



CONSENT

V2.0 2025



Consent means getting a person's permission to do something to, with or for them, before it happens.

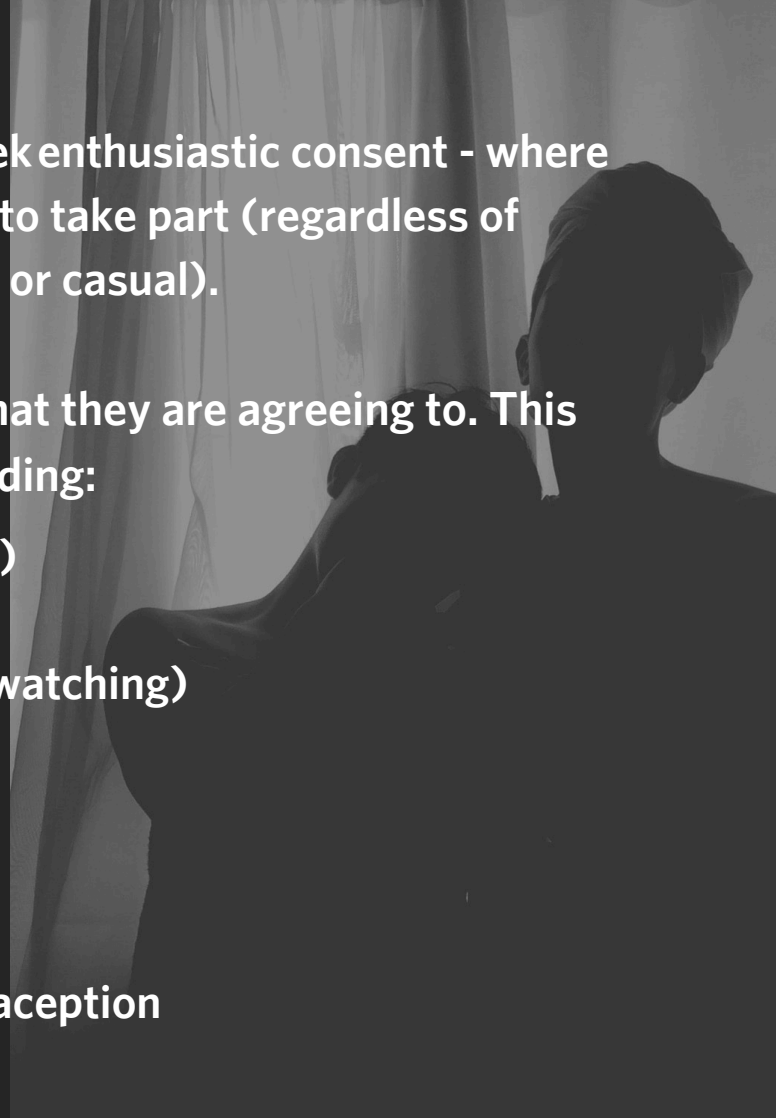
It is also...

- **An agreement that lasts only as long as everyone involved wants it to**
- **Something that can be withdrawn at any point**
- **Requires everyone involved to fully agree every time it happens**
- **Involves accepting and respecting a person's wish not to take part or to stop the activity**

For sex, it is important we always seek enthusiastic consent - where everyone involved is happy and keen to take part (regardless of whether a relationship is established or casual).

People also need to know exactly what they are agreeing to. This applies to any intimate activity including:

- **Kissing (with or without tongues)**
- **Touching**
- **Masturbation (both together or watching)**
- **Vaginal sex**
- **Anal sex**
- **Looking at pornography**
- **Filming during sex**
- **Barrier methods and other contraception**



Good sex and consent go hand in hand. Some people might think asking for consent is awkward or likely to 'ruin the moment' but it actually makes sex more pleasurable!



Consent is legally required

Any kind of sexual activity without consent is illegal and can count as harassment, assault or rape.

This includes:

- Filming someone without consent
- Sharing film or images of someone else containing sexual content
- Removing a condom during sex without the other person knowing
- Forcing someone to watch pornography
- Repeatedly asking or pressurising someone for sex

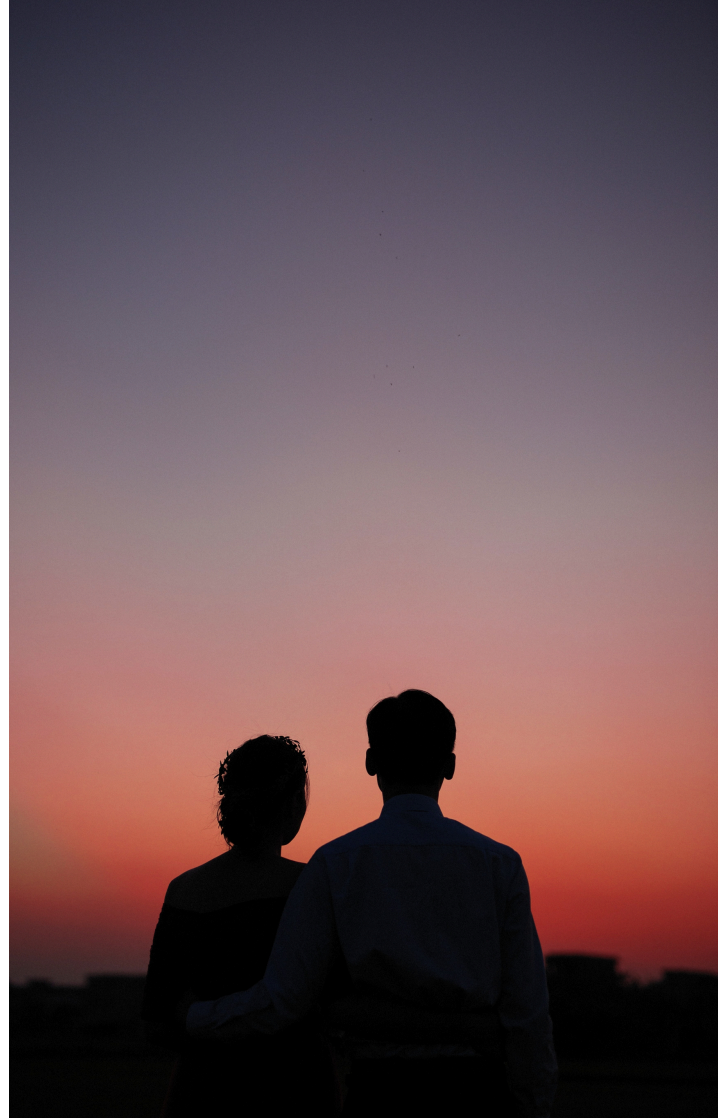
Respect

If intimate material is shared without consent

Sharing explicit photos or videos of anyone without consent is against the law in Scotland and the UK. It is also illegal to have explicit material of anyone younger than 18 years.

Check out: [CEOP Education](#)

If you have been affected by this, you have the right to ask for support from the police (by calling 101), or services offering confidential support and information about your options (see pages 7, 23 and 24 for service information).



Childline (for all people under 19 years)

0800 1111 childline.org.uk

Revenge Porn Helpline

0345 6000 459 (10-4 Mon-Fri) revengepornhelpline.org.uk

Victim Support Scotland

0800 160 1985 victimsupport.scot

Victim Support UK victimsupport.org.uk

Victim Support NI victimsupportni.com

Citizens Advice information page about revenge porn

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/law-and-courts/civil-rights/freedom-of-information-and-privacy/if-your-intimate-photos-or-videos-are-shared-without-your-consent/>





Am I ready to give consent?

The decision to be sexually intimate with anyone is yours alone.

If you feel unsure at all, take some more time to think about it: if someone really cares about you they will respect your decision and give you all the time you need, with no pressure.

If you are sure and feel ready to be sexually active with anyone, make sure to check they are too! You should not assume that others are as keen or ready as you may be, even if they have consented to sex with you before.

Talking about consent

It doesn't need to be a long conversation or a written contract: checking in with each other before and during sex can be quick, straightforward and actually pretty sexy!

However, you should not have sex without it...



Before sex...

Make sure you know the age of the person you are discussing sex with: the legal age of consent for sex in Scotland and the UK is 16 years.

This law, and the penalties for breaking it, still apply even if you are under 16 years yourself.

Even if the other person seems aroused, it does not necessarily mean they want to have sex: you need to check with them about what they want to do, without pressuring them.





Discuss with your partner if verbal or non-verbal consent practices work best for you both. Whatever is agreed, it should be clear: asking someone to 'chill' is not asking if they want to have sex!

Keep verbal questions simple e.g.
'do you want to have sex?'

If the other person clearly indicates they would like to have sex, check what they want to do...

'What do you like?'

'Would you like me to [touch/rub/lick etc] your [.....]?'

Talk about barrier methods
including dams.

You have the right to
use them, and to
request their use
without shame.



You should **NEVER** remove barrier methods during sex without full
knowledge and consent of the other person.

Talk about any other contraception you might need.



During sex...

Find out if the other person likes what you are doing or if they would like something else, verbally or non-verbally if this has been agreed beforehand.

Non-verbal signals can include body language 'cues' and responses, that have been discussed before sex started.

Verbal check-ins can be simple questions like:

- 'Is this okay?'
- 'Do you want me to keep doing this?'
- 'Would you like to try doing something else?'

You should not assume your partner will be happy doing anything else, even if they have done so before.



Check the responses you get are clearly signalling enjoyment, for instance...

- Smiling
- Being relaxed
- Being physically responsive to touches
- Pre-agreed non-verbal signals
- Being verbally responsive e.g.
 - 'Oh yeah! '
 - 'Don't stop!'
 - 'Keep doing that!'
 - 'Can we try?'

WHEN TO STOP AND CHECK

- If the other person's responses change
- If their body language doesn't match their words
- If your partner starts tensing or 'freezing' up*
- If you are unsure at all
- If you feel they might not be enjoying it or might like something else



*Sometimes when a person's brain is unsure how to respond to an experience their body can enter a 'freeze' mode. If your partner suddenly stops moving, or speaking, this is a good time to check in with them and ask if they are OK. Silence and/or passivity do not mean consent!

WHEN TO JUST STOP

- Immediately if someone says no or tries to push you away
- If there is no response at all
- If the other person is rigid or tense*
- If the other person is or becomes upset

If someone says stop or gives signals that something may be wrong, stop immediately.

Make sure the other person knows it's OK to stop and that you fully respect what they want to do (even if you feel disappointed: you need to move past that emotion and think about the safety of the other person).

Don't expect sex to start again that day; you need to wait until the other person is fully consenting.





Drugs and consent

Consent is not just needed for sex but for many aspects of life, including agreeing to take drugs with someone else.

Never assume that if someone has taken drugs with you before they will want to do so again.

You should always seek enthusiastic consent and never pressure anyone: if in doubt, best leave it out.

Be mindful around dose: what may work for you could be too much or even risky for others.

You have the right to choose whether you take drugs or not, and to ask about content and dosage.

Allowing others to 'judge' a dose for you can be risky.

You should never add something to someone's drink or other drugs, or give someone a pill or powder pretending it is something else.



Drugs, sex and consent

Some drugs can increase sexual arousal, lower inhibitions and make people more likely to take risks.

Some people take drugs specifically to heighten or prolong sex ('sex with drugs' or 'chemsex').

Sex with drugs can have risks around consent. There can be increased potential for harm with poly-drug use (using more than one drug at a time) as drugs can interact and tracking doses is extremely important so do your research.

Check out: **crew.scot** and search 'sex and intimacy'





Under UK law, a person does not have capacity to consent to sex while under the influence of drugs including alcohol.

If you choose to take drugs with others and also want to have sex, or there is the possibility of sex, it is vital to put harm reduction measures in place.

Also:

- While sober, fully discuss and confirm if all parties are interested in having sex.
- Make clear limits - what you will and will not do - and stick to them.
- Make a clear safety plan for what to do if someone feels unwell, sex stops feeling good or feels unsafe.

It is common for someone to feel unsure or afraid after experiencing a situation where they felt their consent was not given freely or enthusiastically.

People react differently to new, frightening experiences and can sometimes freeze up while it is happening, or not feel confident to say no at the time. This is a normal reaction. Trust your instincts and listen to your emotions.

It can be especially important to agree on non-verbal cues for consent for people who may have experienced difficult or traumatic events and find it difficult to say the words 'no' or 'stop'.



Needing to talk?

If you feel something has happened to you that was non-consensual, try to take yourself to a safe place, away from the person or people the incident happened with and speak to a person you trust about it. You could also call one of the numbers below (or from page 7).

If you are in danger please call 999, pressing '55' if unable to talk.

Rape Crisis Scotland

08088 01 03 02 (6pm-midnight) rapecrisisscotland.org.uk 

Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline

0800 027 1234 sdafmh.org.uk 

FearFree (domestic abuse support for people who identify as a man or from the LGBTQIA+ community)

0131 624 7270 fearfree.scot 

More info also see pages 7 and 23

healthyrespect.co.uk (sexual health information and support for young people in Lothian)

lgbtyouth.org.uk (support for LGBT+ people aged 13-25 years)

revengepornhelpline.org.uk

unitysexualhealth.co.uk/accessing-service-learning-difficulties (sexual health information for people with learning difficulties)

notyourstoshare.scot (information about Scottish law against sharing intimate material without consent)

Crew would like to thank the Ogangs Youth Advisors for their amazing help with this resource!

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