

Having sex for the first time

If you're having sex for the first time, there are a few things you need to know. Get info on sexual relationships, including common reasons people decide to have sex for the first time, questions you should ask yourself to make sure you're ready, and what to expect when you have sex.

Making the decision to have sex

As soon as you get past childhood, everyone starts to face questions about sex;

- > *when to have it*
- > *who to have it with*
- > *where to have it*
- > *how to have it*

and of course

- > *whether to have it in the first place*

People come across these sexy questions constantly throughout their adult lives. The decisions they do end up making about their sex life largely depends on what having sex means to them.

It doesn't matter whether sex means a lot to you, or not much at all. However, if you're thinking about having for the first time there are some things you do need to consider – because sex does have consequences. If you're informed and knowledgeable about sex and understand your own feelings about having it, you're likely to have better peace of mind about the whole thing. You can feel comfortable knowing that you've made a well thought out decision.

Things to think about before having sex for the first time

Why do you want to have sex in the first place? You might decide to have sex because

- > *you think it might be fun*
- > *you're in love and it feels right*
- > *it feels good*
- > *you see it as a sign of commitment*
- > *you're curious and want to experiment*
- > *you think everyone else is doing it*

Whatever the reasons you're considering having sex for the first time, you also need to consider them alongside these questions

- > *Do you feel emotionally ready to be sexually active?*

This may help if...

- > *You and your partner have been talking about having sex*
- > *Lots of your friends are having sex*
- > *You're not sure if you're ready for sex*

Take action...

- > *Don't make any decisions until you have become informed*
- > *Find out how from friends how their first time went*
- > *Be prepared – if you're going to do it, make sure it's safe*

- › Are you informed about the risks of sex, like pregnancy and STIs? See the contraception fact sheet on ReachOut.com
- › Are you comfortable discussing contraception and safe sex with your partner?
- › Is it possible to practice safe sex right now? (E.G. Do you have a condom or dam with you all the time)
- › Do you feel comfortable with your choice of sexual partner?
- › Do you feel more anxious than excited?
- › Do you feel pressured by your friends or your partner?
- › Are you comfortable with how your decision about having sex fits with your religious beliefs and / or culture?
- › Are you too young legally? Check out the lawstuff website for information on the legal age of consent across different areas of Australia.
- › Are you worried about what having sex might mean for you and whether it will make you feel different?

If you haven't thought about these questions, it's a really good idea to do so before having sex for the first time. If you're struggling with these questions, take some time to work out how you feel about them before jumping into bed (or wherever else).

Other things you should know

- › You **can** get pregnant or contract a sexually transmitted infection the first time you have sex. Make sure you consider using condoms or dams to protect yourself. Check out the contraception fact sheets on ReachOut.com for more info on having sex safely.
- › First time sex doesn't necessarily hurt. Some people find their first time having sex to be really comfy, fun, and pleasurable. For others, it does feel uncomfortable, and can hurt. If you do experience pain during sex, you might not have enough lubrication, you may need to try a different sexual position, or ask your partner to slow down. If it hurts a hell of a lot, stop. It shouldn't be super painful, so talk to your partner about ways you can make sex more comfortable.
- › Sometimes there is blood. For a girl, there can be bleeding the first time they have penetrative sex if their hymen ruptures. It's normal to bleed and it's equally normal not to bleed. If you do bleed, it shouldn't last long, but if it continues, visit your GP.
- › Post sex, the first time, people can experience a whole range of emotions – both good and confusing. It's not uncommon to feel:
 - › worried or guilty
 - › extra affectionate
 - › excited

Sex is a really personal way of being intimate with someone, so it's understandable if you experience intense feelings after sex. If you're worried about the feelings you're having, talk it through with your partner or someone you can trust, like a good friend, family member or a counsellor.