

# Masturbation

For ages I'd been hearing friends of mine discussing masturbation whilst chatting in the school playground at lunch time. I must have only been about 11 at the time and I was really unsure what it all meant, so like most kids, I had to ask others to find out more.

When I heard that it was 'the best feeling ever' and that you could reach that feeling easily on your own, I just had to try it. I did, but it bloody hurt to start with, and I was struck down by some rather stupendous amounts of guilt. I felt like I'd done a bad thing and it messed with me for what felt like years.

Ultimately I ended up confiding in my father, worrying that I was some kind of evil monster for enjoying masturbation. He literally laughed in my face and told me it was nothing to worry about. He also went a little overkill and decided to tell me it was alright because he did it too. Thanks dad. In the end, I grew up and I realised, as everyone does, that masturbation is the most natural thing on earth and it stood me in good stead as my sexuality progressed. Being disabled is sometimes challenging when it comes to matters of sexual intimacy, so being well used to my own equipment thanks to years of masturbation most certainly comes in handy!

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Masturbation (or touching your own genitals to get sexual pleasure) is completely normal, natural and pretty common! For most of us, masturbation is the first time we experience sex of any sort, possibly have our first orgasm, and it's a great way to get to know and learn about our own bodies. Equally, not everyone is that keen on masturbation, and that's absolutely fine too! Like any sexual act, it should only be done if you feel comfortable doing it.

There's no right or wrong way to masturbate – it's whatever feels good to you! You can masturbate on your own, or some couples do it together. One great thing about masturbation is that it can't cause you any harm, as you are completely in control of your own feelings. It's a very safe (and STI free) way of getting pleasure – unless any fluids are passed between you and your partner, of course.

## Bragging vs Hiding

For some reason, it seems to be impressive for men to talk about masturbation, whereas many girls feel like they will be judged if they do. Both men and women masturbate regularly, and both genders should feel comfortable in doing so. Masturbation is a great way to find out what you like and don't like, and you can transfer this knowledge for when you have sex.



**If you have a disability:** Depending on your own body and dexterity, masturbation might be super easy for you, or a little bit tricky. Like anything, getting it right sometimes takes time and effort, but if you are struggling, don't be embarrassed to speak to your GP or another professional. There are many ways to help everyone masturbate and get sexual pleasure, regardless of ability.

## Extra support

Feel free to contact Mik or Emily at The Love Lounge:

[www.enhancetheuk.org/enhance/the-love-lounge](http://www.enhancetheuk.org/enhance/the-love-lounge)

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