

REISS PREMARITAL SEXUAL PERMISSIVENESS SCALE—SHORT FORM

The following four questions concern **YOUR** attitude regarding premarital sexual intercourse. First decide whether you agree or disagree with the view expressed. Then indicate the level of **YOUR** agreement or disagreement by circling the number of the response that best expresses **YOUR** view.

1. I believe that premarital sexual intercourse is acceptable if one is in a love relationship.

Strongly Agree = 1	Slightly Disagree = 4
Moderately Agree = 2	Moderately Disagree = 5
Slightly Agree = 3	Strongly Disagree = 6

2. I believe that premarital sexual intercourse is acceptable if one is in a relationship involving strong affection.

Strongly Agree = 1	Slightly Disagree = 4
Moderately Agree = 2	Moderately Disagree = 5
Slightly Agree = 3	Strongly Disagree = 6

3. I believe that premarital sexual intercourse is acceptable if one is in a relationship involving moderate amounts of affection.

Strongly Agree = 1	Slightly Disagree = 4
Moderately Agree = 2	Moderately Disagree = 5
Slightly Agree = 3	Strongly Disagree = 6

4. I believe that premarital sexual intercourse is acceptable even if one is in a relationship without much affection.

Strongly Agree = 1	Slightly Disagree = 4
Moderately Agree = 2	Moderately Disagree = 5
Slightly Agree = 3	Strongly Disagree = 6

The **easiest way to create a scale score** is by counting all three agree responses as “agree” and all three disagree responses as “disagree”. Then give one point for each question answered with an agree and zero for each question answered with a disagree. The total score for the four question scale would range from zero to four, with zero being the lowest on permissiveness and four being the highest. Of course, you may choose to use the full response to each question and figure a low to high score that way.

The questions do form a unidimensional, cumulative Guttman scale. The original scale included four questions on **kissing** and four questions on **petting** (sexual intimacy short of coitus other than kissing). If significant numbers of your respondents might fall into zero type on the above 4 item coital scale, then you could add these two additional scales. You would simply change “premarital sexual intercourse” to kissing and for the petting scale, change it to petting. You should define petting as I did here in order to be sure everyone knows what you are asking.

The original scales also sought to detect **double standard attitudes** wherein men would be given greater sexual acceptance than women. If you wish to detect double standard attitudes, then ask each question first by inserting in each question the word “for women” after the word “acceptable”, and then ask the same questions and insert “for men” after the word “acceptable.” Then you can compare the response to those two sets of questions for each respondent.

To see the original 12 item scale see: pp. 496-498 in: Clive Davis, et.al. (Eds.) **Handbook of Sexuality- Related Measures**. Sage Publications, 1998. The original 12 item scale was first used in 1959. The revised four item scale presented here was first published in 1989. The references in the **Handbook** will include articles on Guttman scales as used in the original Reiss national and regional surveys and also a dual culture survey validating the revised 4 item scale. You can consult these references for any further information.