

# Condoms



There is more to safer sex than just picking the right condom and knowing how to use it. This fact sheet will look at many of the other practices sex workers use to keep themselves physically safe and healthy.

Condoms come in different shapes and sizes and are made out of different things. There is even a condom made for women these days, often called a female condom, or Femidom.



## What are you going to be reading about?...

- Most common different sizes and shapes of condoms and who they're for
- How can you tell the size you need to use?
- How to put a condom on with your hands
- Putting a condom on with your mouth
- Disposing of the condom
- Using a condom as a cock ring
- Internal condoms—female condoms or condoms for anal sex
- How to insert an internal condom
- What are condoms made out of?
- Reasons condoms may break or slip off
- Things to do to keep you safe as a sex worker
- Where can you get condoms?



## Most common different sizes and shapes of condoms and who they're for

You can tell the size and shape of a condom by looking at the side of the box if you buy them in boxes from retail outlets like chemists, supermarkets and service stations.

The box will have a diagram of the shape of the condom and will tell you how large they are in millimeters.

If you buy condoms in bulk though, they don't have pictures of the condoms on the box, so it's best to know the size in millimeters or ask the person selling them if they are large, medium or small in size.

You need to be careful buying a condom by name because one brand may call a small condom 'tighter fitting' and another may call a large condom 'tighter fitting'.

Also, if you're working overseas in Asia, for example, an average-sized condom over there may be smaller than it is in Australia, so you don't want to choose by brand name or words like 'average' and 'large'.

If you can, always try and remember the size of the condom you need in millimeters of the width of the condom, or buy a size smaller and larger just to be safe.

Sizes and shapes include:

- Small condom—49mm nominal width
- Regular fitting—54mm nominal width
- Large extra large condoms—56mm-58mm nominal width
- Extra strength—54mm nominal width
- Studded and ribbed—54mm nominal width



**Flared condoms**—the same size at the base and in length as an average-sized condom, but they have an extra 2mm circumference in the shaft of the condom.

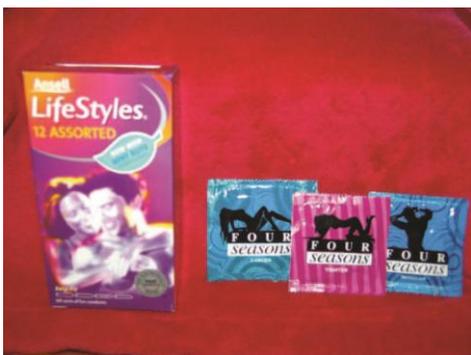
In other words, the shaft of the condom flares out, so they're good for penises with a thicker shaft.

If you find an average-sized condom is very tight around the shaft but fits at the base and fits the head, then this is the condom to use.

**Mushroom condoms or flared tip**—the same size at the base and in length as an average sized condom, but they flare out at the top of the condom where the head of the penis goes, so they're good for dicks with a large head.

Mushroom-shaped condoms are also good for people who ejaculate a lot of cum, because if there is too much cum to fit in the tip it can race down the edges of the condom and gush out at the bottom.

You'll only be able to tell if your client should wear this condom for the too-much-cum reason if you've seen him before.



### How can you tell the size you need to use?

The saying 'fits like a glove' is probably the best way to explain how a condom should fit. When you put a pair of rubber gloves on, if they are baggy, falling off or your fingers don't reach to the tips of the glove, you know you need to try a smaller glove.

If on the other hand your hand is stretching the glove, your fingers are threatening to push through the tips, the glove doesn't pull all the way down to your wrist or you get a red rim around your wrist where the glove has been cutting into you, you know you need to get a larger size glove. It works the same for a condom.

If you can't pull the condom all the way down to the base of the shaft, if it's stretching on a particular part of the penis or if the guy gets a red ring around the base of the condom where it's cutting into his skin, you know you need a larger condom. If the condom is baggy around his dick or if it's going to fall off, you know you need a smaller sized condom.

After you've put condoms on 20 times, you get to know the size you need just by looking at the size of the penis. With some clients however, their penis may get bigger when they get really horny, or may start going down if they get too horny or stop themselves cumming too many times. For these reasons, it's a good idea to check throughout the booking that the condom you put on is still the best condom for the penis. You're allowed to change the condom as many times as you like in a booking, so never worry about stopping the service and changing the condom.

## How to put a condom on with your hands

1. Get out all the supplies you need



2. Be careful not to tear the condom



3. Hold the condom so the rolled bit is facing out



4. Hold the tip of the condom with your finger and thumb and place on the tip of the penis



5. While keeping hold of the tip with one hand roll the condom over the head of the penis, being careful not to touch the skin



6. Continue to roll the condom down the penis shaft to the bottom of the penis



7. Look at the penis to make sure the condom is rolled down, hasn't ripped and fits the penis properly, ie the condom is not too big or too small



## Putting a condom on with your mouth

Workers may prefer to put a condom on with their mouths because:

- Can look more erotic so turns the client on more
  - When you get good at it, it may mean you don't need to touch your clients body at all to put the condom on.
  - If you put it on with your mouth, it is an extra opportunity to get close to your clients genitals and give him a final STI check without him realising you're doing it
  - You need to be very careful to ensure the tip is squeezed at the between your tongue & roof of your mouth to ensure it remains free of air & keeps the right amount of space at the tip for the cum to go into or else you risk a broken, slipped or leaking condom.
1. Place the condom in your mouth, with the rolled part outward touching your lips. Hold onto the condom between your lips using your tongue, if necessary, to hold it in place. Be very careful that your teeth do not tear the condom.



2. Place the condom in your mouth over the head of the penis. Make sure your entire lips are covered by the condom so your lips make no contact with skin or precum. Suck the condom into your mouth as you push the condom down the shaft of the penis with your lips, as far as you can go. You can then use your hands to complete rolling the condom down. You will probably find that you can just apply the condom using suction without having to hold the penis.



## Disposing of the condom

To dispose of a condom in the safest possible way keep in mind the following things:

1. You take it off the client so the client doesn't dribble it's contents all over the place. Try not to touch it with your bare hands – always use tissues, toilet paper or latex gloves if you can



2. Try to avoid the temptation to tie a knot in the top of it because it's best to have the smallest amount of contact with it as possible so you don't get cum on your hands. Instead try wrapping it up in the tissue you pull it off with. Avoid flushing it down the toilet as you may block your toilet.



### Using a condom as a cock ring

Many workers like to use condoms as a cockring because:

- Designed to sit around the base of the penis so tend to do less harm or bruise the base of the penis
- Easier to remove than metal, heavy rubber and leather cock rings
- Are sterile

If you would like to use a condom as a cock ring, just pick the next size down of the condom your putting on his dick and that is usually tight enough. For example, if you have a regular size condom on him, punch a hole in the end of a small condom so you have what looks like an elastic band, pull it down over his dick and settle it at the base of his dick. When using cock rings it's important not to sit them over the top of the condom because they can cause friction or the condom to tear or break.



When you have finished with the cock ring, just pull it off at the same time you pull the condom off and dispose of them together.

### Internal condoms—female condoms or condoms for anal sex

These condoms are worn internally and were designed for women to insert inside their vaginas, although they can also be used for anal sex. They are not easy to use the first time and it is recommended that you try them first with someone you trust so that you can concentrate on getting used to the feel of them and the noise they can make depending on what they're made out of.

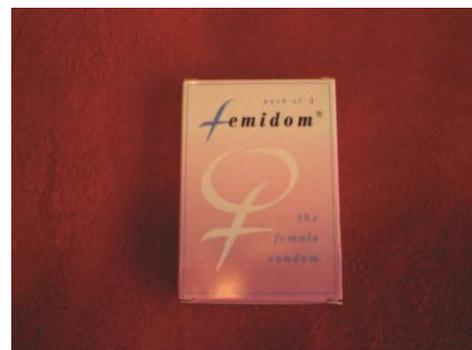
This condom is a pouch with flexible rings at each end and is inserted before sex. One ring sits on the outside of the body and the other ring sits deep inside either the vagina or anus with the length of the pouch sitting inside the body. The tube-shaped pouch is 1½ times larger and 2 times thicker than a male condom.

If someone is going to insert them inside their butt, usually they take the ring off the end that sits inside the body and the penetrative partner inserts their penis inside the condom and then pushes it inside the anus. These condoms don't need the penetrative partner to have an erection to use.

It has been shown that female condoms are not as effective at stopping pregnancy as the male condom; however, studies in the US in 2005 (1) showed they are better at preventing some STIs than a traditional condom because they cover more skin, which cuts down the chances of skin-to-skin viruses such as herpes being transmitted.

People may not like using them because they can be difficult to insert properly and are quite large and heavily lubricated, so they are very slippery. There is also the issue of the rustling or crinkly noise they make like the rustling of a plastic bag. However, some brands are now being made out of different materials so this no longer has to be the case.

These condoms are also very expensive compared with traditional condoms. They are lubricated with silicone lube and have a lot of lube on them so can keep slipping out of your fingers when you try to insert one.





1. Take the female condom out of the pack and unfold it. Make sure the internal ring is sitting right at the closed end of the female condom



2. Holding the outside of the condom, pinch the internal ring together to make it a long skinny shape for insertion



3. Get into the same position you would to insert a tampon or sponge and gently push the ring just inside into your vagina or anus. Make sure that the rest of the condom is hanging outside your body. You are only inserting the ring at this stage.



4. Place your fingers inside the condom, being careful not to put your nails through it and push up like you would a sponge or tampon. Do not insert the outer ring into the body



5. The outer ring of the female condom sits comfortably outside the vagina or anus and should remain there for the duration of sex



### What are condoms made out of?

**Latex**—most condoms in Australia are made of latex. They are a highly effective barrier to sperm and microorganisms, including HIV and the even smaller Hep B virus. You can use either water-based or silicone lubes with them; however, oil-based lubes will cause them to break.

**Synthetic/Polysoprene latex condoms**—latex condoms that have had 90% of the proteins removed from the natural latex (which is responsible for allergic reactions in natural latex condoms). This makes them safer to use for people with latex allergies.

**Synthetic non-latex condoms**—are a non-latex condom. Synthetic condoms are mainly made out of polyurethane but are also made of other synthetic materials like polysoprene and resins.

Polyurethane condoms differ from natural latex condoms because they conduct heat better, aren't sensitive to temperature and light are less allergenic than latex and don't have an odour.

Femidoms are made out of polyurethane. Some people don't like these condoms because they tend to feel scratchier or more rigid than natural latex condoms.

**Lambskin condoms**—made from sheep intestines, they are less allergenic and provide more sensation than natural latex condoms.

They are used for pregnancy control; however, they don't provide protection from STIs because the pores in the material are large enough to allow infections to pass through.

Sex workers who have used lamb skin condoms report a bad smell they can't wash off. They are more expensive than other condoms & more difficult to access.

**Spermicidal condoms**—some latex condoms are lubricated with a spermicide called nonoxynol-9, which was once thought to offer extra protection from STIs and pregnancy.

Recent studies have shown, however, that it may increase the risk of HIV transmission. Spermicidal condoms also have a shorter shelf life and may cause urinary tract infections. They are not recommended for sex workers to use.

**Climax control condoms**—these condoms have a lubricant in them that can reduce a man's ability to cum by numbing or reducing sensitivity. They are marketed for men who may have issues cumming too quickly, or for people who want to prolong sex. It's your choice if you want to have sex for longer.

The lubricant can also contain warming properties that can cause thrush and reduce sensitivity in you, which can be dangerous because sex workers need to feel exactly what is happening to their bodies at all times.

**Textured condoms**—these condoms may be studded, ribbed or bulb-shaped around the g-spot or perineum to provide extra sensation for both people having sex.

Textured condoms are not recommended for use in anal sex, because they can irritate and tear the walls of the anus. Similarly, women can experience the same irritation, especially sex workers who may be having sex with more frequency and for longer.

**Warming condoms and ice condoms**—these are condoms that have either a warming lubricant or ice lubricant added to them. The lubricants can irritate both partners, and can cause thrush, urinary tract infections and blistering. The ice lubricant feels like having sex with Listerine—it kind of burns, but is cold at the same time.

**Coloured condoms**—condoms come in all colors including glow-in-the-dark condoms. These are a popular condom to use for sex workers when they have their periods in case they bleed through a sponge, so the client can't see the blood.

**Flavoured condoms**—condoms come in many flavors these days, including banana, spearmint, strawberry and licorice to name a few. You need to be careful when using these condoms because they can cause thrush and urinary tract infections, especially with frequent use.



### Reasons condoms may break or slip off

- not using enough lube—it's best to use silicone or water-based lubricants
- using too much lube – be careful if you put a drop of lube inside the tip of the condom because too much can cause it to slip off
- not swapping condoms if having sex for a long period of time
- changing positions quickly or roughly without holding the base of the condom down to keep it on while the client pulls out
- not using a condom that fits properly
- not putting the condom on properly
- latex degradation—usually caused by storing them at too high a temperature, exposing them to sunlight, using expired condoms or using oil based lubricants
- using two condoms at once
- people pin-pricking them or intentionally putting holes in them
- not taking the penis out of you fast enough after the guy has cum and his dick has gone down, causing the condom to slip off
- accidentally tearing the condom when taking it out of the packet

### Things to do to keep you safe as a sex worker

- Only use your condoms—don't use a condom a client brings because you don't know how it's been stored or if he's tampered with it in some way. The easiest way to avoid using a condom a client brings (sometimes they bring ribbed or studded ones, for example, thinking they are giving you an extra treat) is to tear it as you open it and say 'Ooopsie!'

- Have an assortment of different condoms including coloured, textured, latex, non-latex and an assortment of sizes. This will mean you will always have the size of the condom that best fits your client and condoms you can use to redirect your client if he doesn't want to use one e.g. 'Baby I know you don't want to use a condom, but if we use these ribbed ones, it will give me extra sensation so I'll come harder wrapped around your cock'.
- Never use mineral oils or oil-based lubricants.
- Be careful not to get oil-based massage oils on a condom if you're giving your client a massage before you bonk him. Also be careful not to get any oil on his dick because this will cause the condom to slip off. The cheapest water-based massage lotion is sorbolene. It has no smell either, which means clients don't leave your premises smelling different and possibly drawing attention to themselves at home or back at work.
- Store your condoms safely so they're kept out of the heat and direct sunlight.
- Don't leave your client alone in a room with your condoms in case he tampers with them.
- Be careful not to accidentally tear the condom when opening the condom wrapper.
- Use lots of lubricant and apply it frequently when bonking your client.
- Swap condoms if you're having sex for a long time or if you're having hard-and-fast sex.
- Always put the condom on your client yourself.
- If your client touches the condom, take it off and put a new one on in case he has torn it or he has an STI on his hands that he then transfers onto the condom. He may get an STI on his hands if he plays with his dick after showering.
- Check the expiry date on the condom to make sure it isn't out of date.
- Be careful when using flavoured or warming condoms because they may cause thrush, blistering or urinary tract infections on you and your client.
- Don't use condoms with spermicidal lubricant added to them.

## Where can you get condoms?

- Respect Inc
  - Chemists
  - Service stations
  - Sexual health clinics
  - Supermarkets
  - NSPs (needle & syringe program)
  - Ordering online
  - Brothel
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## Disclaimer:

All material in this fact sheet is provided for your information only and may not be construed as legal, medical or health advice or instruction.

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## Respect Inc contacts:

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