

# ISFP

(Introverted, Sensing, Feeling, Perceiving)

**It's the thought that counts**

## Career Satisfactions for ISFPs

### Doing work that:

- Is consistent with my strong, inner values, and is something I care deeply about and want to contribute my energy and talents to
- Is done with others in a supportive and affirming climate where I am a loyal and cooperative member of a team
- Requires attention to detail, where I work with real things that benefit other people and have practical applications
- Gives me freedom to work independently but nearby other compatible and courteous people, and where I don't feel restricted by excessive rules, structure, or inflexible operating procedures
- Lets me be adaptable yet committed; where I have a sense of purpose and am able to see and experience the actual results of my accomplishments
- Lets me use my sense of taste and aesthetics to enhance my physical work space, personalize it, and make others feel more comfortable
- Is done in a quietly cheerful and cooperative setting and where interpersonal conflicts are kept to a minimum
- Gives me an opportunity to experience inner growth and development within a context of work that I feel is important
- Lets me handle problems promptly and simply, offering practical help
- Does not require me to perform regular public speaking, lead a large group of people I don't know well, or give people negative feedback.

### Work-Related Strengths

- Welcomes change and adapts well to new situations
- Demonstrates sensitivity to people's needs and desires to help them in real ways
- Is Practical and has realistic perceptions
- Good common sense
- Warmth and generosity
- Is loyal to people and organizations you care deeply about
- Pays attention to important details, especially those that concern people
- Is thoughtful and has the ability to focus on current needs
- Willing to support organization's goals
- Has the ability to clearly assess current conditions and see what needs fixing
- Flexibility and willingness to take calculated risks and try new approaches

### Work-Related Weaknesses

- Tendency to accept things at face value and miss deeper implications
- Inability to see opportunities and options that don't exist at the moment
- Tendency to take criticism and negative feedback very personally
- Dislikes preparing in advance; may have trouble organizing time
- Trouble making decisions
- Dislikes excessive rules and overly structured bureaucracies
- Difficulty making logical decisions if they conflict with personal feelings
- Unwillingness to risk disharmony to fight for your idea or position
- Tendency to become overwhelmed by large or highly complicated tasks
- Resistance to setting long-term goals and difficulty meeting deadlines
- Difficulty disciplining direct-reports or criticizing others

# Popular Occupations for ISFPs

## Crafts/Artisan

- Fashion designer
- Carpenter
- Jeweler
- Gardener
- Tapestry worker
- Potter
- Painter
- Dancer
- Designer: interior/landscape
- Chef
- Artist
- Cartoonist and animator
- Sketch artist
- Tailor
- Musical instrument maker

## Science/Technical

- Surveyor
- Computer operator
- Forester
- Botanist
- Geologist
- Mechanic
- Marine biologist
- Zoologist
- Television camera operator
- Soil conservationist
- Archaeologist
- Systems analyst
- Aviation inspector
- Electrical home appliance repairer
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## Health Care

- Visiting nurse
- Physical therapist
- Massage therapist
- Radiology technologist
- Medical assistant
- Dental assistant/ hygienist
- Veterinary assistant
- Home health aide
- Primary care physician
- Dietitian/nutritionist
- Optician/optometrist
- Exercise physiologist
- Occupational therapist
- Art therapist
- Respiratory therapist
- Licensed practical nurse
- Surgical technologist
- Personal fitness trainer

- Surgeon
- Veterinarian
- Speech-language pathologist
- Pharmacist
- Emergency room physician
- Pediatrician
- Cardiology technologist
- Audiometrist
- Pharmaceutical researcher
- Registered nurse
- Physician's assistant
- Hospice worker/director
- Substance abuse counselor
- Pheresis technician
- Recreational therapist

## Business

- Bookkeeper
- Legal secretary
- Clerical supervisor
- Administrator
- Paralegal
- Insurance appraiser
- Insurance examiner

## Sales/Services

- Teacher: elementary (science/art)
- Police/corrections officer
- Crisis hotline operator
- Storekeeper
- Waiter/waitress
- Beautician
- Travel sales
- Preferred customer sales representative
- Merchandise planner
- Sports equipment sales
- Home health care sales
- Home health social worker
- Child welfare counselor
- Substance abuse counselor
- Social worker (elderly and child day care issues)
- Animal groomer/trainer
- Teacher's aide, paraprofessional
- Landscape architect
- Art and manual arts therapist
- Fish and game warden
- Insurance fraud investigator
- Locomotive engineer
- Florist
- Farmer
- Firefighter
- Genealogist
- Wilderness adventure leader

*This list is meant to give ideas you may not have considered, but is not a comprehensive listing of every career that you might enjoy or find success in.*

# Portrait of an ISFP

The ISFPs are inclined to the fine arts; so when an especially gifted composer, painter, or dancer shows up, he or she, more frequently than not, possesses the character of the ISFP. Beethoven, Toscanini, Rembrandt, and Nijinski, as shown by typo-historical research, were clear-cut ISFPs. But the ISFP temperament is very difficult to observe, even in the great artists, and so ISFP is probably the most misunderstood of all the types.

A major source of misunderstanding is the tendency of ISFPs not to express themselves directly, but through action. If they find a medium of expression, some art form, then the character is expressed in some degree via the medium. If not, it simply doesn't come out, and no one knows them; this social reticence making the character all but invisible. Of course, in those rare cases where remarkable skill is achieved, such as in the virtuoso, ISFPs become celebrities, but their nature is still far from visible. Harpo Marx, a brilliant comedic actor, may well be seen as prototype, in his simultaneous celebrity and mute invisibility.

Because the ISFP is always caught up, so to speak, in whatever actions are underway, rather than practicing toward some distant goal, there is no question of the ISFP noticing fatigue, pain, or danger. They are usually quite oblivious to these accompaniments of many of their favorite activities. It is not that ISFPs are inured to them as much as it is that, wholly engaged by an action, they simply do not notice them.

ISFPs live Epicurean lives in the here and now, and as gracefully as possible. They do not plan and prepare. Submergence in their artistry is not preparation for something later; rather they experience intensely, now. ISFPs do not wait, for to wait is to see their impulse wither and die; they want and value their impulses and see them as the center of their lives. Nor are ISFPs devoted or committed to artful play; rather they are caught, as by a magnet or a whirlwind. So then the long hours of "practice" the virtuoso "gives" to artistry is not practice at all and it is not given; it is doing and it is taken from the (willing) ISFP by the performance itself. The act is ISFP's master, not the reverse, so we must abandon any notion of ISFPs as careful and devoted planners and of dutiful preparation and rehearsal. They paint, or sing, or toot, or dance, or run, or skate, or pot, or whatever, simply because they must: the mountain is climbed because it is there.

ISFP has a special kind of intelligence, under the definition that intelligence means doing things well under varying circumstances. This particular category of intelligence might be called "artisan concretization". This artisan concretization somehow keeps the ISFP more closely in touch with the very real. While the ISTP is attuned to the tool, so to speak, the ISFP is attuned to color, line, texture, shading — touch, motion, seeing, and hearing in harmony. The senses of the ISFP seem more keenly tuned than those of others. Rembrandt could almost taste colors so great was his discrimination, Toscanini could hear a single false note in the most complex operatic-orchestral score, and Hemingway's words tasted and smelled and felt the waves.

The social side of the ISFP character must not be eclipsed by the more spectacular performances some of this group are capable of. The ISFP has to be the kindest of all the types with no near competitors. The kindness is unconditional. Here is sympathy, of which we are all capable, carried to its most extreme form. The ISFP is especially sensitive to the pain and suffering of others and, like St. Francis of Assisi, with sympathetic impulsivity gives freely to the sufferer.

The ISFP is usually not interested in developing facility in speaking, writing, or conversation. Speech, after all, is abstract, not concrete, ISFPs preferring to have their fingers on the pulse of life. That pulse must be felt — by touch, in the muscles, in the eyes, in the ears. This insistence on the senses being so closely attuned to reality

can, in some ISFPs, occasion a breach with language, and language becomes a barrier to smooth interpersonal relations. So ISFPs are sometimes seen by others as reserved and private, tending to give up rather easily in their attempts to express themselves verbally. But this reluctant speech is not so much a lack of ability as it is disinterest. Hemingway broke that barrier, a splendid instance of an ISFP entering into the world of words and making apparent inarticulateness into art, changing the face of 20th century literature.

The number of the great artisans who, upon investigation, were found clearly to have been ISFPs, is truly awesome. The dance seems almost the province of ISFP, and surely investigation will show many of the great athletes come from this group.

Of course, all ISFPs have not been and need not be artisans in the narrow sense of the word. Art, broadly conceived, is any action of the next move of which is a free variable, and it is art thus conceived that is the forte of ISFPs. Thus ISFPs have a lot of leeway in choice of occupation, especially if they don't drop out of school early (school offers little, that is, of interest to them or that challenges their special brand of intelligence). It is a sad day indeed when the ISFP chooses work wherein the operations are fixed by rule or necessity and not free. To be happy and productive the ISFP must choose variable actions and be rewarded for doing them.

Finally, in many ISFPs may be found an instinctive longing for the natural, the pastoral, the bucolic. They are quite at home in the wilds, and nature seems to welcome them. Some have a remarkable way with animals, even wild animals, almost as if there were a bond of mutual sympathy and trust. In some instances a similar bond may be seen between the ISFP and young children, instant and unstudied.

ISFPs may be seen as optimistic and cheerful; egalitarian, fraternal, and insubordinate; tending to ward off obligation, duty, confinement, and fetters; a lover of freedom, easily bored, wanting excitement, risk, chance, and tests of luck; uncomplicated in motivation, trusting, receptive, generous, and in every sense of the word a spender rather than a saver.

Using your strengths is easy.  
The secret to success for an ISFP is learning to:

***ASSERT YOURSELF, STEP BACK AND CONSIDER THE "BIG PICTURE", AND  
NOT TAKE THINGS TOO PERSONALLY***