



Sex toy

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A **sex toy** is an object or device that is primarily used to facilitate human sexual pleasure, such as a dildo or vibrator. Many popular sex toys are designed to resemble human genitals and may be vibrating or non-vibrating. The term *sex toy* can also include BDSM apparatus and sex furniture such as slings; however, it is not applied to items such as birth control, pornography, or condoms. Alternative expressions include **adult toy** and the dated euphemism **marital aid**, although "marital aid" has a broader sense and is applied to drugs and herbs marketed to supposedly enhance or prolong sex. Sex toys are most commonly sold at a sex shop, but they may also be sold in a pornographic DVD store or head shop. Today's sex toys are available in almost all countries for male and females.

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Collection of sex toys



Vending machine selling a range of sex toys

Types

Erotic electrostimulation

Another form of sex toy for both men and women are those for erotic electrostimulation.

Erotic electrostimulation refers to the act of using electricity for sexual stimulation. Electrostimulation dates back as early as the mid 1700s. By the mid 1970s, medical transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) machines were widely available. The machines work by stimulating nerve endings with electricity, sending signals of stimulation to the brain. Electrostimulation works off this same principal, when the brain received a signal of stimulation from the genitals, pleasure hormones are released.

Erotic furniture

Erotic furniture is furniture specially shaped for comfort, penetration levels, and stimulation.

General penetrative toys

- **Ben Wa balls** are hollow metal balls inserted vaginally which can be worn inside the vagina for extended periods of time. The internal rolling is claimed to enhance orgasms.
- A **dildo** is a non-vibrating device which is used for sexual stimulation of the vagina and/or anus. Dildos are generally made of silicone rubber, but can be made of other materials such as metals or glass. They are often made to resemble a penis.
 - A **double penetration dildo** is a long, usually flexible dildo with both ends designed for penetration. It allows for mutual penetration between two persons (or for double penetration of a single female, both anally and vaginally).
 - A **strap-on dildo** is a dildo worn in a harness, used to penetrate another person.
- A **horseshoe** is a non-vibrating sex toy which is shaped similar to a horseshoe, which is put into the vagina and anus at the same time. It is made with softer plastics.
- **Kegel exerciser**, also known as vaginal barbells or jugglers are designed to improve muscle tone in the pelvic floor, and can be used for sexual pleasure as well as enhancing vaginal response.
- A **sex-machine** is a motor-driven device that combines penetration with rotational and/or reciprocal movement.^[2]

Anal toys

- **Anal beads**
- **Butt plugs** are often shorter dildos intended for anal insertion. They tend to have a flared base to prevent the device from becoming sucked into the rectum.^[3]
- **Prostate massagers** are devices designed to stimulate a man's prostate for health and pleasure.



Christmas tree decorated with sex toys^[1]



A type of Ben Wa balls

Glass sex toys

Glass sex toys are commonly made from clear medical grade borosilicate glass ("hard glass"). This particular type of safety toughened glass is non-toxic and will withstand extreme temperatures, as well as physical shock without compromising its structural integrity.

The choice of this high-grade material provides safety in use and the option to heat or chill the toys. Borosilicate glass is also non-porous and can be sterilized to help prevent infection with reuse. The highest quality glass toys can even be put in the dishwasher making them easier to keep clean. As well as their practical qualities, a main selling point of glass sex toys is their visual appeal.

Some glass sex toys vibrate. There are two main ways this can be achieved. Either the toy may have a hole into which a small bullet vibrator can be inserted, or the core of the glass design can be modified to form a standard vibrator. The latter option usually has a plastic cap covering the battery compartment, which will also house any control buttons or switches.

Vibrators

Vibrators are vibrating devices intended to stimulate the body. Vibrators come in a range of shapes and sizes, for internal or external use. Some vibrators intended for internal use are phallic in shape. Small vibrators may have a stretchy loop attachment for use as a finger toy or cock ring. **Penetrative vibrators** usually measure twelve to eighteen cm (five to seven inches) in length and two to five cm (one to two inches) wide often to mimic the size of the average human penis.

- **Anal vibrators** are designed to be inserted into the rectum, which may stimulate the prostate in men. The safest ones have a flared base which remains outside the body, that prevents the toy from becoming irretrievable.
- **Bullet vibrators** are small, bullet-shaped vibrators that can be used for direct stimulation or inserted into other sex toys to increase stimulation. Some are sold with stretchy loops for attachment as a finger toy or cock ring.
- **Luxury vibrators** have an increased focus on design and the use of expensive materials that appeal to a more upscale fashion market.
- **G-spot vibrators** are curved at one end to facilitate stimulation of the female G-spot.
- The **rabbit vibrator**, of which there are several variations, is a popular female sex toy popularized by the television series *Sex and the City*.^[4] It comprises an insertable shaft which often has additional functionality, such as rotation and internal beads or a thrusting action. Attached to the shaft is a vibrating clitoral stimulator. For most rabbit vibrators this comes in the form of "bunny ears" which sit each side of the clitoris.
- **Vibrator wands**, such as the Hitachi Magic Wand, are large vibrators that generally plug into an electrical outlet (versus operating on battery power) and are often marketed as back massagers.^[5] They are able to produce far more powerful vibration than most battery-powered vibrators.^[5] Various



Two butt plugs



Glass Dildo

attachments made of silicone or a rubber material allow the toy to be used penetratively, or give the toy more interesting texture.^{[5][6]}

Nipple toys

- A **nipple clamp** is a clamp used to stimulate the nipples by applying varying degrees of pressure.
- **Suction devices** are generally either rubber or glass,

Penile toys

- Artificial vaginas, also known as “pocket pussies” or “male masturbators”, are tubes made of soft material to simulate sexual intercourse. The material and often textured inner canal are designed to stimulate the penis and induce orgasm. The male masturbators come in many shapes and styles; they can be shaped like vulvas, anuses, mouths, or as non-descriptive holes. Some male masturbators are disposable and some can be washed and used repeatedly. Some are even equipped with sex-machine options that work similar to milking machines.^[7]
- A **ball lock** is an ordinary padlock fastened around the male scrotum, separating the testicles away from the penis and not removable except by key or combination.
- A **cock harness** is a more elaborate harness designed to be worn around the penis and scrotum. Its function is similar to that of a cock ring. These devices are often associated with BDSM activities such as cock and ball torture. An Arab strap is one such form of harness, purported to be a device used for maintaining an erection.
- **Cock rings** prolong male erection by holding blood inside the penis. A man may wear a cock-ring to combat erectile difficulties, or for the sensation of tightness and engorgement that wearing one provides. Some models include a protruding clitoral stimulator, designed to stimulate the clitoris during sex. Others vibrate, either vibrating the ring itself, or in a popular 'Dolphin' variant by using two removable bullet vibrators to provide stimulation to both the testicles and clitoris. Some cock rings also have vibrators attached which can be worn to stimulate a partner during sexual intercourse, especially in the scrotum or perineum.
 - A **triple crown** is a special cock-ring that has additional rings for restraining the testicles. In orgasm, the testicles usually retract toward the body before ejaculation. A triple crown changes and intensifies the sensation of orgasm by forcing the testicles to stay away from the body.
- A **docking sleeve** is a cylindrical device similar to a penis sleeve, but is open at both ends, so that two men can dock, a form of mutual masturbation.
- A **fifi** (also **fifi towel** or **fifi bag**) is a slang term for an improvised vagina, often made of cloth or fabric.^{[8][9]}
- A **penis extension** is a partially hollow device like a very short dildo, with the hollow end placed on the end of the penis, intended to increase the effective length of the penis, again for the benefit of the person being penetrated. These are generally worn with condoms to prevent them from falling off during use.
- A **penis sleeve** is a cylindrical device that is placed on the shaft of the penis, with the aim of increasing stimulation for the person being penetrated. They often have soft bumps intended to provide further stimulation.



Health and safety concerns

No safety regulations exist in the sex toy industry. The sex toys are sold as novelty items so they do not need to adhere to certain regulations such as reporting the chemicals and materials used in a product. Due to this status, manufacturers are not responsible if their toys are used for any other purpose than being a novelty.^[10]

Regulations such as REACH^[11] do exist, and some sex toys may be compliant to this though, despite that there is no obligation for manufacturers on attaining compliance. A recent (2006) study conducted by the Greenpeace Netherlands office found high level of phthalates in seven out of eight plastic sex toys tested.^[12]

A sign that a toy contains Phthalates may include sweating. If you wash a toy and dry it and it appears to be sweating and has an odor that may cause headache, there is a high chance that contains Phthalates.^[13] The reason why sex toys are classified as novelties is because sex toy manufacturers find the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) to have extensive testing and financial requirements for sex toys to be classified as medical devices. Therefore, sex toy manufacturers more often choose the less complex production by labelling them a novelty, where their listed ingredients do not have to be accurate in chemical composition or percentage of ingredients. Due to the novelty classification, sex toys are permitted to contain known toxins in them such as phthalates, which have been banned in children's toys by the CPSC.^{[14][15]} Phthalates are chemical plasticizers that are added as softeners, to create the malleable and soft effect that many look for in sex toys.^[14]

Studies on rodents have revealed that when exposed to very large doses, phthalates can cause damage to the liver, lungs, kidneys, testes and can cause hormonal disruption. The latest research indicates that exposure to these substances can upset the body's ability to regulate hormone production, damage reproduction, can cause liver and kidney defects, and can cause cancer. The most common and external side-effects are rashes, itchiness and irritation to the locations of use.^[16]

When choosing a sex toy, one should check the ingredients. If it says it contains PVC, vinyl and/or jelly rubber, it is not safe for usage. Other ways to know that one is not safe is if it is also flexible, soft and squishy, has oily sweat-like beads that discharge (this is chemical degradation) and/or if it has a rubber or chemical like odor.^[14]

Before using a sex toy, owners should take precautions. One should check for tears, rough seams or cracks that could harm the inside of the vagina or anus. Condoms should also be used on porous sex toys and sex toys that are being shared between two or more partners. They should also use appropriate lubricants; silicone lube will break down silicone toys, and oil-based lubes will break down latex condoms.^[17]

Cleaning sex toys is also very important for sexual health and sex toy safety. Cleaning them will avoid the potential of bacterial infection, transmission of STIs (if shared), or pregnancy (if sperm is present on the toy). Porous sex toys (ridged, flexible, soft and squishy) are difficult to clean and can hide bacterial that multiply and harm the human body. Non-porous toys are easier to clean, being less harmful.^[14] When cleaning sex toys, always use warm water and unscented anti-bacterial soap.^[17]

Non-porous toys^[17]

- Glass toys: some can be put in the dishwasher, but it is recommended not to expose them to extreme temperatures and to wash them soap and water.
- Stainless Steel toys: boil or soak stainless steel toys in 1-10 bleach-water solution for ten minutes, put it on the top shelf of the dishwasher, or use soap and water (if there are electrical components to the toy).
- Hard plastic toys: do not boil the toy, and wash with soap and water.
- Silicone toys: put it on the top shelf of the dishwasher, boil for 5–10 minutes or wash with water and soap.

Porous toys^[17]

- Rubber toys: they cannot be properly cleaned because bacteria is absorbed into the material, so it is recommended to always use a condom.
- Cyberskin and Vinyl toys: clean with warm water, air dry, and sprinkle it with a small amount of cornstarch (to keep them dry and not sticky).
- Nylon toys: put it in the top rack of the dish-washer or wash with soap and water.

Anal toys (butt plugs, small dildos, etc.)

- When using sex toys in the anus, sex toys can easily get lost as rectal muscles contract and can suck an object up and up, potentially obstructing the colon; to prevent this serious problem, it is recommended that individuals use sex toys with a flared base or a string.^[18]

Legal issues

India

Sex toys are illegal in India.^[19] Selling sex toys is a punishable offense under section 292 of Indian penal code, as sex toys are considered an "obscene" product. Besides sex toys, any book, pamphlet, paper, writing, drawing, painting, representation, figure or any other object, is by the way also considered obscene by section 292 if it is lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest.^[20] The punishment for the offense is up to two years in prison.^[21]

Japan

In Japan, many dildos are created to resemble animals or cartoon characters, such as Hello Kitty, rabbits or dolphins, so that they may be sold as toys, thus avoiding obscenity laws.

Malaysia

In Malaysia, the sale and importation of sex toys is illegal.^[22]

South Africa

Section 18A of the Sexual Offences Act, 1957, inserted by the Immorality Amendment Act, 1969, prohibited the manufacture or sale of any item "intended to be used to perform an unnatural sexual act". The term "unnatural sexual act" referred to any sex other than vaginal heterosexual sex, and this prohibition was ostensibly aimed at preventing the use of dildos by lesbians.^[23] No longer enforced, the section was repealed by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007.

United States

Sex toys and lubricants have become increasingly available in major commercial outlets in the United States. On-shelf displays tend to be more discreet than the offerings on web sites. These items tend to be displayed in the "sexual health" sections of stores.^[24]

Until recently, many Southern and some Great Plains states banned the sale of sex toys completely, either directly or through laws regulating "obscene devices."^[25] In 1999, William H. Pryor, Jr., an assistant attorney general in Alabama commenting on a case involving sex toys and discussing to what end the devices are used, was quoted as saying there is no "fundamental right for a person to buy a device to produce orgasm". A federal appeals court upheld Alabama's law prohibiting the sale of sex toys on Valentine's Day, 2007.^[26]

In February 2008, a federal appeals court overturned a Texas statute banning the sales of sex toys, deeming such a statute as violating the Constitution's 14th Amendment on the right to privacy.^[27] The appeals court cited *Lawrence v. Texas*, where the U.S. Supreme Court in 2003 struck down bans on consensual sex between gay couples, as unconstitutionally aiming at "enforcing a public moral code by restricting private intimate conduct." Similar statutes have been struck down in Kansas and Colorado.

Dr. Marty Klein, author of *America's War on Sex* and an advocate for the moral value of sex toys, has written of sex toy bans that this "extraordinary erosion of personal liberty, coupled with the massive disrespect of and fear of sexuality is no joke" and that the "Supreme Court [of the United States] has declared our orgasms a battlefield, and sex toys another casualty."^[28]

Industry

As of 2008, it was valued at US\$15 billion worldwide, with a growth rate of 30%.^[29] 70% of sex toys are manufactured in China.^{[29][30][31]} Sex toys are sold in various types of local and online sex shops,^[32] at conventions associated with the adult industry,^{[33][34]} and at parties. However, some items, such as "hand held massagers", are sold in mainstream retail outlets such as drugstores.^[33]

In popular culture

- On *Millionaire Matchmaker*, "Sex Toy Dave" Levine - who earned a fortune selling adult toys and wanted Patti to find him a mate, preferably bisexual, who would accept him as he is - was featured as one of Patti Stanger's clients.^[35]
- On *Real Housewives of Atlanta*, Kandi Burruss frequently discusses, displays, and gives other cast members gifts from her sex toy line, "Bedroom Kandi", which she also promotes via her online show, *Kandi Koated Nights*.^[36]

See also

- Anti-Obscenity Enforcement Act
- Genital jewellery
- List of BDSM equipment
- Sex doll
- Sex shop
- Sex toy party
- Sybian
- Venus 2000
- Teledildonics
- Tenga (masturbation toy)

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External links

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