Love
Sex
Relationships

How can I tell someone I fancy them?

What is bisexual?

I've met someone in a chatroom and I think I'm in love!

Are we compatible?

HELP! The condom broke!...

... or, uh, maybe we forgot to use one.

Is it OK to say no?

How can I tell if I'm ready for sex?

Can I get contraceptive advice without anyone knowing?

How do I turn someone on?

Does having sex hurt?

Is it possible to survive rejection?

How do I tell the difference between love and a crush?
Your sexuality is part of your personality. It’s how you feel about yourself as a sexual being and how others see you. Your emotions, feelings, behaviour and culture all help to define your sexuality.

Like your body and your brain, your sexuality develops throughout your life. It may take time to find out who you are and what you want, but that’s all part of the process. Take your time. There’s no rush.
The sad truth about why you will never look like the idealised celebrities of your dreams is that they barely exist in the first place.

Take away the photo-manipulation, the retouching, the stylist, and the make-up, and what you’re left with is just another (ordinary) pretty face.

**MAGAZINE BABE**
- Three hours of hair and make-up in order to look fresh and natural
- Legs digitally elongated
- Five hours per day with personal trainer (@£50/hour)
- Cellulite retouched out
- Boob job (x4)
- Liposuction of arms, ankles and neck
- Bad mood from perpetual diet of grapefruit and wheatgrass
- Glow from being madly, desperately in love (with self)

**REAL YOU**
- Smart, funny
- Knobby knees
- Small tits
- Nice bum
- Bad hair month
- Spots
- Farts
- Fashion error
- Fantastic smile
- Great kisser

**HELP!** My girlfriend/boyfriend tells me I’m too fat!
Tell them they’re too critical and then tell them to push off. Once they’re gone, stick to people who don’t make you feel bad about yourself.

**EATING DISORDERS**
Sometimes people may have a false image of their body (a feeling that they are fat and need to lose weight, when this isn’t the case). Their feelings about food become mixed up with how they feel about themselves. An eating disorder often indicates other problems. Talk to your doctor or a group that can help (see p16).

“The degree of thinness exhibited by models chosen to promote products is both unachievable and biologically inappropriate”
British Medical Association report

**BODY IMAGE**

**REAL YOU**
- GSOH
- Shortest in class
- Lovely eyes
- Sticky-out ears
- Hates sport
- Great dress sense
- Nice to old ladies
- Tells you you’re gorgeous when you feel like a ratbag

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**MOVIE STUD**
- Back, crack and sack wax (forget what it costs, it hurts like “£??&**!!)
- Spots airbrushed out
- Five hours per day with personal trainer (@£50/hour)
- Calf implants
- Abdominal ‘etching’ (fake sixpack)
- Hair implants (do they get them from the crack?)
- But enough about ME, doll … does my crotch look big in this?

**BORING BUT TRUE**
The easiest way to stay in shape is to increase the amount of physical exercise you do (play a sport, walk to school or college, dance), and keep the quantity of fizzy drinks, sugar and junk food you have to a minimum.
OK, NO LABELS. BUT WHAT IS...?

**asexual** a person who doesn’t feel sexual attraction or respond sexually to others.

**bisexual, or bi** a person sexually attracted to both men and women (not necessarily at the same time).

**celibate** a person who chooses not to have sex.

**fetishist** a person turned on by a particular thought, activity or object, such as the feel or smell of leather.

**gender** being male or female. A person’s sex is determined by their chromosomes (tiny thread-like structures that carry genes. Genes determine what sex we are and what we look like). Gender is determined by their feelings and emotions, culture and society.

**heterosexual (straight)** a person mainly sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex.

**homosexual** a person sexually attracted to people of the same sex; gay usually describes men attracted to other men, and sometimes homosexual women as well; a **lesbian** is a woman attracted to other women.

**transgender** someone who sees themself as one gender but is seen by other people to be another; this includes transsexual people, but transgender people do not always have surgery to change their bodies.

**transsexual** a person who sees themself as (and usually wants to become) another sex; transsexual people can be straight or gay.

**transvestite** a person who likes to dress in clothing usually worn by the opposite sex.

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**Sexuality is a mix...**

**What mix are you?** A ‘girly girl’ who loves dressing in pink? A ‘man’s man’ who loves lifting heavy weights?

**In practice, most of the world falls somewhere between these two extremes.**

Some heterosexual men like dressing up in women’s clothing, while plenty of heterosexual women wouldn’t be caught dead in a dress.

**Is a tomboy a lesbian? Or a male nurse gay? What about a boy who loves to cook? Or a girl who loves football?**

**Stereotypes bring everyone down. It’s better to forget the labels and treat all people with respect.**

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**SEXUAL ORIENTATION** can take many forms — straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual. Even then, everyone’s different.

A lot of people are unsure what their sexual orientation is.

You don’t choose your sexual orientation — to be straight or gay, lesbian or bisexual — any more than you choose to be tall or small, black or white. It’s just the way you are.

Many parents and friends will support you, whatever your sexual orientation. If yours aren’t supportive, there are plenty of people you can turn to who are (see p16).

**Your sexuality may change throughout your life. Confusion and uncertainty may be difficult, but at least you can be certain you’re not alone. Give yourself time.**

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**HOMOPHOBIA**

Hating, abusing or bullying people because they are gay or lesbian, or using ‘gay’ as an insult to mean ‘stupid’ or ‘crap’, is stupid and crap. So don’t do it.

**BULLYING**

Pushing, hitting, name-calling, persistent teasing, tormenting someone or deliberately making someone feel stupid can make people feel scared and powerless. But you can do something about it. If you see it, report it. If you’re being bullied, tell someone — a parent or carer, teacher, your doctor or the police. Call a helpline (see p16). Write a note if you can’t talk about it. But don’t suffer in silence.

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**THE LAW**

Bullies (and their families) can be taken to court and prosecuted — as can schools who know about it and let it go on.

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**BULLIES**

If you’ve ever bullied someone, think about why. Some people bully because they are upset, angry or afraid. So talk to someone about what’s bothering you — bullying won’t help.

No one deserves to be bullied. Help people out and stick up for one another. You’ll sleep better at night knowing you’ve contributed to someone else’s happiness.
Who would you choose as a best friend/partner?

Ask 20 people the same question and they’ll all give you different answers. What does this say? We all have different tastes in people!

**Excellent – and extremely reassuring.**

**At this stage** in your life you might be happy with a few friends. Or you might be starting to think about a partner of the opposite sex. Or the same sex.

You might feel you’re **ready for anything.** Or maybe just a little bit of experimentation. Or sex may be something you’d rather not think about yet.

You might have **fantasies** about people you barely know. Film stars. Teachers. Or your best friend.

Your **hormones** may be telling you to go go go one minute, cry cry cry the next, and run away and hide after that.

There is no ideal progression through sexuality and relationships, any more than there is an ideal partner or body shape.

Relationships take time to explore, and mistakes are part of the journey.

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**QUIZ: Are You Compatible?**

1. Does your friend/partner look at you like you’re insane when you pour out your most intimate feelings?
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. Do they shower you with support when you’re feeling insecure or unsure of yourself?
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

3. Do they make loud and unpleasant comments about you around other people?
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

4. Can you really relax and have a laugh together?
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. Do they pressure you for sex you don’t want or things you don’t want to do?
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. Are you worried that they might someday discover the hideous truth about what you’re really like and then slag you off all over town?
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

**SCORE** Do you really need us to score this quiz for you? The whole point of relationships is to choose someone who genuinely likes and respects you for what you are. It’s easy to get so twisted up trying to please other people that you forget what makes you **you** (plus, it doesn’t usually work).
Check mate
How to tell the difference between love and a crush
A crush can be emotionally all-encompassing, exhausting and often totally unrealistic. The object of your passion may not know you exist or how you feel.

If they are a celebrity or your teacher, that’s the way it’s likely to stay, and that may suit you just fine. If it’s your sister’s best friend, however, you may have a chance of it becoming real.

You need to talk, find out if you have things in common and get to know each other better. A crush becomes love when it becomes real – when you tell the other person how you feel and find out that they feel the same.

How to get a relationship
If you’re looking for love and can’t find it, work on developing other relationships. People who make and maintain close friendships learn valuable skills to apply next time around to a different kind of love.

Everyone talks about ‘raging hormones’, but you may find the science reassuring. Extreme feelings of creativity, love, rage, and despair are typical of the teenage years because your body is producing high levels of the natural chemicals responsible for these feelings. Some people barely notice the ups and downs; others may swing between exhilaration and despair. By your 20s, many of these swings will settle down and you’re likely to feel more in control. If you’re worried about how you feel, talk to someone who can help (see p16).

Don’t forget your friends
Sexual attraction may lead to love – or disappointment. So treat your friends well. Real friends will stick around long after your current object of passion has crawled back under its rock.

How to tell someone you’re not interested
Try to be kind and put yourself in the other person’s shoes. “I just don’t think we’re right for each other,” or “I’m sorry I don’t feel the same way,” is generally a better response than “You must be joking.”

Is it possible to survive rejection?
It is, but nobody will say it’s easy. In case of rejection, fall back on the people who really do love you – your family, your friends, your guinea pig. Rejection is part of life and, if you learn from it, can help your next relationship to be smarter and stronger.

How to tell someone you fancy them
“I worship and adore you!” can be off-putting. It’s generally better to build up to it slowly. Try talking about something shared – food, a film, a thunderstorm, a favourite band. Eat lunch together. Text each other a few times. Get to know one another. If the object of your passion won’t lend you a pencil, they’re probably not interested in having a relationship either.

How to tell if someone really likes you
Do they talk to you, ask your opinion, listen to your answers, want to be with you and treat you nicely? R-E-S-P-E-C-T is always a good start. No good relationship works without it. Anyone who can’t remember your name and/or avoids you like the plague is probably not in love with you.

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WHAT IS HAVING SEX?

WHAT IS HAVING SEX, often called making love, includes any activity that sexually arouses you and your partner. It’s not just about the penis penetrating the vagina.

Sexually arousing one another might include talking and flirting, kissing, looking, touching, stroking each other, kissing using tongues (French kissing), removing clothes, touching each other’s genitals, putting on a condom.

IS IT OK TO SAY NO?

Knowing about sex doesn’t mean you have to do it. Don’t do anything you don’t want to do and don’t pressure someone into doing something they don’t want to.

It’s fine to change your mind – if you start having sex and want to stop, it’s not being a tease.

Having sex once doesn’t mean you have to have it again. You might worry about upsetting the person you’re with, but it’s better than doing something you might regret.

WHAT IS SAFER SEX?

WHATEVER your sexual orientation, you can have sex in all sorts of ways – there’s no magic formula.

Safer Sex is taking steps to reduce the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Practising safer sex (using condoms) is the single most important step anyone can take to help prevent getting or passing on STIs.

SAYING WHAT YOU WANT

Sometimes in relationships we find it hard to say what we want, such as asking your partner to wear a condom or telling them what turns you on. Sometimes that’s because we’re not sure what we want, or perhaps put our partner’s needs first.

OFTEN we don’t say what we want for fear of being rejected, laughed at, hurt or ignored. But the more we don’t say what we want, the more resentful we become, and the harder it is to talk.

Think about what you want and how to say it. Practise on your own and then pick your time. If people can’t respect your needs, they don’t deserve your time and attention.

AM I THE ONLY ONE NOT HAVING SEX?
The average age for young men and women having sexual intercourse for the first time is 16 in the UK, but many wait until they are older.

MASTURBATION

Most women and men masturbate (touch, stroke and rub their genitals in a way that feels pleasurable). It’s a good way to get to know your own body and your own sexual responses. Once you know what turns you on, you can let your partner know too.

THE LAW

In the UK, the age at which young people can agree, or consent, to have sex is 16. This is the same whether you are gay, straight or bisexual.

HAPPY CAUSING

DOES HAVING SEX HURT?

Some people experience pain, for example, when a penis first penetrates the vagina or anus. Taking it slowly and with sensitivity is vital, and yet another reason to make sure you trust your partner.

WHAT IS ORAL SEX?

Licking, sucking and kissing each other’s genitals. Often called a ‘blow job’ when done to a man, and ‘going down’ when done to a woman. Some people enjoy it; others aren’t interested.

WHAT IS ANAL SEX?

Penetration of the anus by the penis. Some people think that only gay men have anal sex – but it’s not true. Many gay men never have anal sex. You can be gay, straight or bisexual. Some people enjoy it; others aren’t interested. Some find it uncomfortable or painful.

You can catch and pass on sexually transmitted infections by oral sex and anal sex as well as vaginal sex so make sure you cover the penis with a condom or the female genitals or male or female anus with a dam – a latex or polyurethane (soft plastic) square.
Certain behaviour is not ok — under any circumstances.

- Telling lies or using anyone else to get what you want.
- Taking ‘no’ to mean ‘yes’.
- Putting pressure on somebody to get what you want.
- Threatening behaviour of any kind.

Use common sense to figure out what’s not ok. Does it make you (or someone else) feel bad or uncomfortable? Is it dangerous? Illegal? Or just plain stupid? Will it get you pregnant? Give you an infection? Are you scared if you don’t, someone will laugh at you? Think you’re not cool? Not love you?

Believe in yourself. If someone tries to make you feel bad about what you do/say/wear/like/are, tell them where to stuff it.

Protecting yourself

If you’ve had sex without contraception, or your contraception failed, or if you think you’ve risked catching an STI, act quickly — go to your doctor or ring one of the helplines on the back page.

The emergency contraceptive pill, Levonelle, must be taken up to three days (72 hours) after sex. It is more effective the earlier it is taken after sex. It is available with a prescription, or to buy from a pharmacy if you are over 16.

The emergency contraceptive pill, ellaOne, must be taken up to five days (120 hours) after sex. It is only available with a prescription.

An emergency IUD — must be fitted up to five days after sex, or up to five days after the earliest time you could have released an egg (ovulation).

Make an emergency appointment at your general practice, a contraception or sexual health clinic or a young people’s service.

If you’ve had sex with anyone where you are under any circumstances.

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CRUCIAL CONTACTS
All these helplines are confidential

How FPA can help you
sexual health direct is a nationwide service run by FPA. It provides:
• confidential information and advice and a wide range of booklets on individual methods of contraception, common sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy choices, abortion and planning a pregnancy
• details of contraception clinics, sexual health clinics and genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics and sexual assault referral centres.
Or visit www.fpa.org.uk

FPA helplines

England
0845 122 8690
9am to 6pm Monday to Friday

Northern Ireland
0845 122 8687
9am to 5pm
Monday to Friday

CHILDLINE
Helpline: 0800 11 11
www.childline.org.uk
Free, confidential 24-hour helpline for young people with any problem.

beat — BEATING EATING DISORDERS
Helpline: 0845 634 1414
www.b-eat.co.uk
For concerns about your weight/eating.

FRANK
Helpline: 0800 776 600
www.talktofrank.com
Free, confidential drugs advice.

QUEER YOUTH NETWORK
Helpline: 0870 383 4796
www.queeryouth.org.uk
The UK’s national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth organisation.

RAPE CRISIS
www.rapecrisis.org.uk
For girls and women who have been raped or assaulted recently or in the past.

GET CONNECTED
Helpline: 0808 808 4994
www.getconnected.org.uk
Free, confidential helpline and advice service for young people.

SURVIVORS UK
Helpline: 0845 122 1201
www.survivorsuk.org
For boys and men who have been raped or assaulted.

YOUTH ACCESS
Helpline: 020 8772 9900
www.youthaccess.org.uk
For your nearest counselling service.

YOU have the right to...
• CLEAR INFORMATION about sex
• EXPRESS and EXPLORE your sexuality
• NOT BE JUDGED because of your sexuality
• SAY NO to any sex that you don’t want
• CHANGE YOUR MIND
• have ACCESS to sexual health services
• CONFIDENTIALITY