

# Narcissist Checklist (Traits and Behaviors)

Checklist · 55 items · 12 sections

Narcissism exists on a spectrum, from healthy self-regard to Narcissistic Personality Disorder. The DSM-5 sets a high diagnostic bar: pervasive grandiosity, need for admiration, lack of empathy, beginning by early adulthood, and showing up across contexts. This checklist combines those clinical criteria with the behavioral patterns commonly described in narcissistic abuse: love bombing, devaluation, discard, Hoover. Use it to spot patterns in a relationship, family system, or workplace, not to diagnose another person. Only a qualified clinician can diagnose NPD.

Open the editable version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/narcissist-checklist>

## GRANDIOSITY

- Acts as if they are special, unique, or superior to everyone around them  
HIGH
- Exaggerates achievements, talents, or status with no real evidence  
HIGH
- Fantasizes about unlimited success, power, beauty, or ideal love
- Only associates with people they consider high status or impressive
- Believes the normal rules do not apply to them  
HIGH

## NEED FOR ADMIRATION

- Requires constant admiration, attention, or validation  
HIGH
- Fishing for compliments while pretending to refuse them
- Punishes you for not noticing or praising small accomplishments
- Conversations always return to them, regardless of starting topic  
HIGH

## LACK OF EMPATHY

- Cannot recognize or care about what you feel during a hard moment  
HIGH

- Sympathy disappears the moment your need inconveniences them

HIGH

- Mocks vulnerability in others as weakness

HIGH

- Cold, indifferent, or hostile when you are sick or grieving

HIGH

- Treats waitstaff, clerks, and strangers with contempt

## ENTITLEMENT

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- Expects favors, attention, or compliance as a matter of right

HIGH

- Rage or sulk when expectations are not met instantly

HIGH

- Splits chores, money, or planning unfairly in their favor and calls it normal

## EXPLOITATION

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- Uses people to get ahead, then drops them when they are no longer useful

HIGH

- Sees the relationship as transactional, even if they say they love you

HIGH

- Borrows money, time, or favors without intending to reciprocate

## ENVY AND ARROGANCE

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- Believes others are envious of them

- Tears down friends, colleagues, or family who succeed

HIGH

- Arrogant, haughty body language and tone

- Cannot tolerate someone else being the center of attention

HIGH

## ABUSE CYCLE

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- Love bombing at the start: intense praise, fast intimacy, future-faking

HIGH

- Says you are different from anyone they have ever met

HIGH

- Insists on rapid commitment: moving in, marriage, children, joint finances

HIGH

- Devaluation phase: small put-downs disguised as jokes or honesty  
HIGH
- Criticism of your appearance, family, work, friends grows over time  
HIGH
- Triangulation: bringing in a third person (ex, coworker, friend) to make you compete  
HIGH
- Gaslighting: denying what they said, claiming you misremember, calling you crazy  
HIGH
- Silent treatment as punishment, lasting hours, days, or weeks  
HIGH
- Discard: sudden coldness, ghosting, or open contempt  
HIGH
- Hoover: re-contacting weeks or months later with apologies that do not last  
HIGH
- Smear campaign: telling mutual contacts a story that paints you as unstable  
HIGH

## **PUBLIC VS PRIVATE**

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- Surface charm with strangers, very different at home  
HIGH

## **FAMILY SYSTEM**

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- Children walk on eggshells around mood, never bring friends home  
HIGH
- Roles assigned in the family: golden child, scapegoat, lost child
- Holidays, birthdays, and milestones somehow turn into a crisis about them

## **PATTERN ACROSS TIME**

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- Estranged from previous partners, friends, or family members with a one-sided story for each break  
HIGH
- Never accepts responsibility, always reframes it as your fault or someone else's  
HIGH
- Apologies are word-shaped but contain no behavior change  
HIGH
- Therapy attempts end quickly when the therapist names a pattern

## WARNING SIGNS

- Threats of self-harm or suicide used to control your decisions  
HIGH
- Financial control: hiding accounts, restricting access, running up your debt  
HIGH
- Physical intimidation: blocking doorways, throwing things, punching walls  
HIGH
- Sexual coercion, including pressure during conflict or as a make-up demand  
HIGH
- Stalking, monitoring devices, or tracking your location after a break  
HIGH

## NEXT STEPS

- If physical safety is at risk, contact a domestic violence hotline before discussing leaving  
HIGH
- US National DV Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)  
HIGH
- Document incidents privately with date, place, and exact words  
HIGH
- Work with a therapist familiar with personality disorders, not couples counseling alone  
HIGH
- Build a separate support network: friends, family, professionals, peer groups  
HIGH
- Read on grey-rocking, low-contact, and no-contact strategies before deciding
- Diagnosis is the clinician's job, your job is to decide what behavior you will accept  
HIGH