

Solutions to some common condom problems

Condoms feel too tight

- Use a stretchier brand like Maxx, or a bigger brand like Lifestyles Tuxedo, the black ones. These bigger brands can fit almost anybody, big or small. The ring at the base will hold it on.
- Put a drop of water based lube or saliva inside the tip to help conduct heat and help the end to slip around more. Lube in the tip also reduces risk of breakage.
- Make sure the ring is completely unrolled to the base of the penis. If it's not rolled all the way down, the ring will feel tight. In order to unroll the condom all the way, unroll it with your hands before putting it on the penis. Then put it on like you would a sock or tights. Be careful not to tear the condom with your fingernails.

Can't feel anything

- Try a better quality condom that is thinner such as Beyond Seven, Maxx, or Kimono.
- Try condoms and lubes without nonoxinol 9 spermicide. Nonoxinol 9 can irritate the lining of the vagina or anus and cause numbness. For the same reasons, use lubes without spermicide.
- If the last time you used a condom was years ago, condoms are a lot better nowadays. They are not only thinner, but more reliable.
- A drop of lube in the tip will make it feel more natural. Water conducts heat better than latex, and more play in tip means more sensation on the most sensitive part of the penis.

Condoms break

- Make sure you leave no air pockets in the tip of the condom. Pinch the tip to leave some room at the end and work out any air bubbles with your thumb and index finger. Use lube in tip, and better quality condoms. Check the expiration date too. Never keep your condoms in a warm place. If you're having a marathon session, check that the condom is holding up and change it once in a while.

No condoms around when I need them

- Keep condoms in a handy place such as your bag, jacket pocket, by the bed. Think ahead if you are going to drink or use drugs to make condoms easy to find.
- Don't worry about your reputation just because you carry around condoms with you. Your partners will probably be relieved that you thought of protecting both of you **and** had the courage to mention it.

Condoms irritate me

- Allergies to latex are rare. More common is an allergy to the spermicide (nonoxinol-9) found in many lubricants. Avoid condoms and lubes with spermicide.
- Try Avanti condoms which are made of very thin plastic. Unlike latex, these can be used with oil based lubes. Like the "female" internal condom, the plastic Avanti condoms are not stretchy like latex so they tend to get baggy and slip off.

I go limp at the thought of condoms

- This problem is usually due to a break in the momentum when one of you goes to find condoms or has trouble getting the thing on. Nerves also play a part, especially when you're with a new partner.
- Condoms can also be a turn-off at first because we have so many bad associations with them. The best way to get over this kind of safer sex performance anxiety is to practice by yourself (yeah, that's right) so you can get used to the feel and learn different ways to put it on (rolling it down or pulling it on like a sock).
- Get your partner involved in getting the condom on to make it more fun (a third hand is always useful to squeeze the tip to keep air out). Just because you or your partner got soft in a condom once, doesn't mean it won't work better the next time. It just takes practice and a lot of communication.
- Remember, your brain is your biggest sex organ. Make condoms a habit so you can put your mind at ease.

Condom slips off

- There is a brand (Mentor) of condom that is designed for heavy duty and has some 'post-it' adhesive at the base.
- Don't linger inside your partner once you've come. Hold the base of the penis and pull out before the condom gets baggy and slips off.