



# Dating Dictionary Consent Edition

*Updated version - June 2024*

A guide on how to get and give consent  
by Tinder and Chanel Contos

Everyone gets to add their own zest to the language of dating and the variety of phrases out there to describe any possible dating experience is something to behold.

There is one area that has been historically overlooked that we should all brush up on though – consent.

As the type of connections we can make continues to evolve, it's important for us to have a guide of how to talk about consent and be certain that we are making decisions that reflect our dedication to safe experiences.

Following the recent release of the [Australian Government's Consent Framework](#), we've once again collaborated with consent advocate, and founder of [Teach Us Consent](#), Chanel Contos, to create this V2 of our Dating Dictionary: Consent Edition. In here you'll find some definitions of key terms relating to consent education and also some easy ways to incorporate consent checks into your dating routine.

Consent isn't just about a one-time conversation and simple yes or no, we need to be able to hold space for the dynamic nature of consent, and all the maybes in between. Consent is so much more than permission and rules, and consent practice takes care, energy, and space - but at the end of the day it's quite simple!

There's nothing we love more than helping people make exhilarating new connections, but we want these to be safe and consensual, above all.

*"Language is one of our most important tools. If you can't understand something, how can you put it into practice? And if you can't name something, how can you prevent it from happening?"*

**Chanel Contos**

# 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."*

# Consent Phrases

Making asking for consent sound sexy or natural can be difficult, so here is a list of some phrases you can use throughout your dating journey to ask for, give or withdraw consent.

Keep in mind that as well as verbal responses, body language that indicates discomfort, fear or disengagement is also a sign that no consent has been provided. Silence, turning away, moving away, averting eyes and being still are all examples of not giving consent. Remember that unless it is enthusiastic both verbally AND physically, then it's not consent.

## First chat

### Asking permission

"I'm really feeling my outfit today, are you okay with me sending a fit pic?"

### Giving permission

"Yes I'd love to see what you're wearing!"

### Not giving permission

"No thanks, I don't really want to be exchanging pictures."

## First date

### Asking permission

"I'm really attracted to you right now, could I kiss you?"

### Giving permission

"Yes!" or *\*lean in for a kiss\**

### Not giving permission

"I think it's better if we just keep talking."

---

### Asking permission

"I've been thinking about this all night, can I kiss you?"

### Giving permission

"I've been thinking about it all night too, yes!" or *\*lean in for a kiss\**

### Not giving permission

"I'm not comfortable with kissing right now."



### ***Asking permission***

*"Can I walk you home?"*

### ***Giving permission***

*"Yes, that would be nice!"*

### ***Not giving permission***

*"Thanks for offering but I'd rather say goodbye here."*

## ***First intimate encounter***

### ***Asking permission***

*"Can I touch you here?"*

### ***Giving permission***

*"Yes please!"*

### ***Not giving permission***

*"No thank you. Let's just do this for now."*

---

### ***Asking permission***

*"Can you touch me here?"*

### ***Giving permission***

*"Of course, show me how you like to be touched."*

### ***Not giving permission***

*"I'm not up for that."*

### **Asking permission**

*"Does it feel good if I do this?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"Yes, that feels good keep going."*

### **Not giving permission**

*"No, I don't like that, do this instead."*

---

### **Asking permission**

*"Do you want to have sex?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"Yes, I've been waiting for you to ask!"*

### **Not giving permission**

*"No, I don't want to have sex let's just keep doing this."*

---

### **Asking permission**

*"Should I get a condom?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"Yes please, I want to use protection."*

### **Not giving permission**

*"No that's not necessary, I don't want this to become sexual."*

## Checking in

### **Asking permission**

*"Does this feel okay?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"Yes, this feels great."*

### **Not giving permission**

*"I don't really like that, can we stop please?" or "I don't like that, can we go back to what we were doing before?"*

---

### **Asking permission**

*"Are you still enjoying this?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"Yeah I really like it."*

### **Not giving permission**

*"I'm not enjoying this anymore, can we stop."*

---

### **Asking permission**

*"Do you want to cuddle for a bit?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"I'm liking what we are doing, but we can chill if you want."*

### **Not giving permission**

*"That sounds good thanks, we can chat some more."*

### **Asking permission**

*"Do you want to go back to the party or hang out here?"*

### **Giving permission**

*"Let's stay here, I'm enjoying being alone with you."*

### **Not giving permission**

*"Good idea, let's go back to the party."*

## **Checking in after intimacy**

*"I really enjoyed that, did you?"*

---

*"How did that feel for you?"*

---

*"Is there anything you'd like me to do or not do next time?"*

# 5 KEY CONCEPTS *of consent*

## ***Free and voluntary***

It is present only when all people genuinely and enthusiastically want to engage in the sexual activity.

## ***Specific and informed***

Consent is only present when everyone involved genuinely or enthusiastically wants to engage in that specific sexual act, and everyone understands what that act is and any potential consequences of that act.

## ***Affirmative and communicated***

Sexual partners need to actively say or do something to check for consent. Consent can never be assumed. Silence, freezing, the absence of a 'no', appearing disengaged or a lack of any apparent discomfort, hesitation or resistance, does not imply consent.

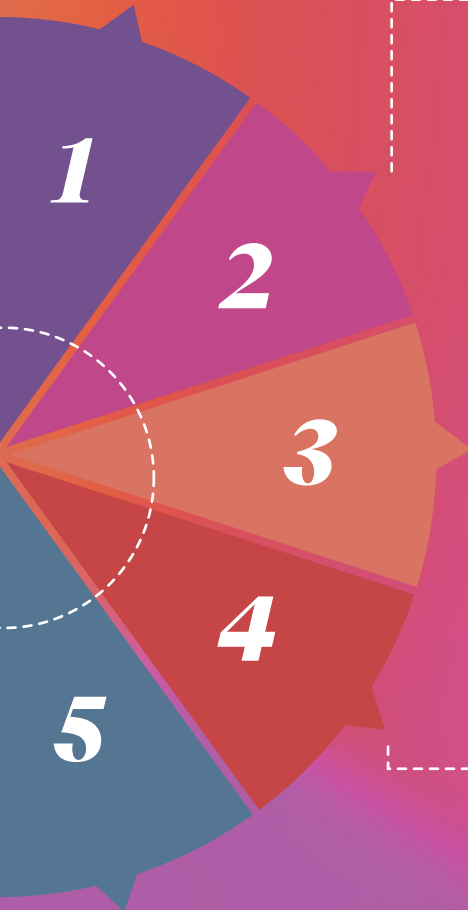
## ***Ongoing and mutual***

Consent for past sexual activity does not mean consent can be assumed in future sexual activity. Remember, consent can be withdrawn at any point in time!

## ***Reflects capacity***

Everyone involved in a sexual act needs to have the capacity to reach, communicate or withhold consent. A range of factors, including age, intoxication, consciousness or other impairment, can affect this capacity to consent.

Remember, if someone is unconscious or asleep, they are not capable of giving consent.



# Resources

## ● **Dating Safety Guide**

<https://datingsafetyguide.com/au>

Want to learn more about dating Safety? Take a look at our dedicated Dating Safety Guide



## ● **Teach Us Consent**

[@teachusconsent](#) on Instagram

Teach Us Consent advocates for and provides holistic consent education through social media. The page has relevant and accessible resources related to consent.

## ● **ReachOut**

<https://au.reachout.com>

helps young people feel better about today and the future

## ● **eSafety Commissioner**

<https://www.esafety.gov.au>

is the online harms regulator whose mission is to help all Australians have safer, more positive experiences online. In addition to resources on safer online dating practices, Australians can report image based abuse or serious adult cyber abuse.

## ● **1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)**

<https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

is a national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling and support service

# Resources

## ● Men's Referral Service

<https://ntv.org.au/>

A men's referral service for any men who are concerned about their own behaviour or need support

## ● Full Stop Australia

<https://fullstop.org.au/>

A national organisation providing support, education and advocacy to ending sexual, domestic and family violence

## ● The Line - Our Watch

<https://www.theline.org.au/>

A primary prevention, social marketing, behavioural change campaign run by Our Watch that helps young people to negotiate healthy and respectful relationships

## ● Make No Doubt - NSW Government

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/make-no-doubt>

A government funded video campaign to raise awareness about the change in consent laws to an affirmative model in NSW.



These terms and phrases are put together by Chanel Contos - consent advocate and founder of Teach Us Consent, with help from the Australian Government's Consent Framework.