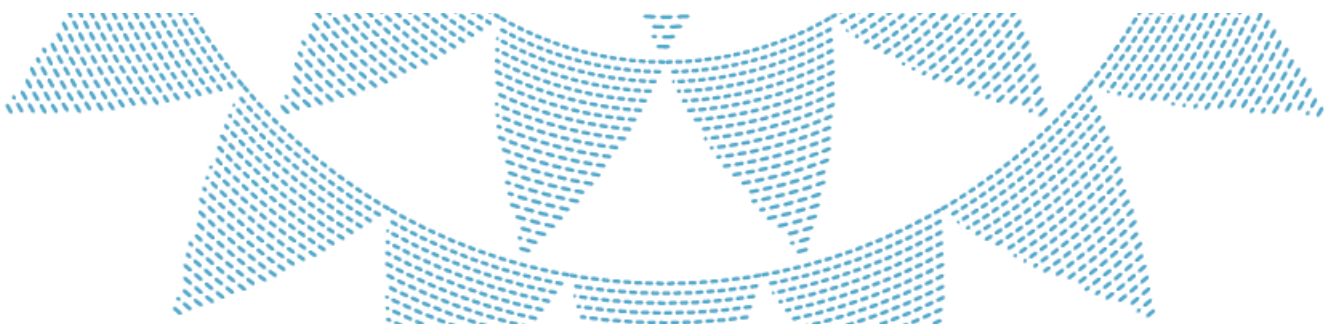
- a) Go straight over to the neighbour's house, own up, apologise and offer to pay to have the window fixed.
- b) Argue with your mates about whose fault it is and try to convince them that everyone should share the cost to get the window fixed.
- c) Go home and talk with your family about what to do.
- d) Run and hope no one noticed you playing there.

8 You are at the supermarket. You're hungry but you've only got \$5. You're tempted to shove six bread rolls into a bag then eat two of them as you walk around the shop, so you'll only have to pay for four. What do you do?

- a) Don't do it because it would be stealing.
- b) Tell yourself it's OK because they're overpriced anyway.
- c) Tell yourself that you'll tell the checkout operator how many you've eaten and pay for them when you get to the counter. You need time to think about what to say.
- d) Decide it's fine. The supermarket owners are super-rich and the rolls are only worth \$2.

9 You've promised yourself and your family that you'll stop smoking. You know it's bad for you, and you recently developed a disgusting cough. It's now Friday night, and you're chilling with a mate when they offer you a smoke. What do you do?

- a) Say no thanks, you've quit. Stick to your guns.
- b) Tell them you're trying to quit and hope they put them away.
- c) Take a few puffs of theirs. No one said you had to give up straight away.
- d) Take the smoke and decide to lie if your family asks about it.



10 You are working on a building site in the rain, and you're annoyed about being soaking wet. You consider taking two hours off for lunch instead of the one hour you're allowed, but there's a good chance someone would notice you've skived off for an extra hour. What do you do?

- a) Don't do it, because you'd be stealing time from the company.
- b) Do it, then tell your boss you'll make up the time at the end of the day.
- c) Do it, then make up an excuse for your boss, like you had a headache, to buy yourself some more time to figure things out.
- d) Do it, then lie and say you were on-site working the whole time.



RESULTS

Now take a few moments to look back over your answers. Do you notice any patterns in the way you responded to these questions?

If you mostly chose As

You are a very honest person with lots of integrity. Awesome!

If you mostly chose Bs

You know what the right thing to do is, but you don't always do it. You will find that when you live by your values, life becomes much easier.

If you mostly chose Cs

It seems you are taking time to consider what is the right thing to do. This is great. Sometimes, though, when you don't do the right thing the first time, it becomes very difficult to go back and put things right later on. So, you end up doing the wrong thing by default. It's a good idea not to procrastinate. Just do the right thing straight away.

If you mostly chose Ds

Being honest is an issue for you. It would be good to take some time to review whether this approach to your life is working well for you. Sometimes, being dishonest is a bad habit. You can find yourself lying even when you do not need to. There are many reasons why people choose to be dishonest. Sometimes it's because you don't believe life is fair, so you feel you don't have to play fair. It might be useful to check out the resources, and talk with someone you trust about how to be more honest with yourself and others.