



YOUR SEXUAL kick-starter

You've got the anatomy bit nailed, but biology can't answer the *really* important sex topics – like owning it when naked, or where to start when looking for a sex toy. We can: practical, crowd-sourced advice that's all about your feels. Yes please!

We go to classes to get fitter, watch TED Talks to get smarter, negotiate our salaries to get richer. Great sex is expected to just... happen. By magic. But watching a Beyoncé video and hoping for that no-holds-barred confidence when naked is like a dude watching *Magic Mike 2* and hoping to be Channing Tatum. It's good #inspo (and yep, a girl can dream) but you've got to learn your own formula for confidence and desire.

"Film and porn present sex as simple and effortlessly obtained, with everyone having vast quantities of orgasmic partnered sex. The rest of us wonder where we fit in if we are un-partnered or aren't experiencing orgasms,"

explains Doctor Lauren Rosewarne, gender researcher at the University Of Melbourne (laurenrosewarne.com).

Her answer? "We need to become more committed to learning about our pleasure, and abolish the idea that speaking about sex – that asking too many questions about it – is shameful, dirty or taboo."

Hell yes to that! As our response, we've rounded up a group of awesome, smart, sex-loving women who make a living out of that message. Apart from just hanging out (because they rule), we asked them to answer the questions you felt that you could never ask in sex-education class.

“How do I orgasm the ‘normal’ way?”

Expert: Sexologist Naomi Hutchings, founder of Adelaide Sexology (adelaidesexology.com.au).

Let's lose a word from that sentence...

"Normal. I constantly get women feeling bad if they can't orgasm 'the normal way', which they only see as vaginal penetration. I often hear, 'I'm having clitoral orgasms but I want you to teach me how to also have vaginal orgasms'. Or, 'I had an orgasm but it was with my partner's finger'. And my response is always this: since when was there a hierarchy of orgasms? When we start giving things a hierarchy that's just too much pressure. Let's just call them all orgasms."

P in V isn't the be-all and end-all. There are so many other ways to enjoy an orgasm.

"If you're not having vaginal orgasms with a penis inside of you, don't worry. Most women – around 70 per cent – don't. And because of where the clitoris is situated, it makes perfect sense to me that you wouldn't. It's OK to use your hand or a vibrator on the clitoris during sexual intercourse. When you stop thinking that things can only happen one way, you'll enjoy whatever is going on a lot more."

“How on earth do I buy a sex toy?”

Expert: Professional sex-toy tester Epiphora, heyepiphora.com.

It might be a little on the obvious side, but first things first – just walk in to the shop.

"People get consumed by the terror of being in a sex shop, but the Internet can never depict the size, shape, feel, controls or noise of a toy. I see many toys touted as waterproof, super-loud vibes labelled 'whisper quiet', straight dildos that claim to hit the G-spot. Get your hands on things – your visceral reaction will tell you a lot."

Navigate through the big ones, the small ones and yep, even the spiky ones.

"Think about how you usually like to masturbate. Do you like to insert something, stimulate your clitoris, or both? Do you like pressure pinpointed on one spot or broader? After that, it's pretty much a question of what features you require. If you masturbate in the bath, you're going to need something submersible. If you need to be quiet, don't go for sheer power (there's also an

accompanying noise level). If you're not a huge fan of penetration when you are masturbating, a Rabbit isn't going to be ideal – no matter how great *Sex And The City* made it look. The most key ingredients are a range of different vibration intensities, from very low to powerful, with many levels in between."

If you're new to the whole sex toy thing and are after a great all-rounder...

"My pick would be the LELO Mona 2 (\$159.95, mimideluxe.com). Although primarily marketed as a G-spot toy, this is one of the best things to ever come in contact with my clitoris [to picture it in real life, make a thumbs up sign – the Mona has the same slight curve up top and wide tip]. It's rechargeable, strong, rumbly, waterproof, and its shape is awesome both internally and externally. I just love mine so much that I have two back-up Monas on standby at home." ➡

“How do I feel clothes-off confident about my body?”

Expert: Burlesque artist Sina King (misssinaking.com) has built up a career on being confident in (just) her skin.

Replace any limiting voices in your head with positive, self confidence-boosting mantras and sayings.

“Anything that could expose you to potential judgement can be really scary. Performing isn’t too nerve-racking as I’ve been on stage since childhood, yet my first TV interview petrified me. I was a mess. But my desire to achieve something was much greater than my concern for what others thought. I often use positive mantras: ‘You are a confident, beautiful, intelligent person’. If you read that and it made you feel happier, replace the ‘you are’ with ‘I am’. Repeat this whenever that negative voice start to creep in.”

Certain poses automatically make you hold yourself with more self-confidence.

“Avoid squeezing your arms against your body – it flattens everything out and hides your natural shape. Rest your hand lightly on any body part that you wish to draw attention to. Think upwards: elongate your neck, imagine that your chin is resting on a little ledge, keep both your shoulders back to improve your posture and... make sure you smile.”

You don’t need to try too hard to be “sexy”. You already are, as is.

“Trying to ‘be sexy’ is the first step to feeling uncomfortable. Sexy is something you feel; if you’re not feeling it, you won’t ever be confident pretending. Looking in the mirror and thinking what you wish was different about yourself is a really horrible thing to do. Be nice to yourself. Being naked is a skill that we are all born with. You’re already expert.”



“How do I decide if anal sex is for me?”

Expert: Sexologist Juliet Allen runs sex-positive workshops for young adults (juliet-allen.com).

If you’re feeling quite intrigued and are keen to give it a go...

“It doesn’t have to be painful. The important thing is to relax your mind and body. Try this: physically tighten the muscles in your anus by squeezing your butt muscles and then relaxing them. This is useful to remember if you do try it. Where to start? A finger brushing around the area will get you used to how it feels. If you enjoy that contact and are keen to try something deeper, relax your mind, your muscles, and use plenty of lubricant as the anus doesn’t produce its own natural wetness [like a vagina]. But it’s your body – never feel pressured to do anything that you don’t get pleasure from.”

And do so without pressure...

“Anal sex isn’t for everyone. If you don’t enjoy it, or don’t even enjoy the thought of trying it, then that is 100 per cent OK. On to the next section!”

“How do I make the most of touching myself?”

Expert: Author of *Sex Yourself, The Woman’s Guide To Mastering Masturbation*, Carlyle Jansen.

Break your routine for a stronger orgasm.

“Variety can take us away from the boring path – just as our bodies respond with more excitement to something slightly different in partner sex. Use a different hand, face a different way on the bed, try a different position, fantasy or location. Make a little sound. It’s not about how loud – you don’t get extra points for screaming – a gentle ‘Mmm’ or ‘Ahhh’ won’t alert your parents or housemates.”

When you’re going at it... hard, try and relax the muscles in your thighs.

“Many of us naturally tense our thighs as well as our pelvis because it seems to increase the sensation. It does, but it then stunts further arousal. Because the muscles that usually contract during orgasm are already contracted, you’re left with a much weaker, shorter orgasm.”

Instead, try to relax your thighs with every breath out. This way, you’ll achieve increased sensation without limiting the end result.”

Increase the intensity by aiming for at least 20 minutes per session.

“If you tend to orgasm in less than 10 minutes, you haven’t given your body time to build your maximum amount of arousal. Bring yourself close – then back off, focusing on another part of the body or kind of stimulation – then switch back. If you don’t orgasm easily, or at all (10 per cent of women don’t either) use a vibrator. It makes it less laborious and frustrating to try to get there. Don’t worry too much about needing it; like some need glasses to see properly and others need a calculator to do basic maths, some of us need the help of a vibrator to reach orgasm.”

“How do I get from so-so sex to great sex?”

Expert: Psychologist Sarah Calleja is a member of the Society of Australian Sexologists and has developed a sex-ed app (actionpsychology.com).

When it comes to sex, there is no magic number or ‘right’ technique.

“Sex six times a day. No sex at all. A sex drought. When it comes to sex, we’re 50 Shades of Confused. Why? Because we romanticise sex to be multiple-orgasmic, energetic and coordinated. The reality is that sex is often pretty clumsy: inserting and then withdrawing, sweating, slipping, sliding and varting (vaginal farts!)”

Firstly, talking about your sex life can really, really help.

“People invest more effort into deciding whether to trim their pubic hair or not

than in learning to talk about sex. But you want to know if the sex that you’re having is part of an exclusive relationship or casual, yeah? Who will be the main initiator? Who’ll take responsibility for safe sex? You want your partner to make you feel wanted and desired, and for them to reassure you they won’t judge you or abandon you. The way to do that isn’t wild chemistry or a wild sex position – it’s putting your piece of mind first, and simply just bringing it up.” Yep, you heard it here first, a seriously mind-blowing orgasm is just one conversation away. Too easy. You’ve totally got this. 🍆