



# EMILY MORSE

Teaches

**SEX AND COMMUNICATION**



MasterClass

# The Pleasure's All Yours

MEET EMILY MORSE, A WALKING HOW-TO GUIDE FOR GETTING IT ON

Emily Morse wants to talk about sex. She'd like to discuss foreplay, role-play, nipple play. She'd be happy to break down the finer points of BDSM or delve into the details of planning your first threesome. Did you just find your teenage daughter's sex toy? Emily is all ears.

But the host of the award-winning *Sex With Emily* podcast wasn't always so open. Born and raised in the suburbs of Detroit, she double-majored in psychology and political science at the University of Michigan. She remembers asking friends, "What is the big deal with sex? 'Cause this is not impressive. It doesn't feel great." She didn't hear the word *orgasm*, much less discover that women could masturbate, until her junior year of college. "I was so confused. I was angry. And I was like, 'How come I don't know this?'" Emily says.

After graduating in 1992, she moved to San Francisco and spent the next decade trying different career paths. She worked for Senator Barbara Boxer and hit the campaign trail with Mayor Willie Brown—and made an award-winning documentary, *See How They Run*, about the latter's bid for reelection. She acted in commercials and a few movies, and she did some modeling. She backpacked in Asia for a year. She tried silent meditation.

Still, Emily was talking about sex with everyone she could. "You probably have this friend that's like, 'Oh, last night, I had the best sex in my life. Sex was amazing.'



And I always found myself saying, 'Well, hold up. What exactly do you mean by that? Are you on the top? Are you on the bottom? Like, what is happening to make sex great?'" she says.

Finally, in 2005, inspired by her experience as a documentarian, she decided to start recording these conversations. She hired some help off Craigslist, conducted interviews from her living room, and posted them online—and, in doing so, became one of the first weekly podcast hosts. (The word *podcasting* was coined in 2004.) Making *Sex With Emily* felt different than any of her previous jobs. "This is gonna be my career," Emily



THIS CLASS CONTAINS MATURE CONTENT WITH SEXUAL CONTENT AND/OR THEMES

remembers thinking. “I just had this hunch—this is going to change people’s lives.”

It did. *Sex With Emily*’s honest, candid conversations about pleasure and intimacy—the first episode included discussions about polyamory and bikini waxes, and an interview with a man named Captain Erotica—quickly gained the attention of listeners. As her audience grew, Emily expanded into other media. In 2011, she coauthored the book *Hot Sex: Over 200 Things You Can Try Tonight*. She starred in the Bravo reality series *Miss Advised* the following year. Since then, she’s written a column for *Glamour*, appeared on the *TODAY* show,

released a smartphone app, and signed with SiriusXM. She also attended the Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality. Fifteen years into its historic run, *Sex With Emily*, widely cited as one of the longest-running sex podcasts in history, now has more than 1 million downloads per month.

Emily’s hope is that you’ll learn to better navigate your sex life, discover new techniques, and find ways to communicate openly about sex. “Why shouldn’t we be able to talk about it like we’re talking about everything else?” Emily says. “Sunny outside. I had an orgasm for breakfast. See? That’s easy.”

## Automatic Negative Thoughts

Negative self-talk during sex or masturbation, which can limit or stifle sexual exploration and fulfillment.

## Compliment sandwich

A strategy for constructive critique within a sexual relationship. Start with an affirmational lead-in, followed by something you'd like to try or change, and end with another positive statement.

## Desire discrepancy

When a couple has mismatched libidos.

## Edging

The process of learning to control ejaculation for penis owners, achieved by reaching the precipice of orgasm, then stopping stimulation (see also: squeeze technique).

## Elevator pitch

A brief talk wherein you tell your partner about a fantasy and propose making it into a reality.

## Feel-good hormones

Oxytocin, dopamine, serotonin, prolactin, and endorphins—the chemicals your brain releases as a response to orgasm.

# Let's Talk About Sex

THE OFFICIAL EMILY-APPROVED SEXUAL DICTIONARY

## Four stages of arousal

A theory from sex researchers Masters and Johnson (see page 5) that proposes a linear sexual response cycle consisting of excitement, plateau, orgasm, and resolution.

## G-area

An area two to three inches inside the vaginal canal that, when stimulated, can lead to pleasure and sometimes orgasm. Medical evidence of the G-area—often called the G-spot, short for the Gräfenberg spot and named for gynecologist Ernst Gräfenberg—remains limited due to long-standing gender disparities in health research, and its entire existence has been called into question in recent years.

## Kegels

Pelvic floor exercises that both penis owners and vulva owners can use to strengthen sexual muscles. These can positively

affect orgasm, prostate health, incontinence, and overall sexual pleasure.

## Lust phase

The period in a new relationship when partners typically have more sex.

## Mindful masturbation

Using masturbation as a method to explore sexual response to various stimulations, like erogenous zones and personal fantasies (see page 12. See also: sexual wellness).

## Orgasm gap

The disparity in orgasm frequency between penis owners and vulva owners.

## Orgasmic potential

All of the orgasms in your future.

## Penis owner

People with penises (it's not just cis men).

## Responsive desire

A theory of arousal, proposed by sex researcher Rosemary Basson (see page 6), which suggests that sexual desire is triggered by touch, affection, and romance, and that it is nonlinear.

## Sexual bucket list

The top sex acts you'd like to try. Write them down and share them with a partner, if you've got one (or more).

## Sexual menu

All the sex acts you see as being possible. For each individual sexual encounter, you and your partner can choose a few.

## Sexual road map

Your unique turn-ons and kinks.

## Sexual wellness

Sexual health, both physical and emotional. Sexual wellness is understood as an important part of overall health and well-being.

## Squeeze technique

A method of edging for penis owners. This means stopping stimulation when the penis owner nears ejaculation and squeezing the top of the penis (where the glans

meets the shaft) until the feeling passes.

## The three Ts

Emily's three must-haves for a healthy discussion about sex between partners: timing, turf, and tone.

## Unlocking your orgasm

The process of using masturbation for self-discovery—and teaching yourself to have an orgasm.

## Vagina

The vaginal canal; the "inside" of the vulva.

## Vulva

The clitoris, labia, urethral opening, and vaginal opening; the "outside" of the vagina.

## Vulva owner

People with vulvas (it's not just cis women).

## Yes/No/Maybe list

A list of sex acts on which you and/or your partner can mark "Yes," "No," or "Maybe," indicating an individual or shared appetite for specific acts.

# What They Don't Teach You in Sex Ed

SPOILER: IT'S A VERY (VERY) LONG LIST

Remember the sex ed scene from the movie *Mean Girls*? “Don’t have sex, because you will get pregnant—and die,” the gym teacher says to a crop of wholly disinterested students. Then he hands out condoms. It’s a textbook case of satire that feels a little too true. Emily doesn’t mince words: “Sex education has really been a letdown, especially in America.”

Because classes are regulated state by state (rather than nationwide), there are massive discrepancies in what you might learn during a sex ed class—if you even *have* a sex ed class. Per [the National Conference of State Legislatures](#), as of October 2020, just 30 states and the District of Columbia require that public schools teach students about sex. At the time of this publication, only a fraction of states require the class content to be medically accurate.

According to the [Guttmacher Institute](#), a policy and research organization that seeks to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights, in 2014, more than 75 percent of public and private high schools taught students that abstinence is the most effective way to avoid pregnancy and sex-related infections, like HIV. Meanwhile, only 35 percent taught students how to use a condom. (When used correctly, condoms are 98 percent effective at preventing pregnancy, and they have been found to reduce the risk of HIV transmission by up to 87 percent.) As of 2015, less than 6 percent of LGBTQ+ youth reported that their high school health class included positive portrayals of LGBTQ+-related subjects. [Six states](#)—Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas—have laws that expressly for-

bid the “promotion of homosexuality” in health classes.

“There is nothing in sex education that talks about pleasure, that talks about consent, that explains to you your actual body parts and how they work, how you can use them, how you know what feels good,” Emily says. In her opinion, this approach to teaching sex is harmful. A portion of the medical community concurs: In 2017, a [comprehensive systemic review](#) of U.K. schools found that abstinence-only programming didn’t lead to changes in sexual behavior.

These are only a few reasons why the public overwhelmingly supports comprehensive sex education. According to a 2019 study published in *Sex Education*, 89 percent of likely voters believe it’s important to have sex education in middle school, 98 percent believe it is important to have sex education in high school, and just ten percent support federally funded programs designed to prevent unintended pregnancy and that focus only on encouraging the postponement of sex.

Sexual education for children has a long and contentious way to go, which makes sexual research all the more important for adults. “My personal mission around sex education is to liberate the conversation around sex,” Emily says. “Essentially, rebrand sex because most of the things you’ve learned about sex are untrue.”

*Many students don’t learn terms like “heteronormative” in sex ed. For help expanding your own vocabulary in conversations about gender identity, visit [masterclass.com](#).*

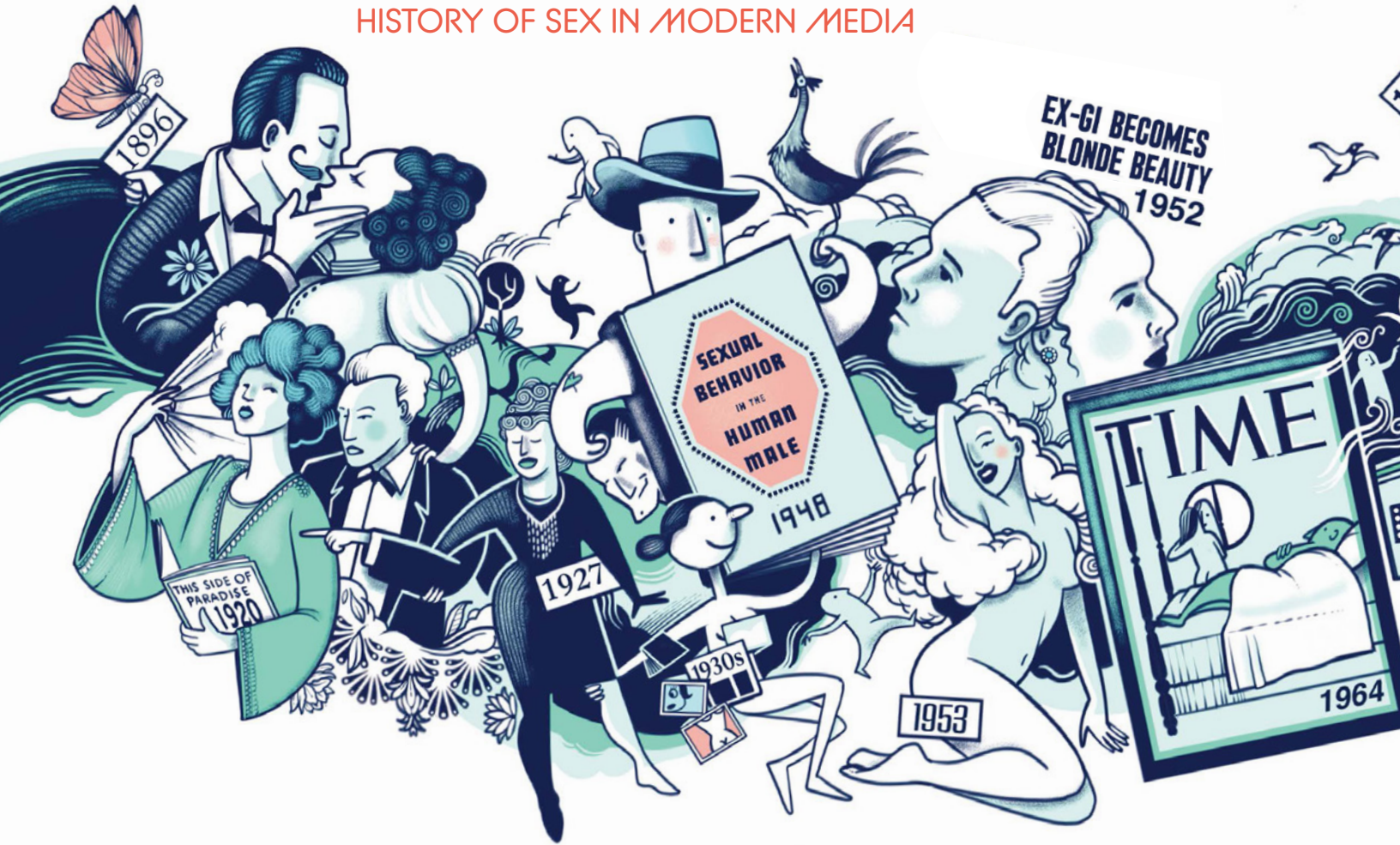
## Journal Prompt:

What was your in-school sex ed experience like? Outside of school, how did you learn about sex?



# Censory Overload

A CRASH (INTER)COURSE ON THE HISTORY OF SEX IN MODERN MEDIA



• **1896**

*The Kiss*, an early commercial motion picture by Thomas Edison, shows the first on-screen kiss between movie actors. Actress Louise Willy performs a striptease in the French film *Le Coucher de la Mariée* later that year.

• **1920**

In his debut novel, *This Side of Paradise*, F. Scott Fitzgerald examines morality and young love in the post-WWI era: “None of the Victorian mothers... had any idea how casually their daughters were accustomed to be kissed.”

• **1927**

The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America releases initial criteria for self-censorship in Hollywood. Prohibited subjects include “licentious or suggestive nudity,” interracial relationships, venereal diseases, and childbirth (“in fact or in silhouette”).

• **1930s**

Pocket-size cartoon pornos, called Tijuana bibles, circulate widely. Illustrations focus on popular comic strip characters, like Olive Oyl and Dick Tracy, having sex.

• **1948**

Alfred Kinsey publishes *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, the first of his two famed reports, showing that many men and women have had same-sex sexual experiences—and masturbate regularly.

• **1952**

Christine Jorgensen, a transgender woman, appears on the front page of the *New York Daily News*.

• **1953**

The first issue of *Playboy* magazine goes on sale, featuring a topless photo of Marilyn Monroe.

• **1964**

In a 5,000-word cover story essay, *TIME* magazine declares a new “Sexual Revolution.”

• **1969**

The Elgin Theater in New York screens Andy Warhol’s *Blue Movie*, described by *Variety* as the “first theatrical feature to actually depict intercourse.”

• **1972**

*The Joy of Sex* and *Open Marriage: A New Life Style for Couples* both appear on the *New York Times* Best Seller list. The former, which includes illustrated sex

positions, stays on the list for more than 40 weeks.

• **1978**

BBC Radio 1 refuses to play Tom Robinson’s “Glad to Be Gay” on the Top 40 show. It reaches No. 1 on the Capital Radio charts and becomes an international LGBTQ+ anthem.

• **1985**

Lyrics referencing female masturbation in “Darling Nikki” by Prince galvanize a censorship movement, leading to the introduction of Parental Advisory stickers on albums



containing “sexually explicit content.”

- **1995**  
Activist Riki Anne Wilchins uses the word *genderqueer* in a newsletter, which helps popularize the term throughout the '90s.

- **1997**  
*The Ethical Slut*, written by Dossie Easton and Janet Hardy, arrives in bookstores. It sells 200,000 copies and reframes the dialogue surrounding polyamory.

- **1998**  
HBO's *Sex and the City* features the Rabbit

vibrator. Average annual sales of the product increase more than 700 percent.

- **2000**  
*Queer as Folk*, the first hour-long drama on American TV focused on LGBTQ+ adults, premieres on Showtime.

- **2002**  
Sex researcher Rosemary Basson introduces the Cyclical Model of Desire, positing that desire can appear in response to outside activity, like reading erotica.

- **2003**  
*Queer Eye for the*

*Straight Guy* premieres on Bravo. The show focuses on five gay men giving grooming, culinary, and styling advice to straight male contestants.

- **2005**  
*Sex With Emily*, one of the longest-running sex podcasts in history, begins production.

- **2013**  
*Masters of Sex* premieres on Showtime. The period drama is based on the lives of William Masters and Virginia Johnson, pioneers in the science of human sexuality.

- **2018**  
Netflix reboots *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* as simply *Queer Eye*. The new iteration sees the Fab Five—Tan France, Jonathan Van Ness, Karamo Brown, Bobby Berk, and Antoni Porowski—working with (and crying with) “heroes” of all genders and sexual orientations. It's a global sensation.

- **2018**  
HBO hires Alicia Rodis, the network's first-ever intimacy coordinator, to oversee and choreograph all sex scenes for *The Deuce* (a series about the sex-work industry). Her presence is so significant in terms of making actors feel protected that HBO hires intimacy coordinators for all of its shows.



**Journal Prompt:** What are some memorable sex pop culture moments or news stories that happened in your lifetime? Why did they make an impact on you?

# View Responsibly

## HOW TO CONSUME PORNOGRAPHY ETHICALLY

Pornography is easier to access now than ever before, and watching scenes alone or with a partner can be an instant turn-on, a springboard to explore fantasies, or a way to get off. And while it's worth noting that there are better avenues for technical sexual instruction (remember: mainstream performers are, well, *performers*—the product typically doesn't reflect real-life sex, and important personal preparation, like applying lube, often gets edited out), porn can be a valuable part of your sex life.

But do you know where and how (and by whom) the videos you watch are being made?

In recent years, an alarming number of performers

have spoken up about unsafe working conditions on set, including instances of sexual assault. And some of these accusations have been leveled against performers and companies that market themselves as feminist.

It's indicative of the complexities involved with defining "ethical porn"—a subject you should investigate personally. Start by looking up the production company, platform, and performers you like, and check for troubling accusations against them. Better yet, make an effort to pay for your porn—preferably by giving your money to a performer directly, either by subscribing to their website or through OnlyFans. If you're interested in learning more, check out the Twitter hashtag #PayForYourPorn.

## Hit the Books

A quick guide to spicing up your bookshelf

Erotica has effectively existed, in one form or another, for as long as the written word. Sure, the earliest known Mesopotamian raunch (written by a woman, on a terra-cotta tablet, circa 2300 BC) or Victorian England's euphemistic botanical pornos (Charles Darwin's grandfather Erasmus was among the genre's preeminent scribes) seems mild by modern standards. But in their respective eras, these were sources of education and arousal, and the medium can still deliver on both fronts. Interested in exploring? Here are a few contemporary texts worth checking out.

### ROMANCE AND EROTICA

- *Red, White & Royal Blue* by Casey McQuiston
- *The Kiss Quotient* by Helen Hoang
- *The Wedding Date* by Jasmine Guillory
- *The Lady's Guide to Celestial Mechanics* by Olivia Waite
- *Get a Life, Chloe Brown* by Talia Hibbert
- *Addicted* by Zane
- *Best Women's Erotica of the Year* edited by Rachel Kramer Bussel

### GROW'N-UP SEX ED

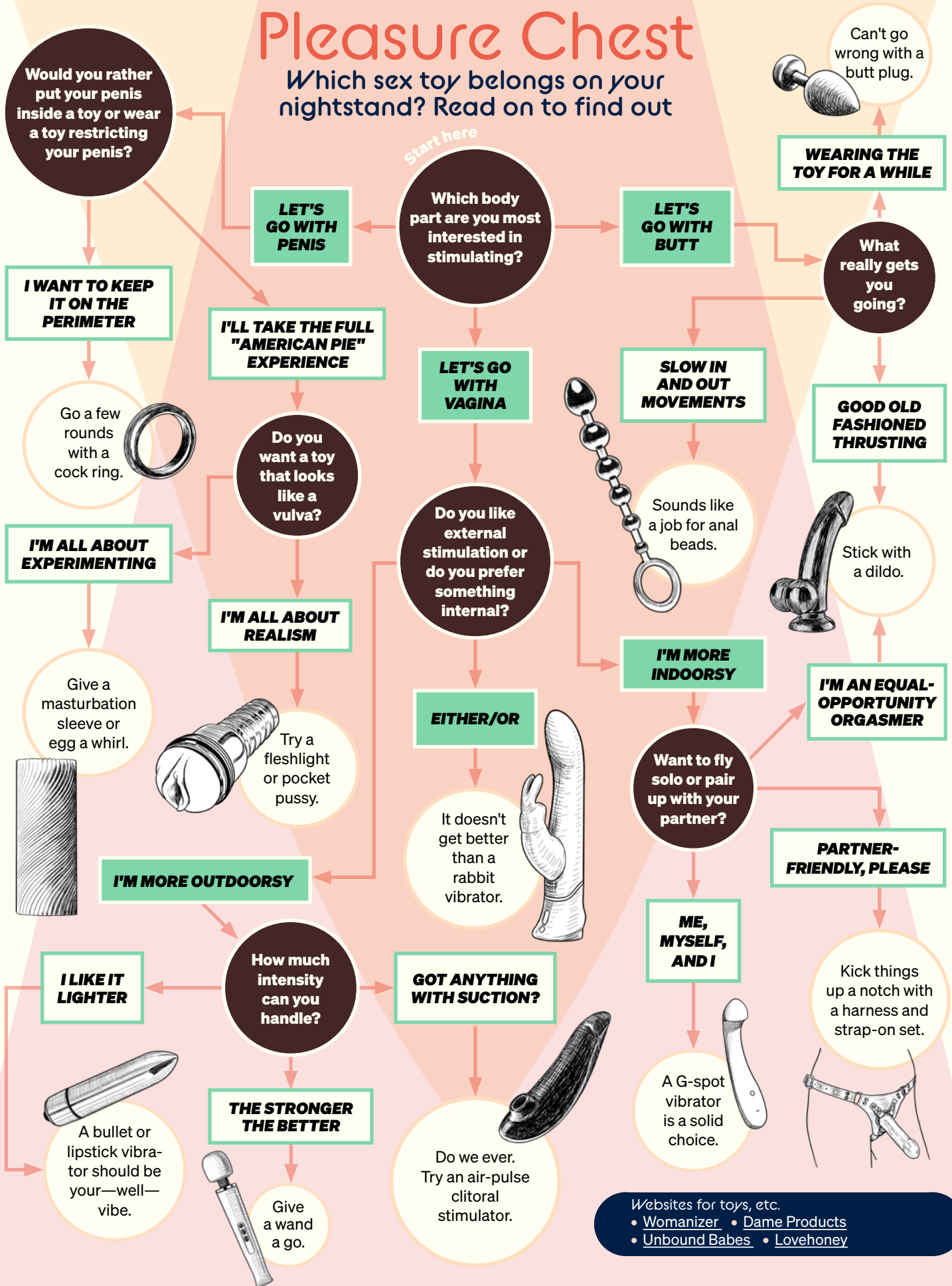
- *Hot Sex: Over 200 Things You Can Try Tonight* by Emily Morse
- *Come as You Are: The Surprising New Science That Will Transform Your Sex Life* by Emily Nagoski
- *Girl Sex 101: A Queer Pleasure Guide for Women and Their Lovers* by Allison Moon
- *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good* by adrienne maree brown
- *Queer Sex: A Trans and Non-Binary Guide to Intimacy, Pleasure and Relationships* by Juno Roche
- *Bonk: The Curious Coupling of Science and Sex* by Mary Roach

Websites for erotica (written and audio) • [Dipsea](#) • [Quinn](#) • [Literotica](#)



# Pleasure Chest

Which sex toy belongs on your nightstand? Read on to find out



Websites for toys, etc.

- [Womanizer](#)
- [Dame Products](#)
- [Unbound Babes](#)
- [Lovehoney](#)

# Sex à la Carte

"I'll take foreplay with a side of oral"

We live in a society where all we see is this heteronormative sex. We see it in media. We see it in porn. We see it everywhere," Emily says. "And I want to change this idea that sex is goal-oriented." So if you think sex is limited to a single flavor (penis enters vagina) or outcome (orgasm), well it's time to expand your palate.

The truth is that sex includes all kinds of activities, from making out to mutual masturbation. It doesn't have to include penetration or even climax. Try thinking of sex as a menu from which you can pick and choose depending on your mood and that of your partner(s). And don't forget Emily's motto: "Foreplay can be the main course."

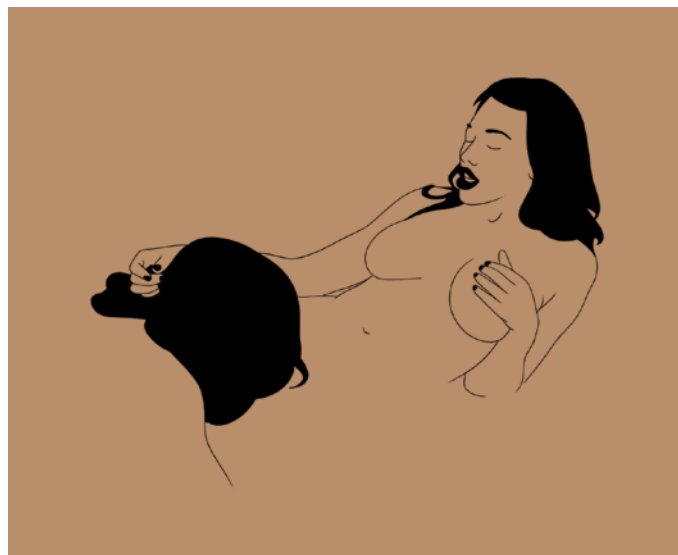


## KISS, KISS

- Kiss their neck
- Nibble their lower lip
- Touch their mouth with your finger
- Suck on their tongue
- Kiss them like you want to be kissed
- Ask them to show you how they want to be kissed

## FOREPLAY...OR THE MAIN COURSE

- Sensual massage
- Nipple play
- Mutual masturbation
- Make out—but you keep your clothes on



## ORAL SEX

### On a vulva

- Tease the labia
- Lick near the clitoral hood
- Suck on the clitoris
- Lick in circular motions around the clitoris

### On a penis

- Grab the base
- Swirl your tongue around the head
- Touch (or suck) the balls
- Lick the frenulum

### On either

- Make eye contact
- Add a sex toy
- Add lube
- Add anal play

## ANAL PLAY

- Lick the anus (use lube!)
- Add a finger (or two) inside
- Make a "come-hither" motion to find the prostate
- Add a sex toy



Get the lowdown on *lube (and tips on how to use it properly)* at [masterclass.com](http://masterclass.com).

## PENETRATIVE SEX

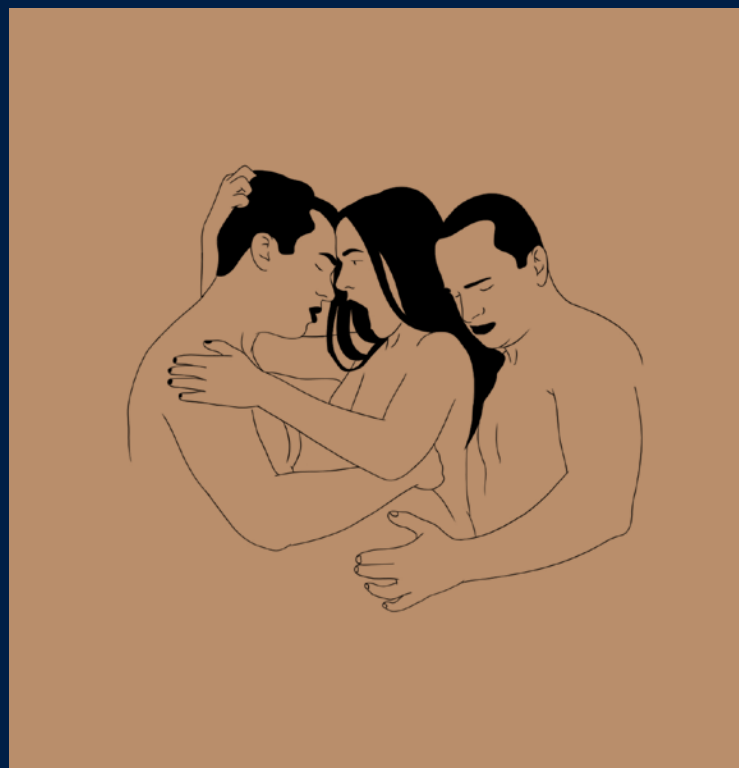
Vaginal or anal;  
penis or strap-on

- **Edge of the World**  
One person lies down on the edge of a bed, table, or any lifted surface so that everyone's genitals are at the same height. The person lying down is completely supported and relaxed. You can look into each other's eyes and use your hands to explore each other's bodies.
- **The Glowing Spoon**  
One person lies on their side and the penetrating partner straddles their bottom leg. The partner lying down can curl their top leg around the penetrating partner, making a triangle shape with their legs. Penetration can happen with fingers, genitals, and toys. This position allows for deeper penetration and easy access for genital stimulation.
- **The Floating Rider**  
One person lies down with knees bent, and the other partner is on top, resting on their partner's thighs. While thrusting, the person lying down can support and lift their partner's hips up with their forearms and hands.

- **The Freefall**  
Both people are standing and one person bends at the waist, allowing access for penetration from behind. This position allows the bodies to closely connect, which creates more intense sensations. As a bonus move, the bent-over partner can play with their partner's genitals or their own. Try this one in the shower.

- **Heart-to-Heart**  
One partner is sitting with crossed legs while the other partner sits on top, facing their partner. The partner on top then wraps their legs around the sitting partner.

Remember: Any penetration here is going to be back and forth rather than up and down. This position allows for deeper intimacy, eye gazing, and heart-to-heart hugging and kissing.



## KINK

- Dirty Talk
- Bondage
- Dominance and Submission
- Spanking
- Threesome
- Watching porn together

For more tips and techniques—including a primer on *tantra*—check out [masterclass.com](http://masterclass.com).

# PECKING ORDER

## Put yourself (and your pleasure) first

**T**hink about what makes a good sex partner. Openness? Honesty? Communication? A libido that matches yours? No matter how many amazing lovers you've had, we all have the same number one: ourselves.

"We are responsible for our own pleasure," Emily explains. "I'm responsible for my orgasm, you're responsible for your orgasm. It's not about your partner giving you an orgasm. It's about us understanding what we need and what feels good."

Science backs up Emily's assertion. A 2014 study, conducted by Kwantlen Polytechnic University in British Columbia, found that the more women focused on their own pleasure during sex, the more satisfied both they *and* their sex partners were in the end. Vulva owners in particular need to advocate for their own plea-

sure when engaging in intercourse; penis owners typically orgasm more quickly and easily, while only around 20 percent of vulva owners orgasm during penetration.

"I felt so much shame during intercourse if I touched myself with men," Emily says. "They somehow feel inadequate. They feel that if I have to touch myself, they're doing something wrong. And I just want to be like, 'No, it's just that your penis is nowhere near the clitoris. It has nothing to do with your abilities.'"

Along with touching yourself during sex or asking your partner to do so, you can use masturbation, fantasy (like reading erotica or watching porn), and sexual experiences to figure out what gets you to orgasm. And once you know, you can give your partner specific instructions: "I love having my neck kissed right here, above my collarbone" or "I'm really curious about wearing a blindfold during sex."

"When we start to say, 'I'm going to be an advocate for my pleasure,' then we are able to understand the depths of our sexual pleasure and how we could have a healthier relationship," Emily says. For more on how to tap into your sensuality, take a look at the next page.

### Journal Prompt:

Reflect on some ways that you can advocate for your own pleasure.



# Going Solo

## Emily's tips for mindful masturbation

Masturbation can be a powerful (and enjoyable) way to better learn about your body, especially when it comes to focusing on your own pleasure. You can figure out what type of touch you like, what fantasies turn you on, what you need to have an orgasm. Emily considers masturbation the key to knowing what makes you feel good.

Masturbation isn't just for single folks or when your partner isn't around (or not in the mood). It's an integral part of health and wellness. Taking time for masturbation, even if you have a consistent sex partner, is a matter of self-care. So introducing elements of mindfulness just makes sense.

To start, Emily suggests setting aside 20 minutes per week for mindful masturbation. If you can add more time or increase frequency, and have the desire to do so, all the better. During that time, focus on being present, in the moment. Change up your usual masturbation routine and pay close attention to how your body feels and reacts to different sensations. And expect it to take time. Of course, masturbation of any kind is a deeply personal act. But if you're looking for some basic mindful masturbation pointers, consider the following concepts:



**Journal Prompt:** Write down your plan for mindful masturbation—when you'll do it (i.e., in the evening before bed) and how you'll prepare (i.e., --asking your partner for some alone time and curating a playlist).

### 1. Set the Mood

Lock your door, turn on music, light a candle, change your sheets—whatever puts you at ease. If you feel best being naked, take off your clothes; if lingerie or loungewear are more your speed, do that instead. The goal here is to create an environment where you feel comfortable and aroused. “It’s kind of like you’re going on a date with yourself,” Emily says.

### 2. Practice Deep Breathing

Take slow, deep breaths to relax and center yourself. If you're a vulva owner, when you inhale, picture your breath going all the way down to your pelvic floor. As you exhale, focus on the sensations that your body feels. (Bonus: This increases the blood flow to your pelvic area, which increases your sensitivity and arousal.)

### 3. Touch Your Whole Body

Instead of trying to have an orgasm as fast as possible, concentrate on learning what kind of touch you respond to most. And don't go straight for the genitals. Caress

your arms, thighs, chest or breasts, stomach—or any place else you're sensitive.

### 4. Deemphasize an Orgasm

If you orgasm during mindful masturbation, great, but that's not (necessarily) the goal. Instead, focus on the exploratory element—different areas of your body, different pressures and speeds, how sensations ebb and flow. Ask yourself: *Does this feel good? Does this turn me on?*

### 5. Embrace Self-Love

Tell yourself you're sexy. Really look at, touch, and appreciate your body. If you have a vulva, Emily suggests bringing a mirror into play; you can see how your labia and clitoris change appearance when you're aroused. It's simply one way of appreciating your body for all it can do. And if it's difficult to see yourself in that positive way, be patient and give yourself time.

***Get more information about pelvic floor exercises (and a road map of erogenous zones) at [masterclass.com](https://www.masterclass.com).***

# Oral Reports

Tough conversations—and how to have them

Maybe you want to have more sex (or less). Maybe you want to try BDSM. Maybe you just hate the way your partner kisses your ears. Either way, the road to a more fulfilling, more enjoyable intimate experience often includes a slightly awkward conversation.

Emily's advice: Have that conversation.

"So much of [having a healthy sex life] has to do with communication," she says. "Communication is a lubrication." It might feel awkward in the moment, but the rewards are so worth it.

There are ways to make these talks easier. For starters, try to remember Emily's three Ts: timing, turf, and tone. Don't bring up a new kink you want to try right after sex when your partner's running out the door for work or right before hosting a stressful dinner party. Make sure you're both feeling good and initiate the conversation in a neutral place, like at the kitchen table. Chatting during a walk or long car ride can eliminate the pressure of eye contact.

Keep your tone open, curious, and nonjudgmental. You're proposing a change for the benefit of your shared pleasure, not criticizing or complaining. Here are examples of a few common issues and how to approach the conversations.

## You don't like your partner's kissing

Suggest playing a game: You show them your ideal kiss, they show you theirs. Then you try all different kinds of kissing until you figure out what you both like. Per Emily: "Rather than saying, 'You are a bad kisser,' because then they're gonna, like, carry that with them for the rest of their life, just be like, 'You know, I'm gonna show you how I like to be kissed.'"

## You need to disclose a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI)

First, understand that STIs are incredibly common. You need to disclose yours to a new partner before having sex with them, but there's no reason to be ashamed. So don't apologize, and instead take a matter-of-fact approach. Share what your partner needs to know about your condition and how you're managing it. Say something like, "Hey, I really like you, and before we get physical I need to let you know that I have herpes. I was diagnosed three years ago, and I take an antiviral daily to prevent an outbreak and reduce the risk of transmission. I also use condoms. What do you think?"

## You want your partner to change how they have sex

Use Emily's compliment sandwich, framing a suggestion around positive aspects of your shared sex life. Say something like, "I love making out with you. The way you kiss my neck turns me on so much. If we could spend a little more time on foreplay, I know I'd be even more turned on when we start to have sex."

## Your sex drives are mismatched

Everyone's libidos ebb and flow. This can happen on a daily basis and be impacted by factors like stress or general fatigue. Most couples will experience a discrepancy in sex drive at some point. Talk to your partner and consider scheduling time for intimacy—and be clear that intimacy doesn't necessarily have to mean sex. Say something like, "I really miss being intimate with you. Let's get a babysitter for the kids on Saturday and spend some time with just us. I'd love to give you a massage and cuddle. We don't have to go further if you don't feel up to it."

## You want to try a new kink

Practice an elevator pitch in which you tell your partner about your fantasy. Keep it brief, only a few sentences. Say something like, "I want to tell you something. I think it would be really hot if you'd tie me up during sex. I've had this fantasy forever, and I've been fantasizing a lot about you tying me up—what do you think about that?"



**Journal Prompt:** Think of something you'd like to change about your sex life in the present, or a time when you wanted to change something in the past but didn't know how to bring it up. Then make a plan for initiating that conversation.

# X MARKS THE SPOT

Gauge your appetite for experimentation

Are you interested in adding a few new activities to your sex life? Try making a Yes/No/Maybe list. Emily calls it a kind of “sexual road map,” and it’s exactly what it sounds like: a list of intimate activities that you can mark Yes (*I definitely want to do this*), No (*I definitely do **not** want to do this*), or Maybe (*I’m not sure if I’d enjoy this, but I’m open to talking more about it and maybe trying it*).

You can use it either alone or with a partner. If you’re using a Yes/No/Maybe list with a partner, you should each fill out the list separately and then compare to see where your desires overlap.

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anal rimming (giving)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Edging                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Massaging inner thighs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anal rimming (receiving) | <input type="checkbox"/> Eye contact                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mutual masturbation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anal sex                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Facesitting                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Neck kissing             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anal toys (giving)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Fingering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nipple play              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anal toys (receiving)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Fisting                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral sex                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing together         | <input type="checkbox"/> Flirting                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Orgasm denial            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biting                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Food play                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Penis rings              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blindfolds               | <input type="checkbox"/> Foot massage                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Penis worship            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bondage (giving)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Gags                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Period sex               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bondage (receiving)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Group sex                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone sex                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caressing                | <input type="checkbox"/> Hair pulling                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-sex shower together |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choking (giving)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand jobs                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Role-playing             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choking (receiving)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Handcuffs                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex games                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climaxing together       | <input type="checkbox"/> Homemade porn                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex outside              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compliments              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot wax massage candle          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex party                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cuckolding               | <input type="checkbox"/> Humiliation                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex toy play             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cuddling                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal (G-spot) stimulation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex toy shopping         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing together  | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal (prostate) stimulation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexting                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep throating           | <input type="checkbox"/> Lap dance                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow sex                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dirty talk               | <input type="checkbox"/> Licking                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanking                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing up              | <input type="checkbox"/> Making out                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Squirting                |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Strap-on play            |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Striptease               |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Swinging (or swapping)   |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tantric sex              |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Temperature play         |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Threesomes               |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Vulva worship            |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching porn together   |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wearing lingerie         |

**If you or someone you know has experienced sexual trauma, consider the following resources.**

[Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network \(RAINN\)](#)

[The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress](#)

[Anxiety and Depression Association of America](#)

[Complex Trauma](#)

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration](#)

[Eye Movement Desensitization  
and Reprocessing International Association](#)

#### **CLASS CREDITS**

##### **The Wondrous Vulva Puppet®**

Used with permission from Dorrie Lane

##### **Various audio clips from *Sex With Emily***

As broadcast on SiriusXM Radio

##### **Headshot of Emily**

Photograph courtesy Nathalia Vieira

##### **Instructor Guide**

Spot illustrations by Claire McCracken

Timeline illustration by Peter Goes

Figurative illustrations by Regards Coupables