



GOOD  
SEX IS..

for women who have  
sex with women

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# introduction



This booklet is an inclusive and positive guide about sex and relationships for young women.

Our identities, our bodies and how we choose to express ourselves should be celebrated and valued. This includes respecting all our trans, cis, non-binary and intersex partners. If you or your partner are trans, intersex or non-binary, you may also find it helpful to read our Good Sex Is...Guide for Trans People.

This guide is for all women who have sex with women, regardless of their sexual orientation. You might identify as bisexual, pansexual, lesbian, gay, queer, asexual, straight, or something else entirely. You don't have to pick a label if you don't want one.

There is no wrong sexual orientation and you deserve to be treated with respect no matter which gender(s) you find attractive. If you have questions or concerns about talking to your friends and family, LGBT Youth Scotland's 'Coming Out' guides can help: [lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://lgbtyouth.org.uk)

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# do i want to have sex?



Only you will know if you want to have sex – it's not something anyone can or should decide for you. You never have to have sex, even if you are in a relationship or you've had it before.

You might decide you want to have some kinds of sexual contact, like kissing or touching with your clothes on, but not others. You may want to consider things like:

- Does the idea of having sex sound like fun to me?
- Is my partner kind and respectful? Do they also want to have sex?
- Can my partner and I have an honest conversation about the things we do and don't want to try together?
- Do I have everything I need to keep myself safe?
- Do I know how to contact my local sexual health service or GP for information if I have more questions about safer sex or STIs?

If you decide to have sex, go slow and be prepared to stop if you or your partner change your minds or feel uncomfortable.



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**communication** ☆

Getting to know a new friend, date, or potential partner should be fun and exciting, though it's also normal to feel nervous or unsure. Take your time chatting and hanging out, learning about what you have in common. You should make sure your friends and partners treat you with the same kindness and respect as you offer them.

If you ever feel uncomfortable with someone, you always have the right to ask them to stop what they are doing or leave. Likewise, listen out for cues from your friends and partners. If you are doing something that is making them upset or uncomfortable, stop.



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**consent!**



What does it mean to give or get consent? It applies to more than just sex. Chances are you already know what it looks and feels like. Think about when you and your friends are arranging a night out. You share ideas for a bit, then get excited when you all agree on the best plans. When the night is over, you might talk about your favourite parts and make sure everyone goes home happy. When everyone agrees on a plan, it feels good before, during, and after.


This is how sexual consent should always feel. Good sex always starts with an enthusiastic yes! This is often shown through body language rather than said aloud.

Both partners have to freely agree to sex every time. If intoxicated through drink or drugs, people are unlikely to be able to freely agree to something on the same basis as if they were sober – this is called 'having capacity'. If you or your partner has any doubts then don't have sex.



Any sexual activity without consent is against the law. Even if you said you wanted to have sex in the past, you can decide not to at any point, including during sex.

Being in love or in a relationship with someone does not mean you have to have sex, even if you said you might want to. If you are unsure if your partner wants to do anything sexual with you, wait until you are absolutely sure before touching them. Stop if they ask you to or seem uncomfortable or seem like they're not enjoying it.



ARE YOU ENJOYING IT? ARE THEY ENJOYING IT? CHAT TO EACH OTHER!

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# alcohol and drugs

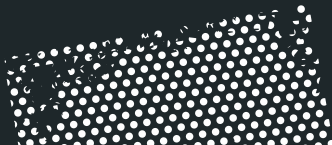


Being drunk or under the influence of drugs may make you feel more confident for a while, or make you feel more of a desire to have sex. If this is the case, you might be more likely to want to have riskier sex and less likely to use safer sex practices. This can increase your risk of STIs including HIV.

You may not be able to consent or recognise whether or not your partner is consenting.

Alcohol and drugs can also reduce our ability to feel physical pain, which can mean we don't notice warning signs of injury.

If you are using any type of drug, mention this at your sexual health check-up. They will help explain the risks that apply to you and how you can stay safe.





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# sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and check-ups

You can't tell by looking at someone if they have an STI, including HIV. It can feel awkward, but it's good to chat with your partner before having sex to make sure you've both been tested recently and to talk about what you want to use to stay safe.


The only way to protect yourself and your partner from STIs is to always use barriers such as condoms and dams. Adding water-based lubricant ('lube') to these will help keep them from breaking and may also make sex feel a lot better. Barriers and lube are available at no cost from your local sexual health services. They can also show you how to use them effectively.

You can visit your local sexual health services to ask questions even if you've never had sex. They've heard it all and are happy to help!

WHEN WAS  
YOUR LAST  
STI CHECK?

Once you become sexually active, visit your local sexual health service or GP to have an STI test. After that, regular check-ups can help keep you and your partners safe.

Don't be afraid if you think you have put yourself at risk of an STI: all are treatable. Treatments work better the earlier you start, so get checked as soon as you notice symptoms or have any concerns.



YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS A PRIORITY AT SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES. WE'RE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE!

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# contraception and safer sex tools

It is possible to become pregnant as soon as you have your first period (monthly bleeding from your vagina). If either you or your partner has a penis then you should always use a condom to prevent sperm from entering the vagina.

There are many forms of contraception available. Because some of these are also excellent barrier methods or can help you manage your period, you may want to use them even if you and your partner both have a vulva. Your local sexual health service can help you find the best contraception or barrier methods for you.

**CONTRACEPTION:**  
PILLS  
IMPLANT  
COIL/HORMONAL IUS  
COPPER COIL/IUD  
INJECTION  
PATCH

**BARRIER METHODS:**  
DAMS (thin sheets of latex,  
flavoured or unflavoured)  
CONDOMS  
INTERNAL ('female') CONDOMS

You can find more information at [www.sandyford.org](http://www.sandyford.org)  
and [www.healthyrespect.co.uk](http://www.healthyrespect.co.uk)

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# meeting new people



Social media and apps are popular tools for meeting new people for friends, dates or sex, but they are not without risk. You can never be entirely sure who you are meeting, so if you decide to meet up you should take steps to make sure you're safe:

- Make sure you have a way to get home quickly if you end up feeling unsafe. Charge your mobile phone, have the number of a taxi service or available friend, and carry enough money for taxi or bus fare.
- Ask for several photos/selfies before meeting and chat for a while. If their photos don't match their description or the chat makes you uncomfortable, don't meet them in person.
- Meet in a public place you know well. Make sure you are comfortable with each other before going anywhere private. If you aren't comfortable, leave.
- Tell someone you trust where you are going and who you plan to meet. You can also share your location on your phone with a friend.



- Chat about sexual health, including the last time you were both tested, before having sex. It's best to talk about this in person, but you can talk about it online first if that feels easier.
- Bring your preferred safer sex supplies, like dams, gloves and lube.

For more tips, check out Young Scot's guide to online dating: [youngscot.org](http://youngscot.org)



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# know your body



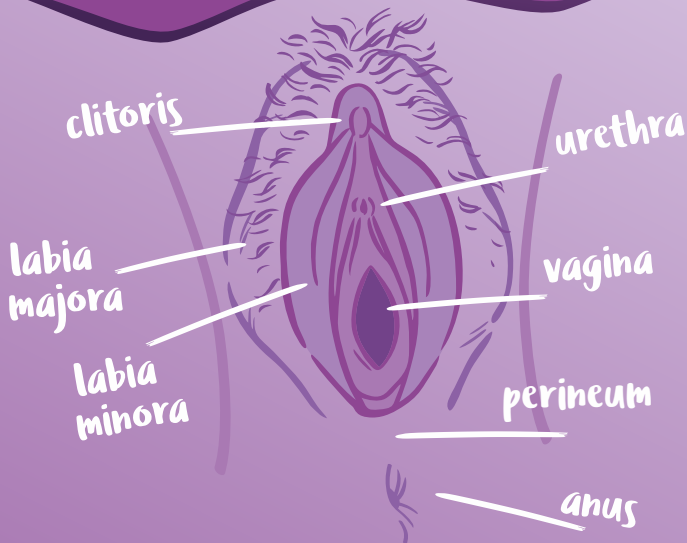
Sex is more fun when you know your body and what you like. It can be helpful to look at and touch your own body to better understand what feels good to you.

Everyone's breasts and nipples are a different in terms of size, shape, colour and sensitivity. It's good to know what's normal for you and what kind of touch feels good on your body. If you are concerned about any changes in your breasts, talk to your GP. It is also important that you attend your smear tests, when you are invited to do so.

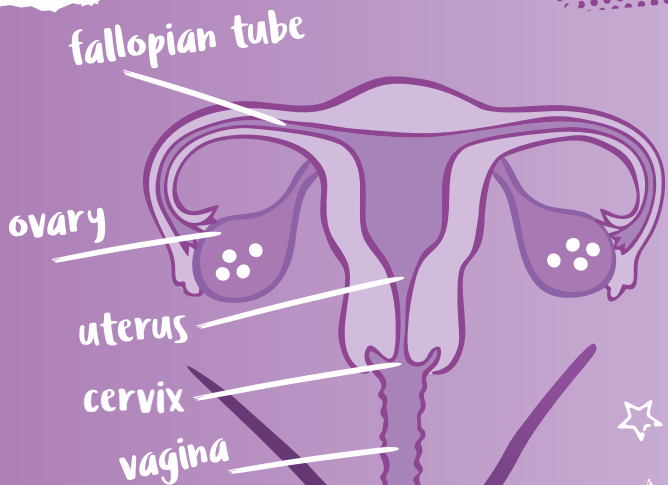
It's completely natural to have hair in the pubic area. Some people shave or remove some or all of this hair. It's your choice and your body.

You might find it interesting to have a closer look at your vulva with the help of a mirror. (The vulva is the whole of the female genital area that is on the outside. The internal part is the vagina. Some people call this a 'fanny', or you might have another name for it.)

The size and shape of the clitoris ('clit') and the inner and outer labia ('lips') varies a lot from person to person, which is as natural as variation in eye colour and height – everyone is different! Here is an example of a vulva:



The vagina is on the inside of the body,  
as shown here:



If you or your partner are trans, you may find it helpful  
to check out the *Good Sex Is...Guide for Trans People*  
for more information about different types of bodies.



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# touching, pleasure and orgasms



Sex is about enjoying your body alone or with someone else. There is no one right way to have sex and what you like may change over time – your imagination can play a big role in what you enjoy. You'll probably find that you like certain parts of your body to be touched more than others or in different ways.

Sex with a partner can involve any variety of activities that you both agree to do together. This can include touching yourselves (masturbation) while near each other or touching each other with your hands, mouth, or toys. Between consenting partners, there is no set/correct way to have sex and all forms of sex are valid.

LUBRICANTS (LUBE) MAKE  
BODY PARTS SLIPPERY, WHICH  
CAN PREVENT PAINFUL FRICTION  
AND TEARS IN SENSITIVE SKIN.  
WHEN IN DOUBT, USE PLENTY  
OF WATER-BASED LUBE!

WASHING YOUR  
HANDS BEFORE AND AFTER  
SEX IS ONE OF THE EASIEST  
WAYS YOU CAN KEEP YOU  
AND YOUR PARTNER  
HEALTHY.



You might be pleasantly surprised by the number of different places you can touch yourself or your partner that you both enjoy. Lips, ears, necks, breasts and tummies can all be quite sensitive in ways that feel pleasurable. Be sure to ask your partner what they like.

Sex can involve your genitals as well as your partner's. It's important to remember that genitals are very sensitive, so go slow and talk to each other to make sure you are touching each other in ways that feel good to both of you. You can always stop what you are doing if you or your partner don't like how something feels.

Sometimes people have orgasms during sex. Most people need to feel happy, relaxed and safe to have an orgasm. An orgasm is a feeling of intense sexual pleasure, sometimes called 'coming' or 'climaxing'.



HAVE CLEAN HANDS AND TRIM FINGERNAILS SO YOU DON'T ACCIDENTALLY CUT YOUR PARTNER'S SKIN. YOU CAN ALSO USE LATEX OR POLYURETHANE GLOVES.



Knowing how to touch yourself or your partner in ways you both like takes time and patience, and learning together should feel good! Ask questions and be honest with each other. The 'right' way to touch each other is the way that makes you both feel happy and safe.



DOES THIS FEEL GOOD?

HOW DO YOU LIKE TO BE TOUCHED?

THIS DOESN'T FEEL GOOD. LET'S STOP AND DO SOMETHING ELSE.

I PREFER BEING TOUCHED THIS WAY.



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## sex toys

Some people enjoy using sex toys, which are generally divided into three types: internal, external, or both. Adding water-based lube can make using any of them feel even better. (If you are using sex toys for anal sex, you should get special ones with a flared base so that they cannot get accidentally stuck inside the anus.)

Sex toys always need to be cleaned well between uses, usually with warm, soapy water. You should always use a fresh condom on the toy each time you use it with a new person. Clean toys will keep you and your partner safe from infections.

flared base



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## oral sex



Using your mouth on your partner's genitals is called oral sex. This should feel good for both the giver and the receiver, just like with any other kind of sex. You shouldn't be afraid to speak up if your partner is touching you in a way that doesn't feel good, even if you said before that you thought you might like it.

STIs can be transmitted through oral sex, so chat with your partner about your and their health status. Arrange a check-up with your local sexual health service or GP if you aren't sure.

You can use condoms or dams (thin sheets of latex, flavoured or unflavoured) to make oral sex much safer: hold one side against your partner's genitals and lick the other side. Only ever use one side of the dam (don't swap it over to use the reverse side).



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# anal sex and pleasure



Some people enjoy having their anus touched or penetrated by part of their partner's body (such as a tongue or a finger) or a sex toy. This should feel good for both the giver and the receiver, just like with any other kind of sex.

You should wash the area around your anus well before any sort of anal sex to reduce the amount of bacteria present. You do not need to eat a special diet or use enemas or laxatives before having anal sex.

If you are using your tongue to stimulate your partner anally (rimming), use a dam or cut condom to decrease the transfer of bacteria from anus to mouth. You should never go from rimming to oral sex as bacteria transferred from the anus can cause painful infections in the vagina and bladder.

The anus is a delicate area that does not self-lubricate and can tear easily. Always go slow, use plenty of lube, and stop if you or your partner are experiencing any pain or bleeding.

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# sex during your period



If you are both happy to have sex during your period, you should take care by using a dam or cut condom. Menstrual blood, like any other blood, can carry bacteria and viruses that may be harmful to you or your partner.

Remember that sex is about your whole body and that during your period you or your partner may want to be touched in different ways.





**Biological sex:** Refers to physical aspects of bodies, including the reproductive system as well as secondary sexual characteristics such as the development of breasts, growth of facial hair and variations in depth of voice.

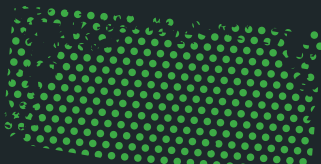
**Cis:** Someone who identifies with the gender they were assigned with at birth.

**Clitoris:** Small sensitive part of the vulva which is there just for the purpose of pleasure.

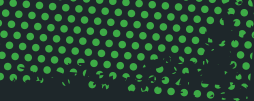
**Dam (sometimes called dental dam):** A thin square of latex used to prevent infection being passed on during oral sex. These come in a range of flavours.

**Gender identity:** A person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned to them at birth.

**HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus):** A virus that attacks the immune system and weakens the body's ability to fight off infections and disease.







**Intersex:** A person whose chromosomes, hormones, reproductive organs or genitalia vary in some way from what is considered male or female. Intersex is not the same as gender identity or sexual orientation.

**Lube (short for lubricant):** A substance used to lubricate (moisten) the vagina, penis, or anus. It helps to reduce friction during sex.

**Non-binary (also gender neutral):** An umbrella term for many other gender identities which are outside of the gender binary. People may identify as both male and female, neither or their gender may be more fluid.

**Sexual orientation:** Who you are romantically and/or physically and/or sexually attracted to. Terms such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, pansexual and asexual may be helpful in letting others know about your attraction. Our feelings and our attractions may change over time, as may the terms we use to describe ourselves.

**STI:** Sexually transmitted infection.

**Trans:** An umbrella term to include people who find their gender identity or gender expression is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.



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**contacts**

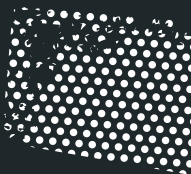


LGBT Youth Scotland plays a leading role in the provision of quality youth work to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people aged 13-25, that promotes health and wellbeing. Our teams across the country work face to face or online.  
[www.lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk)



Healthy Respect – Sexual Health and relationships information. Advice and support for young people in Lothian.  
Drop-in services information at  
[www.healthyrespect.co.uk](http://www.healthyrespect.co.uk)

Sandyford Clinic – Sexual Health service NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Our young people only clinics are drop in – you don't need to make an appointment. Locations and opening times of our clinics can be found at  
[www.sandyford.org](http://www.sandyford.org)





## SANDYFORD

caring about sexual, reproductive and emotional health



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