



What Ever Happened To People Moving Their Arms?

In the famous words of Elaine Benes, it's like they're "carrying invisible suitcases."

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Something very weird is going on. Everyone in Hollywood has stopped moving their arms. Have you noticed? I have. It started with the Kardashians, who are all just leaving them hanging at their sides like dried salamis. Any closer to the ground they're going to get road rash on their knuckles.

Go people watch for five minutes. Everyone moves their arms while walking, even if slightly. It helps with balance and it helps take all of the energy off the legs. In other words, it takes effort to not move your arms.

"Normal arm swing is energetically a much cheaper way to counteract the motion of the legs than using the muscles in the torso," Christopher Arellano, an National Institutes of Health postdoctoral fellow at Brown University, tells *The New York Times*.

According to human science, the natural movement of your arms helps to offset the force of your legs hitting the ground. It also keeps your torso and hips in line.

But in order to strike this latest Kim Kardashian pose, you need to stretch your shoulders waaaay far back, hold them there, then make your arms dead weight. I know, I tried it. I walked around New York City acting like my arms were useless to me, and then I honestly needed a 10-minute massage at a nail salon because I put a kink in my neck. I was also afraid my phone was going to get swiped from my back pocket the whole time. And where does your bag go? What if their assistants are standing the same way and can't hold their stuff? What if you want to gesticulate to make a point? What if you have an itch? Or God forbid, a booger?

In the world of two dead arms, there's no hugging, no twirling your fork to eat spaghetti, there's certainly no driving. The new Google self-driving cars are 100 percent for these people. They can just sit in the back with their arms dangling at their sides and slide side to side while the car does all the work.

If you want a glass of wine, good luck leaning over to suck out of a straw at the bar while your arms hang at your sides like a relaxed gorilla. Exercise? Forget it. You're stuck riding a Unicycle if you want to live like this. May as well buy pants without pockets, what's the use? Can't put anything in. Can't get anything out. Leave your door unlocked at home, who's going to insert the key? Have fun with the remote control. We won't even discuss the bathroom. Cartwheels? No go. Turning the page of a book? Use your tongue, I guess.



At least the Kardashians have other people to apply their makeup and style their hair, maybe that's all they need. They can pay to be spoon-fed too, if that's what it takes to leave your arms hanging like a pro.

Kim used to pose cute—she would smile, hand on hip, purse in hand, acting like a human lady who had full use of her extremities. But then Kanye came along and probably put a “dead arms” rule in place, because that's when this insanity started. Since marrying him, she's equated arm movement with bad for biz, because she hasn't touched her hip in public since they tied the knot.

People always want to look more photogenic in their Instagram and red carpet shots, understandably, but she's walking like this, too. She's walking like Molly Shannon in Seinfeld and no one is saying anything.

Stylist to the stars Phillip Bloch tells Personal Space he calls it “minimalist but ostentatious posing,” and that the other way of posing (hand on hip, smiling) was fun, cute, but sometimes cheesy. And Kim wants to be taken seriously, so now she's using her body language to tell us that.

“She looks afraid to move,” he laughs. “It's this incredibly strong desire to be perfect, I think it shows a lack of emotion. It shows a lack of anything, it is just very straight forward. I think there's a certain bluntness and austerity to it.”

Phillip also says that the hanging arms “really puts all focus on the strange curvature of her body” in the minimalist way Kanye likes.

“I think by just having your arms down like that it's robotic, it takes all humanness away, so you just see this doll-like body.”

But it takes so much effort.

In fact, one study found that not moving your arms took more concentration and effort than naturally swinging them or moving them around.

“Keeping the arms steady increased the effort of walking by 12 percent, the equivalent of walking 20 percent faster or carrying a 10 kilo backpack. When the arms were bound at the sides, not as much effort was needed, which suggests that holding the arms down requires more exertion than letting them swing,” it said.

And according to science, “the practice of arm swinging began as an evolutionary relic from the early human years of walking on all fours.”

“Swinging our arms is a part of the process of walking on two limbs. They discovered that walking while swinging your hands is the most economical form of motion,” says one report.

So Kim and company, if you ever decide moving your arms is “in” again, here are some tips.

But it seems the strange arm-hanging phenomenon is only catching on. Katy Perry's done moving hers too. “Monkey see, monkey do,” laughs Phillip.