



## What is consent?

Consent is an ongoing agreement between two or more people to engage in a sexual activity.

### Consent must be affirmative –

This means that if you want to engage in sexual activities someone, you are responsible for taking steps to get their consent.

### Consent must be freely given –

This means by law that consent cannot be given under intoxication, coercion, force or manipulation.

### Consent must be informed –

This means that everyone who is giving consent knows what it is they are agreeing to do. For example, consenting to one sexual activity does not mean you are consenting to all sexual activities.

### Consent must be an ongoing process –

This means it needs to be given more than just one time. For example, as you get further into the hook up and move between different sexual activities, you and your partner/s must make continuous agreements to keep going.

## What does consent look like in sex spaces?

In sex spaces, some people will communicate entirely through body language, eye or hand movements. Someone can let you know they are interested by maintaining eye contact, smiling and nodding, gesturing for you to come over to them or moving closer to you.

This can make consent more difficult, right? What if you are both reading the other's body language incorrectly?

If someone has shown interest in you, and you've moved towards each other, it's now time to get verbal. Ask them a simple question like

*"What are you up for?"*

*"What are you into?"*

*"Wanna hook up?"*

Wait for them to give you a reply and you're off to a great start at getting consent!

If they are not responding, are turning away or looking away from you, then it's a good indication that they are not interested. If you're unsure whether you have consent at this point, then you probably don't.

Remember, even if someone consented to having sex with you in the past, this doesn't mean they've consented to having sex anytime you like. If someone isn't interested, that's okay. Be polite, move on, and get back to looking for what you want!



## Checking in

As things start to heat up, it's important to check in.

Checking in means keeping informed about how your partner/s are feeling and seeing if it's okay for things to keep going.

This is especially important if you're hooking up with someone who's affected by drugs or alcohol.

The law says that a person can't consent if they are so out of it, drunk or high on other drugs, that they can't give consent or withdraw consent to the sex that is happening.

That is why checking in is so important.

### Checking in with your partner/s is as simple as asking

*"Is this okay?"*

*"Want to keep going?"*

*"Need a break?"*

**Pay attention to your partner's expressions, movement and body language throughout the hook up, not just at the start.**

- **Do they look upset?**
- **Do they look unhappy?**
- **Are they turning away from you?**
- **Are they tensing up?**
- **Are they pushing you away?**
- **Have they gone quiet?**

Even if you're just feeling unsure, always check in – it's as simple as asking a question and waiting for either a verbal or nonverbal response.

If you don't get a response from your partner/s this means you don't have consent to keep going and you need to stop.

## What if you want to stop?

You have the right to say no, and so does everyone else. If you ask someone to stop, it is important that they do so immediately. If they don't this is sexual assault.

Remember, even if you're unsure or just don't feel right, you can stop. You don't need to justify your decision or have a reason for stopping.

## Where can you get help if something happens?

The first thing to do is to get to a safe space. This could look like a bathroom, a private room, a well lit room with people around, or just anywhere that makes you feel safer. Once you are there, you can think about what you want to do next.

It's entirely your decision what you do in this situation, but remember your options include

- Speak with the venue staff about what happened. Venues will have a code of conduct or 'house rules' to protect customers from harm. They may be able to remove the person, and provide you with help.
- Get support by calling a friend or chat with someone about your options on 1800 RESPECT or QLife.
- Contact the Sexual Assault Crisis Line by calling 1800 806 292, available 24/7.
- Contact the Police and report what happened. You can ask at your local station to talk with an LGBTIQ Liaison Officer if you do choose to report.

## Support Contacts

**1800 RESPECT** - 1800 737 732  
1800respect.org.au | 24/7

**QLife** - 1800 184 527  
qlife.org.au | 3pm to midnight

**Sexual Assault Crisis Line** - 1800 806 292  
sacl.com.au | 5pm to 9am

For more information about LGBTIQ+ and sexual health, visit us at [thorneharbour.org](http://thorneharbour.org)



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SEX & CONSENT  
IN SEX SPACES

