

# Consent Terms

**Affirmative/enthusiastic consent** Explicit, informed, and voluntary agreement to participate in a sexual act. It looks for the presence of a 'yes' rather than an absence of a 'no'.

*"Affirmative consent is now the law in heaps of areas in Australia, have you seen?"*

**Aftercare** Another term for a post-intimacy check in, an important part of any sexual interaction to see how a partner is feeling.

*"Chatting and cuddling as part of aftercare is so important to me, it makes me feel safe and respected."*

**Body language** Body language, or the way someone physically reacts to the way you're acting towards or around them, is a good indicator of how they might feel about a particular circumstance.

*"He had no idea how to read my body language. I was trying to create distance between us all night but then he leaned in to try and kiss me without even asking!"*

**Boundary** A limit that someone imposes on an interaction. This doesn't have to always be physical.

*"How are things with that new person going?"*

*"Great! We've been taking it slow because I told them I didn't want to be available 24/7 to chat and they've been very respectful of that boundary."*

**Catcalling** A form of sexual harassment, catcalling is an often rude, derogatory or unwelcome comment made towards someone in passing.

*"I literally won't walk down that street anymore, I'm so sick of being catcalled by the guys who hang out the front of the shops."*

**Check in** A check in is exactly what it sounds like - checking in with a partner to make sure they're still into whatever it is you're doing.

*"I had such a great time, they were really in tune with checking in and making sure I was comfortable."*

**Coercion** Being forced, tricked, threatened or pressured in a non-physical way into an activity.

*"It was weird last night...I felt coerced into the situation. I think I should report it."*

**Coercive control** A pattern of behaviours a perpetrator uses to gain control and power by eroding a person's autonomy and self-esteem. This can include acts of intimidation, threats, and humiliation.

*"My friend was telling me about their partner who tracks their location, goes through their phone, and belittles them often. I'm concerned as this sounds like coercive control to me"*

**Consent** Permission for something to happen or agreement to do something which must be given freely and willingly. Commonly used in reference to sexual experiences.

*"How was last night?"*

*"It was so hot, he kept asking for consent with so much confidence."*

**Fawning** A trauma response that leads a person who feels threatened to be over-nice to their abuser in order to survive an ordeal.

*"I was so scared, I fawned and acted like everything was fine until he dropped me home."*

**Gender norms/ Gender** The economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being women and men.

*"What do you think about the gendered expectations around dating? I reckon we should all just be our best selves and ignore any 'rules!'"*

**Healthy sexual relationships** Sexual relationships among intimate, romantic, or dating partners that include characteristics such as trust, empathy, effective communication, safety, equality, mutual respect and healthy boundaries.

*"Now that I'm in a healthy sexual relationship, where we centre trust, empathy and communication, I'll never settle for anything less again!"*

**Image-based abuse** A crime that happens when someone records, captures and distributes (or even threatens to distribute) intimate images without permission of the person pictured, whether they consented to the image being taken or not.

*"I heard that my ex has been sending my nudes to his friends since we broke up, I'm so disgusted."*

*"Girl, that is literally image-based abuse, do you need some help in reporting it?"*

**Leading on** A myth stemming from people feeling that they are owed something from someone who has not communicated this.

*"I had to leave the party early because he was getting angry about me leading him on... All I did was smile at him when I was dancing and now he thinks it's an invitation to come and kiss me without my consent?"*

**Safe word** A previously agreed word or phrase to be used with a partner in a sexual situation which signifies immediate withdrawal of consent and means that an activity should stop.

*"Do you want to discuss a safe word before we start?"*

**Sexual act/sexual activity** Acts that a reasonable person would see as sexual, including but not limited to, kissing, sexualised touching, penetration of any kind and oral sex. It also includes non-physical acts such as online sexual activity, sexting and sharing sexual images.

*"Remember to always seek consent for any form of sexual activity - that's everything starting from sexting and kissing!"*

**Sexual harm** Harm that results from non-consensual sexual activity, and which has a significant effect on someone's physical, emotional and psychological well-being as well as future intimacy and relationships.

*"If we're going to be intimate together, I wanted to let you know that I've been subjected to sexual violence previously which has resulted in sexual harm for me. I'd like to have a conversation about it with you."*

**Sexual violence** The intentional perpetration of sexual acts without consent, capturing all forms of sexual assault and sexual harassment. This definition of sexual violence refers to both criminal and non-criminal sexual activity perpetrated without consent to reflect that some emerging forms of sexual violence have not yet been addressed in legislation.

*"At uni today we were learning about sexual violence. I never knew how many instances of criminal and non-criminal activity fell under that term! I guess it's all about consent."*

**Social norms** The informal, mostly unwritten and unspoken collective rules that define typical, acceptable, appropriate and obligatory actions in a social group, setting or society.

*"The social norms seem to say the man should message first and plan the date, but if I know what I want then I'm going to shoot my shot and plan a date!"*

**Spiking** When someone puts alcohol or drugs into another person's drink or their body without their knowledge and/or consent.

*"That guy I went out with last night spiked me - I had no idea he was buying double shot drinks."*

**Stalking** The act or crime of willfully and repeatedly following or harassing another person in circumstances that would cause a reasonable sense of fear.

*"We had a bad date and since then I've seen him at my work and my university. I'm really scared, it feels like he's stalking me"*

**Stealthing** The non-consensual removal of a condom during sex, or the failure to put a condom on when someone has been asked to.

*"He stealthed me last night and I only realised after he left. I'm going to report it because it's illegal and it can't keep happening."*

**Victim blaming** Putting the blame of sexual assault on the victim rather than the perpetrator.

*"I hate this culture of victim blaming we have, that poor girl had such a traumatic experience and now people are saying she had something to do with it?"*

**Victim-survivor** People who have experienced family, domestic and sexual violence or gender-based violence.

*"I am also a victim-survivor of family/domestic/sexual violence, and I am glad that we've been able to share that with each other".*

**Withdrawing consent** Withdrawing consent refers to someone no longer consenting to a situation they are experiencing. Consent can be withdrawn at any time and must be respected.

*"I just wasn't really into the making out so I withdrew consent and they immediately stopped, then we had a fun time chatting for ages."*