

## What are they?

Cockrings are rings of metal, rubber, leather or stretchy latex designed to fit snugly around either the base of the penis, or, more commonly, around both the penis and the testicles. Leather and rubber rings may be adjustable, metal rings usually are not.

## How do they work?

Cockrings work by compressing the veins that return blood to the body during erection. An erection is caused by blood engorging the spongy,erectile tissue of the penis. The incoming blood arrives via arteries well inside the shaft of the penis, but the veins which allow blood to leave are very close to the surface. So, wearing a cockring allows blood in, but slows down the flow of blood out.

## Why would I want to do that?

Several reasons!

1) The pressure caused by constriction can be a very pleasurable sensation, and can heighten sensitivity in the penis and testicles, not to mention strengthen and prolong orgasm.

2) Since cockrings constrict the veins that would allow blood to drain out of an erection, some people find that wearing them can make their erections firmer, or even give them a little extra girth.

3) Some folks find they cannot ejaculate while wearing a ring; this can give more 'staying power' or a lovely, frustrating tease.

4) They're pretty! Cockrings present the genitals as an attractive 'package' by making them more physically pronounced, as well as having a sexy, aesthetic effect.



## How do I put one on?

If you have an adjustable ring, you can put it on anytime, either before or after you have an erection. Remember, the ring should be snug but not tight, and it definitely shouldn't hurt. If your cockring has snaps or a slide adjustment, please be careful while adjusting!

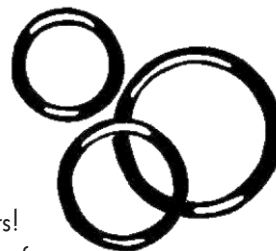
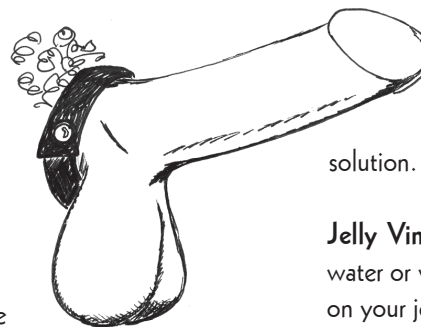
If you want a ring that isn't adjustable, such as a metal ring, it's important to find the proper size before you try putting it on. Use measuring tape to figure out the size you'll need - and better too big than too small.

To wear a non-adjustable ring, you will have to put it on before you get hard. This is done by slipping it over the shaft of your penis, then tucking your testicles through. A little water-based lube might help with this.

## Cautions!

Because they restrict blood flow, cockrings should not be worn for more than 20-30 minutes at a time, as doing so could damage the blood vessels of the penis. Again, the ring should be snug, not tight.

When using metal cockrings, size matters! A too-small ring that fits when you are soft might be painfully tight when you're erect. In that case, your choices are ejaculation (if you can), applying ice, or a trip to the emergency room to cut the ring off. Until you have some experience, it's advisable to use rings that can be taken off quickly and easily.



## Care Instructions

Cock rings can be made out of many different material, here's how to take care of the most commonly used ones.

**100% Silicone:** Silicone is non-porous and hypoallergenic, clean with soap and warm water, or with toy-cleaner. Silicone cock rings can be boiled or soaked in a mild bleach solution. Do not use with silicone-based lubes.

**Jelly Vinyl & Jelly Silicone:** Clean with soap and warm water or with a toy cleaner. Do not use oil-based lubricants on your jelly toys, and do not allow jelly toys to come into contact with one another. Sometimes jelly toys will dry out and crack over time, to extend the life of your toy, store in a small zip lock bag after it's completely dry.

**Blended Silicone & Elastomer:** Clean with soap and water. These toys are less porous than jelly rubber, but are not non-porous like 100% silicone. Do not use with oil- or silicone-based lubes. Do not boil or bleach.

**Vinyl:** Vinyl are less porous than jelly but your toy may have seams that can trap bacteria. Clean with soap and water, rinse, towel dry. Check your toys every so often to make sure seams have not split.

**Leather & Rubber:** Clean with soap or leather cleaner on a damp cloth, follow with a material-specific conditioner to prevent drying and cracking. Do not dry in direct heat.

**Battery Vibrators:** Follow cleaning instructions for appropriate material; be careful not to get water into the battery compartment. If your toy is multi-speed, do not use the speed dial to tighten cap. If you have an "egg" shaped toy and use it internally, do not pull on the cord to remove it. If your vibrator is not working, rearrange or replace batteries. Remove batteries when not in use to prevent leakage.

## Resources

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Venning, Rachel and Claire Cavanah. *Sex Toys 101: a Playfully Uninhibited Guide*. New York: Fireside, 2003

Blue, Violet. *The Adventurous Couples Guide to Sex Toys*. San Francisco: Cleis Press, 2006

Wiseman, Jay. *Tricks to Please a Man*. Oakland: Greenery Press, 2003

Metz, Michael E. and Barry McCarthy. *Coping with Premature Ejaculation*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications, 2003.

Moore, Michael Dr. and Dr. Caroline de Costa. *Dick: a User's Guide*. New York: Marlowe and Company, 2003.

Alterowitz, Barbara and Ralph. *Intimacy with Impotence*. Cambridge: Life Long Books, 2004.

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We believe that one of the best tools to enjoying a healthy and satisfying sex life is knowledge. To that end, we offer our pamphlets series as a way for people to access information even if you're too shy to ask one of us at the shop! You are welcome to download and print any of these pamphlets to share with lovers, friends, clients, or anyone else!

Our goal is to make sex positive and accurate information available to everybody. Our pamphlets offer an introduction to many facets of sex and sexual health and are always evolving. We recognize that language can be limiting and that people have a variety of ways of describing their bits. We've chosen to use medical terms for clarity, but understand that these terms don't work for everyone. We welcome any comments and suggestions that you may have.

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