

# Consent

It does not matter what a person is wearing or how they have behaved, or if you are in their house or in a bed together, **if someone tells you “no” when you are trying to have sex with them, or if they push you away, it means that you have to stop trying to have sex with them.**

It is very important to make sure that the person you are with is happy with the sexual activity you are doing. It doesn't have to be sexual intercourse: touching someone and kissing them if they don't like it, is also against the law.

Forcing someone or manipulating them to have sex with you is also against the law, and anyway, sex isn't fun unless you are both into it. Saying things like “you'd do it if you loved me” or “you've got me hard, we can't stop now” is not okay – if someone doesn't want to have sex you should not try to change their mind.

Sometimes people show they don't want to have sex, or they want to stop, without actually saying “no” or “stop”. **If someone does the following, you should stop trying to have sex with them:**

- Moving away from you or turning away from you
- Covering their bodies
- Lying still
- Says something like “I'm not sure”
- Says something like “Let's slow down”
- Says something like “I don't want to”

**If you are not sure if someone is giving their consent, you can ask them questions, like:**

- Do you want to have sex?
- Do you want to keep going?
- Should I get out the condom?

The best way to know if someone is giving consent to sexual activity is to ask! Most people will appreciate that you respect them enough to ask!

## Laws about consent

No one can have sex with, touch sexually or perform sexual acts in front of anyone under 12 years old.

A person aged 12- 15 years old can only have sex with, be touched sexually or have a sexual act performed in front of them, by someone aged within 2 years of them (but not below 12) and only if both people agree to the sexual acts.

A person aged 16 or 17 years old can have sex with, be touched sexually or have a sexual act performed in front of them, by someone no more than 2 years younger than them, or anyone older than them, so long as that person is not in a caring or supervising role (teacher, youth worker, foster carer) and only if both people agree.

*You cannot have sex with someone, touch them sexually or perform a sexual act in front of them unless they agree to it. A person cannot legally agree to these things if they are asleep, unconscious or affected by alcohol or drugs (even if they say yes when they are drunk).*

## Sexting

It is illegal to have sexual pictures of people under the age of 18, even if the person in the picture has sent you the photo. If someone under the age of 18 sends you a sexual picture of themselves, you should delete it straight away and ask them to not send any more sexual photos of themselves.

It is illegal to send sexual pictures of adults unless the person in the photo has said it is okay.