

# The Scientific Reason Why You Look Different In Selfies Than IRL

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<https://www.refinery29.com/2018/03/192353/selfies-facial-distortion-study>

In a world where taking the perfect selfie can mean the difference between finding your soulmate or finding yourself the recipient of a left swipe (dark, and shallow, but true), we put a lot of effort into finding our angles, our good side, and our light.

But, as a team of scientists and surgeons set out to prove, our selfies are not always what they seem. According to new research published yesterday in the [JAMA Plastic Surgery](#) medical journal, "the short distance from the camera" when you take a selfie from an arm's length "causes a distortion of the face owing to projection," creating a kind of bizarro funhouse mirror effect that makes you look — well, not like *you*.

"For years, I've heard patients and family members say, 'Oh, look at my nose, it looks so big,' when they show me a selfie," facial plastic surgeon Boris Paskhover, MD, who co-authored the study, told [Live Science](#). "I was always telling my patients, that's not how you really look. I knew that selfies distort how your nose looks. And I wanted to prove it."

And prove it he did: Not only did Dr. Paskhover conclude that selfies taken just 12 inches from the face can make your nose look up to 30% wider, but he also discovered how long your arms would need to be to capture the most flattering version of yourself. That would be five feet. So we can all stop worrying about mastering the perfect selfie technique — that, or we can shift our plastic-surgery priorities from [nose jobs](#) to arm extensions. Stranger things have happened.