

What I learned in Sex School

crib notes from the best sex classes

i am sitting on the floor with 18 other women at the good vibrations store in berkeley, ca. we're all here to learn the art of "male erotic massage." in other words, we're taking a class on how to give a good hand job. chances are, the last time you took a class on sex was in 10th grade (when the message was "don't do it!"). but today's real sexual revolution is in grown-up sex education. sex classes are more popular than ever these days and are popping up in cities all over the country. for about \$25, you can add to your sexual repertoire, refine your technique, and improve your sex life. "couples today want to have better relationships and better sex, and if taking a class helps, they'll do it," says carol queen, ph.d., chief cultural officer and staff sexologist at the good vibrations stores in san francisco, berkeley, and boston. "the classes are fun and sexually inspiring. people feel more confident when they're better informed."

personally, i love going to "sex school." as someone who makes her living researching and writing about sex, i can never get enough when it comes to learning more about it. but i know that for a lot of people, the idea's a little embarrassing. so i went to sex school for you and took some notes. here are the best tips ever from 10 of the weirdest, wildest, sexiest sex classes in the country. by Anka Radakovich

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1 Subject Notebook

ORAL SEX

THE BIG O

DIRTY TALK

SMUT PLEASE 101



tap into all your senses

At "Coming to Our Senses: A Sensational Sensuality Workshop" (lasara.us), instructor and author LaSara FireFox says, "The more you indulge in your senses and become familiar with them, the more pleasure you'll be able to receive." Her "isolation and indulgence" exercises help you single out the senses and explore them one by one. For each exercise, one partner is the guide and the other is the "sensory explorer." My partner and I start with him blindfolding me, to take the emphasis off the visual. To experiment with hearing, students whisper in each other's ears, forcing them to listen really closely. Isolating touch involves rubbing something on each other's skin, like a feather or honey. (Classes are clothed, but students are told to practice at home au naturel.) We're encouraged to say, after experiencing a sensation, "I like that feeling" or "I don't like that." Likewise, when sampling smells, it's okay for one person to say, "That smells good" and the other to say, "That makes me puke." The lesson is to communicate what you like and dislike, an idea that's stressed at many of the classes I attended.



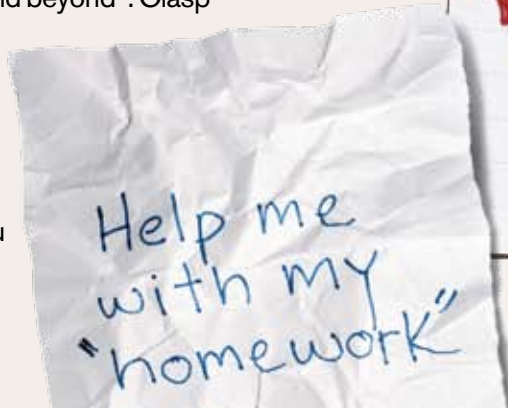
Touch "everything but"
"The object of this class is to drive a man insane," announces our instructor, Elizabeth, at the start of the "Male Erotic Massage" class I took at Good Vibrations (goodvibes.com). How do you do that? Begin by touching everything *but* his penis. "Start with a very soft, featherlike touch," explains Elizabeth, a professional masseuse. "Lightly touch the pubic bone area to wake up the nerves in the area."

Use both hands When you're ready to handle his man bone, don't be afraid to use both hands—well lubed up. ("Really good sex is incredibly messy," Elizabeth tells us.) With one hand or two, gently twist from side to side. Next, use your palms to apply even pressure. Stroke up and off in one swift movement (schwing!), then stroke straight down—you want to give a slight sense of penetration. For an advanced move, try the "infinity and beyond": Clasp your fingers together and make circles with both thumbs to form a figure eight on the frenulum (underside of the penis head). "Your thumbs should touch each time you circle," says Elizabeth.



a little clothing is sexier than naked

you'd think a striptease class would be all about how to get your clothes off. but as instructor diane greenberg points out in "the sacred art of the striptease" (sacredstriptease.com), leaving a little clothing on can actually be sexier than getting naked, because it draws attention to what's underneath. for example, instead of whipping your panties off, pull them down an inch or two and leave them there. pull your breasts out of your bra cups, but leave the bra on. "use your bra to frame your chest," says greenberg. and of course, you can't beat a pair of sexy heels for a hot visual.





don't force dirty talk

"with dirty talk, you have to find your own voice," says sex educator tracy bartlett in her "talking sex: before, during, and after" class at good vibrations. "don't imitate what people say in bad porn, like, 'give it to me, you big stud.' it should be organic, natural." describe what you see that you like (such as, "your hair looks so sexy right now"). or try this exercise: during her class, bartlett goes around the room and has each student say something mundane (such as, "i'm going into the living room") using a sexy voice. "saying something ordinary in a sexy voice takes the pressure off," she says.

STUPID SEX 101

DIRTY TALK

THE BIG O

ORAL SEX BASICS

put your fantasies on paper the "erotic role playing 101" class for couples at babeland (babeland.com) starts with instructor midori telling everyone to write down on index cards "one or two sex things you would really like to see happen." for instance, she says, "you could say, 'i would like to receive oral' or 'i would like you to use a vibrator on me.'" that's the "sex card." then write out a "fantasy card" that describes one of your fantasies. (i pick the "sex with a cop" fantasy, where the hottie cop is arresting me during a cat burglary—i am, of course, wearing a catsuit.) next, all the couples look at everybody else's sex and fantasy cards and get ideas. "i didn't know my wife wanted to do that!" is heard at every class. try playing this at home—writing your desires out on cards makes it seem like a game and takes the embarrassment out of revealing your secret fantasies. compare notes to see if you'd like to explore each other's fantasies. (of course, you're always allowed to say, "i'm not doing that!")

switch up your oral sex positions

if you think you don't like receiving oral sex—or your guy doesn't like giving it—you might simply need to find an angle that works for you. at babeland's "oral sex basics: cunnilingus" class, a young (clothed!) couple demonstrates different positions, earning themselves a round of applause from the class. there's the classic woman on her back, man at the edge of the bed, of course, as well as woman on her knees, guy behind her. the "half 69" has you on your back and him over you on all fours. then there's the famous "face sitting," which is really "face squatting" (the name is self-explanatory). finally, if he gets tired, try it with you lying on your back and him laying his head on your upper thigh (to rest his head, neck, and jaw). no more excuses!

extra credit

Just the names of some sex classes are enough to give you a giggle. (These classes were still being offered at press time.)

- "The Lost Art of Heavy Petting" early2bed.com
- "Oral Majority" goodvibes.com
- "Sex Toys 101: Coffee, Cake, and Kink" thepleasurechest.com
- "Bend Him Over 101" babeland.com
- "Joy Stick Secrets: How to Thrill Your Man" thepleasurechest.com
- "Hot & Bothered: Playing With Erotic Embarrassment" goodvibes.com
- "There Is No Part of Me That Is Not of the Gods: A Pussy-Gazing Workshop for Women" lasara.us



Use little extras to enhance your O

Accessories and toys are a great way to send your orgasm over the edge, so don't be afraid to experiment. Best bets include lube (silicone versions are good because they don't dry out—I like Pink Lube, available at babeland.com); vibrators (try the Hitachi Magic Wand); and penis rings (the jelly ones are good erection helpers, or try one with an attached vibrator).

give yourself a hand

Want to have more orgasms during sex? In "The Art of the Orgasm" at the Museum of Sex in New York City (museumofsex.com), sex educator Ducky DooLittle emphasizes that when you experiment with giving yourself orgasms first, you'll know better what works for you, and you'll be able to take that knowledge into the bedroom with your man. **"The more you masturbate, the better you will get to know your body, and the bigger and more intense your orgasms will be,"** says

DooLittle. Don't be afraid to touch yourself during sex, too—you can show your partner exactly what works for you and help yourself reach your peak.



tell him what you like

this was the number one tip i heard at nearly every sex class. if you like a lighter touch or a harder one, tell him. if you like fingers, tell him (in fact, you should guide his hand to show him what feels good). if you want him to use his tongue, tell him. and don't forget to give positive feedback, too. "while you're showing and he's learning, say, 'that's good. keep doing that,'" says dimitra, who teaches "the big o" at chicago sex shop early to bed (early2bed.com). whispering your instructions—and following them up with a term of endearment for your partner—will make your pointers seem more natural and less clinical, dimitra adds.

It's all about the tongue When it comes to performing oral sex on him, don't focus only on porn star-style suction. You can do a lot with just your tongue, I learned at Babeland's "Oral Sex Basics: Fellatio" (Babeland's most popular class!). Flatten your tongue and pretend you are licking a delicious ice cream cone. Then try the "pointy-tongue" technique to stroke up and down and side to side. Do different strokes and touches, like flicking your tongue over the head, and see what kind of response you get.

Take it slooow

At "The Sacred Art of the Striptease," we learned that the operative word is "tease": All moves should be done in slo-mo. Try these pro-approved tricks.

- Touch yourself slowly with your hands moving inside and outside your clothes. This creates a visual path for his mind to follow.
- Sit on his lap and gyrate your hips, circling his family jewels with your butt. "It should be a very languid movement," says former exotic dancer Catherine Rose, the instructor for "Ladies' Lapdance Techniques" and founder of Slinky Productions (slinkyproductions.com).
- Do the "wandering knee," another lap-dance move: Stand facing your guy with your hand behind him. Use your right knee and shin to caress the inside of his thigh, moving slowly toward his groin.



unleash your inner sex goddess

"Every woman is sexier if she believes she is," says Diane Greenberg, our instructor for "The Sacred Art of the Striptease." "If we own our sexuality, we are sexy and we are sensual and we are beautiful." The women walking into Greenberg's class were afraid to take their clothes off in front of strangers—after all, everyone has an embarrassing body part or two. But learning the different moves took everyone out of their head and into their body. We forgot to think about how we looked because we were too busy feeling sexy! By the end of class, the women around me were exuding way more confidence and sex appeal than when they walked in. Everyone arrived feeling shy and self-conscious, but they left looking like fierce sex goddesses!

The take-home message? You don't need a perfect body to be sexy. You don't even need to learn stripper moves. All you need is confidence and a willingness to surrender to your own sensuality. That's a lesson every woman can learn. ®