

## Slow mental decline begins in your 20s? New evidence suggests brains don't slow down until after 60

It is widely accepted as one of life's bleak but unavoidable facts: as we get older, our brains get slower. But now a [study, based on data from more than 1 million people](#), suggests that mental processing speed remains almost constant until the age of 60.

The analysis puts perceived reductions in speed down to people becoming more cautious as they get older. This could account for the large body of research that has concluded that mental processing speed peaks at about the age of 20 and undergoes a steady decline from that point onwards.

"Our finding is encouraging, as our results show that average levels in mental speed in contexts demanding fast and forced decisions do not decline until relatively late in the lifespan," said Dr Mischa von Krause, of Heidelberg University and first author of the work.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other 'disruptive' innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

"This joins a body of work suggesting that the way mental abilities change throughout life is complicated and we don't really know what's going on," [psychologist Joshua Hartshorne] said. "But whatever's going on, it's definitely not that we peak at 20 and go downhill from there."

**[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)**