



How to Say No to Sex

Two Parts: [Communicating Effectively](#) [Understanding Yourself](#)

There is nothing wrong with saying no to sex. Whether you are asexual, want to stay abstinent until marriage or for other reasons, or are simply not in the mood, you should feel comfortable communicating this with a partner. Work on learning to communicate your desires in order to smoothly say no to sex.

Part
1

Communicating Effectively

1 Practice saying "No." Many people feel nervous or awkward telling someone they're not ready for sex or don't want to have sex at a certain moment. It might be helpful to practice saying "No" in front of a mirror or alone in your room. Try to sound confident in your decision and practice saying, "No, I don't want to have sex right now" or "No, I'm not ready for sex yet."^[1]

2 Give advanced notice. If you have a longterm partner, sometimes it can be nice to let them know ahead of time that you're not in the mood for sex. If you're not feeling well or simply not in the mood, try to make that clear before you two are alone together.

- If you're out on a date or spending a night in together, let your partner know if you're not in the mood. If things feel romantic and fun, your partner might think you're in the mood for sex when you're really not.^[2]
- Sometimes people feel rejected or hurt if sexual advances are turned down. Letting your partner know ahead of time you're not in the mood can save their feelings later. You won't have to turn down unwanted advances.^[3]

3 Take a rain check. Sometimes, you may not be in the mood at any given moment but this does not mean sex is off the table all day. Try asking your partner to see how you're feeling later. For example, say something like "I'm feeling a little exhausted and want to relax for a minute, but see how I'm feeling after dinner." If you're busy, tired, or stressed it's hard to predict when you will and won't be in the mood. Allow your partner the opportunity to try again later can on.^[4]

4 Communicate your reasons with your partner. You don't owe someone an explanation for not wanting to have sex. However, if you're in a relationship with someone it can be healthy to explain to them why you're not in the mood. This can help your partner better understand you and your sexual desires.

- Sometimes, reasons are simple. You can say something like, "As much as I love you and love having sex with you, I've had a really stressful day at work and I'm feeling kind of bad about myself. I'd rather we just do something low pressure like watch a movie and maybe try again tomorrow."^[5]
- If there is a more difficult reason you don't want to have sex, this is even more important to discuss. Are you upset with your partner? Are you not feeling sexual due to negative feelings about your own body and looks? If there's a deeper issue at play, schedule a time to talk things over with your partner. Remember to remain calm and phrase things in a fair, non-judgmental manner.^[6]

5 Do not feel obligated to have sex. Sometimes people feel obligated to have sex, especially if they've already been engaging in activities that would typically lead to sex. Understand no one is entitled to your body and that making out or otherwise fooling around does mean you owe someone sex. Do not listen to anyone who tells you otherwise. If you feel things are headed towards sex, taper off physical content and then gently pull away. If your partner pushes you for more, calmly explain you do not wish to have sex now.

Part
2

Understanding Yourself

- 1 Consider why you're saying "No."** It can help to understand your reasons for not wanting to have sex. The better you understand yourself and your desires, the better you can express yourself to others.

 - Some people **practice abstinence**. This means refraining from sexual activity altogether, either until marriage or for a set period of time. If you're practicing abstinence, consider your reasons for doing so. What are the benefits of abstaining from sex? Why is this important to you? Occasionally reviewing the reasons you became abstinent to begin with can help you feel more confident in your decision.^[7]
 - Some people simply like to wait a bit to have sex. While the sex on the third date rule is common in pop culture, this might not be a sentiment you share. Maybe you like to get to know someone emotionally before engaging in sex. Maybe you simply aren't comfortable with intimacy early on. Explore your reasons for wanting to put off sex until later in the relationship. This can help you feel more secure explaining your motivations to others.^[8]
 - There are obviously many reasons, based on your own personal history and comfort zone, that you might not want to have sex. Whatever your reason, it's valid. There is no reason to have sex if you do not want to.

- 2 Learn about asexuality.** Some people identify as asexual. Asexual is a sexual orientation, similar to being straight or gay.

 - Asexual people are simply uninterested in sex. Sexual activity is not pleasurable to people who are asexual. Asexual people may crave romantic love, but usually have a very low or completely absent sex drive.^[9]
 - If you think you might be asexual, you can learn more about asexuality online. LGTB websites, like GLAAD's website, have sections discussing asexuality. Asexuality.org is a website dedicating to exploring and explaining asexuality.^[10]

- 3 Explore your own sexuality.** Occasionally, people dislike engaging in sex because it does not feel good for them. If you're inexperienced, you may simply not know what does and does not work for you. Exploring your own sexuality can help.

 - Masturbation can help you get more comfortable with your body. You can masturbate with just your hands or use tools like dildos. See what does and does not feel good. This can help you understand how you like to be touched and what might work for you with a partner.
 - Many people explore their sexuality through watching pornography or reading erotica. This can help you get a sense of what tuns you on. You can find porn and erotica online and can also purchase them from sex shops and even some bookstores.
 - Join a club. If you're a college student, there are many sex positive and sex friendly clubs on campus. There, you can discuss sex, your body, sexuality, and more. Through talking and learning with others, you may figure out more about your own sexual desires.

- 4 Experiment with your partner.** If sex is not as enjoyable for you as you want, try experimenting with your partner. Try different positions, different types of foreplay, role playing, and more. Many couples find watching porn together increases sexual desire and gives them ideas for new things to try in bed. Talk to your partner about wanting to experiment a little in the bedroom.

- 5 Check your medication.** If you find yourself frequently not in the mood, many medications can effect sex drive. Read the side effects of any prescription or over-the-counter meds you're on. If low sex drive is a side effect, talk to your doctor about finding an alternative medication or lowering the dosage.

Community Q&A

I am eighteen years old. How do I say no to sex?



Tell the person who wants to have sex with you that you're not ready. You have a voice, so use it. That voice you have will never go away. Just follow what your heart tells you to do and just because someone else has done it, doesn't mean you have to.

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What if I have to pee?

Always try to pee beforehand. Otherwise, you'll have to take a break and excuse yourself.

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What do I do if a girl wants to have sex with me, but I don't have any condoms. I don't want to get any STD's...how should I tell her no without hurting her feelings?

You can say: "Why don't we play it safe, and not do it?" (explaining why) or you can say, "I don't feel comfortable right now."

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What should I do if my significant other keeps pushing to have sex, but I'm not ready?

Keep saying no, and ask them to stop pushing you. If your significant other ends up getting mad or leaving you, it's their loss. They need to respect your feelings and can't push onto you something you're not comfortable with or ready for. And if you feel they're really not respecting you, you may want to consider breaking things off yourself.

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How do I stop myself from sexting? I want to stop, but the temptations are hard to ignore.

Delete the account you are on, or just delete the person's number you are sexting with. If they continue to message you back, delete the messages before you have a chance to read them.

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What should I do if he's being really aggressive, like dry-humping me? I can't push him off and normally, it wouldn't bother me too much - but I wish he wouldn't do it as much in public.

The person doing this is acting inappropriately. Tell him to stop. If he doesn't, think about whether or not you want any kind of relationship with him, least of all a sexual one.

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I'm 22, don't have a lot of experience in sex. How can I turn down my older, more experienced boyfriend?

Follow the guidelines in the article. But remember that everyone starts out having no experience, and you'll never gain experience if you don't start doing it. If you're not ready or not comfortable, discuss the reasons honestly with your boyfriend.

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How do I say no to sex while I am on my period?

You say, "I don't want to have sex". You don't have to give anyone a reason for not wanting to have sex. If you are asked why, you only have to say you don't want to. Not wanting to have sex is like not being hungry or not being thirsty: if you don't want to, you don't want to.

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Can you answer these readers' questions?

Refresh

On **How to Divorce in Kentucky**, a reader asks:

Is the separation agreement signed by both of us and a notary proof of divorce?

Your answer...

Reply

On **How to Use a Laminator**, a reader asks:

Do you have to use the cardboard to cover the sheet you are laminating or can you just put it in the machine with no cover?

Your answer...

Reply

On **How to Hang Curtains**, a reader asks:

How do you hand rod pocket trumpet valances?

Your answer...

Reply

Tips

- If your partner repeatedly tries to pressure you into having sex, the relationship is probably not worth it. Respect is important in a romantic relationship and you should not waste your time dating someone who does not respect you.
- Be careful! Sometimes people get violent when you say no because they think they have a right to your body. It is YOUR body! They have no right! You can also find other ways to say no instead of saying it straight on.
- If your partner is religious then chances are their religion frowns upon sex before marriage or upon sex completely. Respect that and respect them, but don't look at that as a reason to get married.

Sources and Citations

1. <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople/Pages/Itsoktosayno.aspx>
2. <http://www.bustle.com/articles/20323-how-to-say-no-to-your-partner-when-youre-not-in-the-mood-for-sex>
3. <http://www.bustle.com/articles/20323-how-to-say-no-to-your-partner-when-youre-not-in-the-mood-for-sex>

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