

Materials

Silicone Toys: Silicone is non-porous and hypo-allergenic, clean with soap and warm water, or with toy-cleaner. Solid silicone toys can be boiled, or put in the top rack of a dishwasher.

Jelly Toys: Clean with soap and warm water. Because jelly is a porous material, you may want to use a condom on your toy, or clean it with toy-cleaner. Do not use oil-based lubricants on your jelly toy, and do not allow jelly toys to come into contact with one another. All our jelly toys at Venus Envy are third party tested to be free of phthalates.

Cyberskin Toys: “Cyberskin” and similar realistic-feeling materials are very porous, you can use a condom on your toy to maintain its good looks. Clean with soap and warm water, rinse well and allow to air dry. Dust the toy with cornstarch to keep it silky smooth.

Plastic Toys: Plastic is less porous than latex, but your toy may have seams that can trap bacteria. Clean with soap and water, rinse, towel dry. Check your toy every so often to make sure seams have not split and there are no rough edges, file with an emery board if necessary. Do not drop plastic toys on hard surfaces!

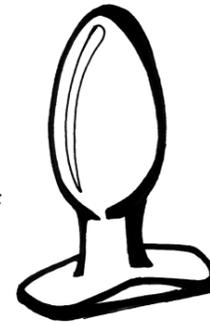
Why sex toys?

Toys offer lots of variety, in many ways, since there are speeds, colours, lengths and textures for just about every taste. They can also bring another kind of fun and adventure into sex. And for those of us with short fingers, say, or repetitive strain injury, toys can help reach that extra half-inch or last those important few seconds longer.



Vaginal Play

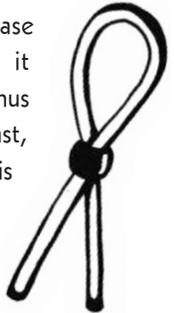
Most of the nerve endings are located in the first inch and a half, but there are other sweet spots to be found in the vagina. The g-spot (or urethral sponge) is stimulated most easily through the front wall of the vagina (under the belly button). Good toys for g-spot stimulation will have a nice curve on them, which makes it easier to get the angle right. Lots of people also enjoy having their cervix touched or thrust against during penetration, but the only way to find out for sure is to play with different positions and toys.



during penetration, or tissue damage could ensue. As well, the tissue of the anus and rectum is very fragile, so no sharp or rough edges, and always (always, always!) use lots of water-based lube. It's also very important to only put toys in your butt if they have a base or a ring that stays outside your body for safe removal.

Cockrings

Cockrings work by compressing the veins that allow blood to drain from the penis. That way, blood flows in at a faster rate than it flows out. Cockrings come in adjustable and non-adjustable varieties, and in anything from leather to latex; they can be worn either just around the base of the penis, or around the penis and the scrotum. People use cockrings for lots of reasons. For some people, they increase girth and sensitivity. Other folks find it difficult to ejaculate while wearing one, thus preventing premature ejaculation. And last, but not least, cockrings can make the penis and testicles into a very lovely package!

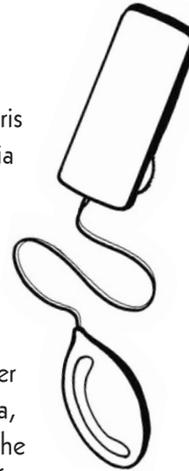


Lube

Lube makes most things more fun, and generally, lots is better than a little. There are a few things to watch for, though. First, water-based lubricants are a good choice- they don't eat holes in your latex barriers, and tend not to upset your vaginal microcosm like oil-based lubes. For those looking for something more slippery and long lasting, there are silicone-based lubes on the market. Second, many lubes contain glycerin, which can trigger yeast overgrowth. Lastly, many lubes use a preservative agent called methylparaben. For those with sensitive skin, this agent can cause itchiness or a rash. Look instead for a natural preservative such as grapefruit seed extract or vitamin C.

Clitoral Play

Although we usually think of the clitoris as a small nub located where the labia meet, it's so much more! The tip of the clit (also called the glans) is home to between 6000 and 8000 nerve endings.



The shaft of the clit extends back under the hood, and then splits into two crura, or legs, which run along the side of the vagina, under the outer lips. In fact, according to *The Clitoral Truth*, there are 18 different parts to the clitoris. Using a cylindrical vibe length-wise from the top of the clit to the perineum is a good way to stimulate all these parts.

Anal Play

Whether you like a finger massaging your anus, or deep penetration, it's good to know your anatomy. The anal opening has tons of nerve endings and blood vessels, and leads to the anal canal. This is comprised of two sphincters: the outer, which is under voluntary control and the inner, which is a muscle controlled by the reflex system. The canal leads to the rectum which is an expandable s-shaped tube about eight or nine inches. Because of the curves, it's important to get the angle right

Resources

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Winks, Cathy and Anne Semans. The New Good Vibrations Guide to Sex, 3rd Ed. Cleis Press, San Francisco, 2002.

Sundahl, Deborah. Female Ejaculation and The G-Spot. Hunter House, Alameda, CA, 2003.

Venus Envy is an education oriented sex shop and bookstore with stores in Ottawa and Halifax. Our goal is to provide everyone with a respectful (and fun!) place where they can find toys and tools to explore gender and sexuality.

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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