

2021 TENGA GLOBAL SELF-PLEASURE REPORT – Main Findings

Sexual and Self-Pleasure Behaviors in the UK

Prepared by PSB Insights
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Overview: The survey was fielded between April 22nd and April 29th to N=1000 Adults in the UK aged 18-54. To ensure a representative sample of the UK Adult population, fielding quotas were maintained and final data has been weighted in accordance with current population statistics based on age, gender, and region of residence.

RELATIONSHIPS AND HOUSEHOLDS

Adults In The UK Choose Monogamy: Over two-thirds (69%) are married, legally partnered or in relationships while 22% are neither dating nor in relationships. Overall, less than 1-in-10 Adults 18-54 in the UK are in open or non-exclusive relationships (7%), becoming 11% among those married/legally partnered and 8% among those in relationships. Gen Z is more likely to be neither in a relationship nor dating (42% vs. 22% total UK Adults).

They Are Family-Centric: Only 13% of UK Adults 18-54 live alone, while slightly over a third (35%) live with their spouse/partner plus children and another 20% live with a partner only. Men 45-54 are more likely to report living alone (21%*).

MASTURBATION

The Majority Of UK Adults Masturbate And The Few Who Don't Have Little Interest: 89% of UK Adults 18-54 have ever masturbated, on par with 2020 figures (89%). Men are more likely to masturbate compared to women (94% and 85% respectively), especially men aged 25-54 (96%). Similarly, LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to have masturbated compared to heterosexual adults (93%* vs. 89%). Of the 11% who do not masturbate, 70% have never considered doing so, down slightly from 2020 (74%).

Frequency Of Masturbation Is Unchanged Overall In The UK, With Dips Among Gen Z Offset By Gains Among Gen X: 57% of those who masturbate do so at least once a week, unchanged from 2020 (57%). Men are more likely to masturbate weekly (73% vs. 39% of women), and this is consistent to 2020 (73% among men vs. 40% among women). However, from a generational lens, weekly masturbation frequency dipped slightly among Gen Z (69%* vs. 73%* in 2020) and Millennials (60% vs. 63% in 2020) while increasing among Gen X (49% vs. 44% in 2020).

Masturbation Satisfies Sexual Needs: The top reason UK adults masturbate is to “Satisfy sexual urges” (59%), in line with last year (58%). “To achieve sexual pleasure” (54% vs. 58% in 2020), and “To relax or relieve stress” (49% vs. 51% last year) round out the top three.

Adult Content Continues To Rank #1 In The Masturbation Routine Of UK Adults: 50% of those who masturbate view adult content while doing so (vs. 55% in 2020). Men are more likely to incorporate it (65% vs. 32% of women). Using their imagination to fantasize is the second most popular (44%) and is more prevalent among women (50% vs. 39% of men, on par with 2020). LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to incorporate adult content into their masturbation routine (66%* vs. 47% of heterosexual adults). Compared to men, women are much more likely to use an external vibrating sex toy in their routine (34% vs. 7% of men).

SEX

Most UK Adults Have Had Sex: 89% of UK Adults 18-54 have had sex, with 12 partners on average. Gen Z is the least likely to have had sex (68%*), and to claim the fewest partners (6*) among those who have. Among sexually active UK Adults, 46% have sex weekly or more, highest among men 25-34 (56%*) and those in relationships, but not married (57%).

*Findings from sub-audiences with an n-size below 150 should be considered *directional*, rather than decision-grade

Sex Brings Pleasure And Satisfies Emotional Needs: The top motivations for having sex are “To achieve sexual pleasure” (69% vs. 68% in 2020), “To satisfy sexual urges” (64% vs. 65% in 2020) and “To feel emotionally connected to my partner” (55% vs. 56% in 2020). Of the three, “To satisfy sexual urges” displays the largest difference between men and women (70% of men vs. 58% of women).

ATTITUDES AROUND SEX AND MASTURBATION

Adults In The UK Are Satisfied With Their Orgasms: Three-quarters of UK Adults 18-54 agree with statements that indicate orgasm and masturbation satisfaction:

- 82% agree (33% strongly): *I'm satisfied with the quality of my orgasms*
- 81% agree (30% strongly): *I'm satisfied with my masturbation frequency*
- 78% agree (30% strongly): *I'm satisfied with the frequency of my orgasms*

...But Some May Desire More In Their Partnered Sexual Lives:

- 70% agree (28% strongly): *I'm satisfied my partner(s) attention to my sexual needs*
- 66% agree (26% strongly): *I'm satisfied with the frequency of sexual intercourse*

Masturbation Improves Personal Well-Being: Most UK Adults 18-54 attribute positive impact to masturbation:

- 78% agree (29% strongly): *Masturbation improves my mood*
- 75% agree (26% strongly): *Masturbation improves my happiness*
- 74% agree (27% strongly): *Masturbation helps me manage my stress*
- 74% agree (27% strongly): *Masturbation is a form of self-care or “therapy” for me*
- 72% agree (30% strongly): *Masturbation improves my sleep*

LGBTQ+ and Current Sex Toy Users hold the most positive views of masturbation.

Slightly under half of UK Adults 18-54 have a weekly self-care routine (46%), and among them, 39% include masturbation. However, among those who do not, the desire is limited (40% would not include masturbation as part of their weekly routine).

...But Fewer Consider That Masturbation Helps Their Image:

- 46% agree (13% strongly): *Masturbation improves my body image*
- 53% agree (15% strongly): *Masturbation improves my sex appeal*
- 56% agree (16% strongly): *Masturbation improves my self-confidence*

Taboos Around Masturbation Should Be Lifted: Nearly 4-in-5 Adults 18-54 in the UK agree that “Society would benefit if people were more open in discussing sexual topics like masturbation” (79% agree; 30% strongly), up from 2020 (70% agree; 24% strongly).

However, Fewer May Want To Take That First Step: 57% of UK Adults 18-54 feel comfortable talking about masturbation with their close friends or partners (23% strongly agree). Gen Z (65% agree), LGBTQ+ adults (71%* agree) and Current Sex Toy Users (68% agree) are most likely to report openness to talking about masturbation.

UK Adults Listen To The Weeknd, Drake Or Ed Sheeran When Masturbating Or Having Sex:

While few listen to music while having sex or masturbating (19% among those who have ever masturbated or had sex) respondents in the UK were likely to call out contemporary musical artists. That said, Marvin Gaye is mentioned as well.

Tom Hardy Leads Sexual Fantasies In the UK: Similar to music, relatively few fantasize about celebrities while having sex or masturbating (24% among those who have ever masturbated or had sex), with Tom Hardy generating the most responses.

SEX TOYS

Incidence Of Sex Toy Use Rose This Year, Driven By Increases Among Men and Gen Z: 58% of Adults 18-54 in the UK report ever having used a sex toy, a slight increase from 2020 (55%). Women are more likely to have tried sex toys compared to men (64% vs. 52%), but men reported the largest increase (52% vs. 45% in 2020). Incidence among women held steady (64% vs. 65% in 2020). The proportion of Gen Z who have ever tried sex toys also rose this year, from 33%* in 2020 to 43%*, although they remain more inexperienced than Millennials (63%) and Gen Xers (60%).

LGBTQ+ are the most likely to have ever tried a sex toy (70%*). In terms of relationship status, those who are married (62%) or in a relationship (66%) are more likely to have used sex toys vs. those who date but are not in a relationship (58%).

...But Frequency Of Use Dipped Slightly vs. Last Year: 23% of sex toy users report using their toys weekly or more, slightly lower than in 2020 (26%). Weekly use among women held steady (25% in both 2021 and 2020), while dipping slightly among men (21% vs. 27% in 2020).

Sex Toy Use Is Highly Enjoyable And A Mostly Solo Activity For Women: The vast majority of sex toy users (92%) report enjoying them, with this perception tracking with frequency of use (85% of Infrequent sex toy users report enjoyment, compared to 96% of Monthly users and 98% of Weekly users).

Nearly half of sex toy users (45%) report using them mostly to pleasure themselves (66% among women). Around one-in-five (22%) report mostly using sex toys to pleasure a partner, climbing to 45% among men.

Vibrators And Dildos Are The Best-Known And Most Used Sex Toys: The top product categories are penetrative vibrators (75%), dildos (72%) and non-penetrative vibrators (68%). At 61% awareness, sex dolls rank #4. Similarly, the most used sex toys are penetrative vibrators (66% of sex toy users have ever used), non-penetrative vibrators (53%) and dildos (41%). Although sex dolls have high awareness levels, they only have a reported usage of 6% among sex toy users. The fourth most used product among sex toy users are cock rings (34%), driven by men (45% vs. 25% among women).

Increasingly, Adults In The UK Are Open To Buying A Sex Toy In The Future: 77% of UK Adults 18-54 are open to the idea of buying a sex toy on the future, up from 67% in 2020. This openness to buying is highest among current sex toy users (96%) as well as those who have never used but have considered trying (84%). Millennials and LGBTQ+ report the most interest in purchasing (83% and 88%, respectively).

BRAND AWARENESS AND PREFERENCES

Awareness Of The TENGA Brand Shows Uptick: Overall, 11% of UK Adults 18-54 have heard of the TENGA brand, an uptick from last year (9%) (although note the context of a different competitive set). Men drive awareness of the brand (15% compared to 8% of women). Only 2% of UK Adults 18-54 are aware of iroha (vs. 3% last year), with low awareness levels across demographics.

Lovehoney Is The Cornerstone Of The Sex Toy Retail Landscape In The UK: When asked about male sex toy brands, 58% of total UK Adults 18-54 report having heard of Lovehoney

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(53% of men, 62% of women). In the context of *female* sex toy brands, Lovehoney also ranks #1 (62%). As in awareness, Lovehoney ranks #1 in purchase preference, with 68% of those who are open to buying sex toys choosing this brand among *male* sex toy brands, and 74% choosing it among *female* sex toy brands.

Nearly 1-in-5 of those aware of TENGA or iroha report having first heard of them by browsing an online specialty retailer like Lovehoney (19%*, unchanged from 2020).

Adult Content Remains An Important Source Of Product Awareness: 18%* of those aware of TENGA or iroha report having first heard of them by browsing an adult content site (vs. 16%* in 2020).

SEX EDUCATION

Most UK Adults Received Sex Education: Overall, 72% of UK Adults 18-54 report having received sex education in school as a child or teenager (vs. 71% in 2020). Gen X (65%) lags somewhat behind Millennials (75%) and Gen Z (79%) on this metric.

There Is General Agreement On What Topics To Cover: Overall, 9-in-10 of UK Adults agree that sexual education should cover pregnancy, puberty, male and female anatomy, sex and relationships, sexual health and STIs, contraception, consent, availability of private counseling, and sexual assault and harassment. In general, Gen X and Millennials are more likely to agree that these topics should be covered.

- *Pregnancy: 96%*
- *Sex and Relationships: 95%*
- *Puberty: 95%*
- *Male and Female Anatomy: 95%*
- *Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections (STIs): 94%*
- *Contraception: 94%*
- *Sexual consent: 93%*
- *Availability of private counseling for those who ask for it: 92%*
- *Sexual Assault and Harassment: 91%*

But Men And Women Disagree About Sexual Orientation And Gender Identities: While there is some agreement that these two topics should be covered in sex education (86% and 81%, respectively), they also generate more differences between men and women. Women are more likely than men to agree that sexual orientation should be a topic (91% vs. 81%), as well as gender identities (85% vs. 76% of men). Women are also more likely than men to agree that sexual assault and harassment should be covered (95% vs. 88%).

Religion Doesn't Belong In the UK Sex Ed Classroom: Roughly a quarter of UK Adults 18-54 disagree that religion and sexuality (26%) or abstinence (21%) should be covered in sex education.

MASTURBATION AND SEX TOYS IN QUARANTINE

A Majority Of UK Adults Have Been Under Quarantine or Lockdown During The Past Year: 72% of UK Adults 18-54 have been under some kind of self-quarantine or lockdown in the past year, with nearly 2-in-5 (37%) spending most to all of the year under these circumstances. They have generally weathered the COVID-19 pandemic with the existing members of their household.

- 82%* of those who live alone also isolated by themselves
- 86% of those who live with only a partner isolated with a partner

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- Those not dating and not in a relationship quarantined alone or with their parents in equal measure (35%).

Masturbation Provided A Lifeline During Quarantine: 40% of UK Adults 18-54 who masturbate report that they have been masturbating *more often* than before (44% among men and 36% among women), and highest among Gen Z (57%*). Among those who masturbate and have been under lockdown, nearly two-thirds (65%) report that masturbation acted as a form of self-care during quarantine.

Quarantine May Have Encouraged Sex Toy Purchases Among Gen Z: 20% of sex toy users bought a new sex toy in the past year, most often to use for themselves (43%*). While only 5% of sex toy users overall were first-time purchasers in the past year, directionally Gen Z was most likely to have purchased a toy for the first time (14%*). Gen Z cited “I had more free time” (36%*) and “To try something new” (34%*) as motivations.

Overall, those who have used sex toys in the past year and have been under quarantine or lockdown, the reasons for using sex toys included:

- “To help me cope with stress, anxiety or uncertainty” (31% overall, 34% among women)
- “I had more free time” (30% overall, 36%* among Gen Z)
- “To improve sexual activity with another person” (25% overall, 31% among men)

COVID Is The #1 Sexual Concern As The UK Reopens: Nearly a quarter (23%) of Adults in the UK say “contracting COVID” is their biggest sexual worry. Gen Z is most likely to be concerned about how they come across: 30% worry about being “romantically or social awkward” (vs. 17% of total UK Adults) and 24% are worried about their sexual performance (vs. 17% of total UK Adults).