

# Nature & Nurture

Psychology

What twin and adoption studies actually show.

Behaviour genetics estimates the proportion of variation in a trait attributable to genetic differences within a population — not the proportion of any individual's trait that is genetic.

**HERITABILITY**  
population-level

**MOST TRAITS**  
~40–60%

**INTERACTION**  
constant

- Heritability is about variation in a population, not about an individual.
- Identical twins share ~100% of DNA; fraternal ~50%.
- Most psychological traits show moderate heritability, roughly 40–60%.
- Shared environment effects are often smaller than expected.
- Gene-environment correlation: genes influence the environments people select.
- Epigenetics: environment alters gene expression.

## LOOK FOR IT

High heritability of height does not mean nutrition is irrelevant — it means, in this population, variation is mostly genetic.

**Heritability is not fixed: it rises when environments are equalised, because environmental variation has been removed.**