

# [Ethnomethodology: length and age assignment](https://assignbuster.com/ethnomethodology-length-and-age-assignment/)

Ethnomethodology As an opening to this project, I have to mention how uneasy I was with having to invade my own personal space in order to complete this assignment. My stomach was actually turning flips just thinking about having to get too close to anybody, but I did manage to get close enough to complete the assignment. Ethnomethodology would be the only way to be able to do a study of personal space, because once you take someone out of their normal surroundings or situations, the rules change.

I chose to “ get close” to my mom (age 55), my sister (age 21), my niece (age 3), a co-worker (age 34), and a doctor (age 57) that I work for. With my mom, I got to about 6 inches away from her before she started moving back and asking me what was wrong with me. I believe I was able to get closer to her than most, because she is my mother and it’s just natural for a mother to be ok with her children invading her personal space, no matter how old they may be. My sister, on the other hand, only let me get about a foot away from her before she started scooting away from me.

That surprised me, I guess I thought that because we were sisters that she wouldn’t be quite so squeamish. I decided to try this on my three year old niece to see if children would have a different reaction. I was able to get within a distance of about 4-5 inches, before she bent down to play with something. She was noticeably uncomfortable when I got right in her face, despite the fact that we have an extremely close relationship. It was even more interesting to try this out at work.

Although we stand touching each other, side by side, while reviewing charts or talking over a situation, the acceptable distance while standing face to face was about 2-3 feet. In general, I believe that the accepted distance to stand away from each other, when face to face, is about an arm’s length (2-3 feet), but it doesn’t seem to apply when you are standing/sitting side by side. However, though I was unable to try this experiment with a stranger, I do think that there would be an accepted distance even side by side when you’re next to someone you don’t know.

I think that gender, age, and relationship do play a big role when people judge their spatial needs. Children will let you a lot closer than adults, and family or close friends will let you closer than people you don’t know so well. In my opinion, although it’s not possible for me to test all of these, women will let other women close, men will let women closer, but women back away from men invading their personal space and for the most part, a man will try not to invade another man’s personal space.