



Science Fun!

Why Are You Right-Handed or Left-Handed?

Do you know that more than 90% of the world is right-handed? But, there are more left-handed peoples than ever before. One of the main reasons for this is that years ago, teachers forced left-handed kids to write with their right hand! They were told that was the correct way. Actually, being left-handed is perfectly alright and totally natural.

What makes a person left or right handed? Scientists are not sure and not all agree on the answer. They have noted however, that being left-handed runs in families. So the hypothesis or guess is that your genes or DNA influences whether or not you turn out to be left-handed or right-handed. Many scientists also believe that most people's brains develop more on one side than on the other. And since the left side of your brain controls the muscles on the right side of your body, and the right side of your brain controls the left side of your body, this could influence the muscles in your hands as well. If the left side of your brain is more developed, then you are right-handed. If the right side of your brain is more developed, then you are left-handed. If your brain is equally developed on both sides, you are ambidextrous which means you can use one hand as well as the other.

Sometimes getting hurt can also make a person left-handed or right-handed. If you injure your hand and can't use it anymore, you become the opposite of the injured hand.

The rumor is not true that left handed people are always artsy. Two famous artists, Rembrandt and Van Gogh are two good examples of that as they were right handed. Here's how that theory began. For both righties and lefties, the brain is divided right down the middle into two sides called hemispheres. One hemisphere is on the right side of your head, and the other is on the left. But here's the strange part: For complicated reasons, the right hemisphere controls movements on the left half of the body, which includes the left hand. The left hemisphere controls movements on



the right side.

Creative thought (writing a song, drawing a picture) happens mostly on the right side of the brain. So if you're left-handed, the theory goes that you're more likely to have a lot of creative thought going on. But thought processes in your brain are way too complex to be limited to just one hemisphere. The two sides of your brain work together when you think. So, just because you like using your left hand doesn't mean you only think with only one side of your brain.

In the past, most products on the market such as scissors, sports equipment and musical instruments were made for only right-handed people. Now most items are made both ways to accommodate everyone.

Left-handed people have the upper hand in sports? While left handed people have to face some obstacles, there is great advantage also on the playing field. In baseball or softball, a left-handed hitter starts out a few steps closer to first base than one who is right handed. The hitter has a better chance at making it to first base before getting tagged out. Batting left-handed also forces the pitcher to throw the ball differently than usual since most hitters are right-handed. Did you know that Babe Ruth, a famous baseball player was left-handed?