

Are you one of THEM?

Read on to find out

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Imagine the situation. You're walking down the crowded high street and suddenly a complete stranger stops you and says, 'Hi! You were on the beach in the south of Spain six years ago. How are you doing? 'This stranger isn't necessarily mad. He or she might be a 'superrecogniser'. These people have the unusual ability to recognise people they have seen only once—a long time ago, maybe in a crowd.



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It doesn't matter what the person looks like now. People change, get different hairstyles, dye their hair or go grey. Wrinkles, new scars and tattoos give them new appearance, but the 'superrecognisers' can still recognise them.

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Although scientists have known for a long time that about 2% of people suffer from face-blindness, which means that they have huge problems recognising faces, they are only now realising that some people are the complete opposite. Tests have shown that a 'super-recogniser' can identify people that they only saw for a brief moment — and this is not an ability that we can acquire, it's something we are born with.

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The police are starting to use 'superrecognisers' to spot criminal faces in videos of crowds. They look for people with a specific build and facial features like beards and moustaches but they can even recognise quite nondescript people, with no distinguishing features at all. As well as surprising our holidaymaker in Spain six years later, this ability can be used for a very practical purpose indeed.

- A A great help
- B An inborn skill
- C A rare experience
- D Whatever the differences in appearances
- E Fear of upsetting criminals
- F A common skill