

keen to have sex. Sexual desires are normal and healthy for men and women, regardless of their sexuality. A good rule of thumb is that you should feel comfortable having an open and frank discussion about sex with your partner, including what protection will be used, before beginning a sexual relationship. It is normal to have a sexual relationships with your partner, but this should never be imposed by one partner on another. There are also some people who enjoy 'casual' sex which means that the couple aren't dating as such – there's no romance or commitment to each other. No matter how deep the relationship or when this becomes sexual, full consent is essential from both.

What is CONSENT?

Consent means giving permission for something to happen or agreeing to do something and being comfortable with that decision. It doesn't matter what gender you are, or whether you're straight, gay or bisexual, if you're planning to do anything sexual then both of you must give consent.

Consent has to be given freely and no one can be made to consent to something. It's not consent if someone does something because they feel like they have to. You can also never assume that someone is giving consent – you have to be sure.

Consent is an essential part of healthy relationships and it's really important to know what it is. Both you and the person you're with always need to consent before sex or any intimate activity. If you want to do something sexual with your partner, the responsibility lies with you to check for consent, not with your partner to say 'no' if they don't want to.

You need to take responsibility for seeking consent from your partner every time, as people can change their mind at any point, even during sex. Just because someone consented to something once, it still means you have to ask again as they could feel differently from last time. Also, consent to one sort of sexual activity does not mean consent to everything

Even if you've had sex with someone, and then you start again and they say no, if you insist/force them then it can be considered sexual assault or rape. Having sex with somebody who is too drunk or too high from drugs to make a decision, or who is asleep, can be considered rape and you can be prosecuted. Similarly, if someone has agreed to sex with a condom, and you do not wear a condom, or remove or tear the condom, they have not consented to unprotected sex and it can be considered rape (this is sometimes called "stealth" in the media). If someone has forced you or had sex with you in any of these situations you can report this to the police. This applies equally to heterosexual and gay/lesbian relationships.

A good way to understand consent is to watch the videos below.

Tea Consent: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZwvrXVavnQ>

Consent is Everything: <http://www.consentiseverything.com/#Home>

Every sexual relationship has to be consensual. It is not just the relationship that has to be consensual, but also the sexual practices. There is a wide range of things that people do as part of sexual activity – the general rule is that anything that both people want to do is fine; anything that only one person does/does not want to do is not OK.