



Dear Sex Counselor,

I'm thinking about getting a vibrator, but I don't know how to pick one. There are so many shapes and sizes and colors... How do I know which one is right for me?

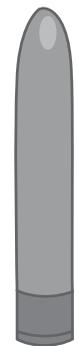
I understand how overwhelming it can be to look at all the choices. There are vibrators in every shape and size available. If this is your first vibrator, we've found that *variability* is the best characteristic to look for in a beginning vibrator. Choose one that offers lots of different options when it comes to how and where to use your vibrator. The more you're aware of your preferences, the easier your next choice will be.

To pick the vibrator that's right for you, ask yourself the following questions. You can keep track of your answers—or someone else's, if you're giving a gift—on the inside flap of this brochure.

1. DO YOU WANT TO USE A VIBRATOR EXTERNALLY, INTERNALLY, OR BOTH?

Be prepared to explore. Some people like to use vibrators on the clitoris directly, but that is fairly intense for some people. Others use them on the lips of the vulva, while some like to use them inside the vagina. Some people like to move the vibration around to all three places. You'll never know what you like until you try it yourself.

For most women, arousal that can lead to orgasm occurs when the clitoris, lips of the vulva, and first 1-3



inches of the vagina (closest to the outside of your body) are stimulated. So, if you're looking to increase your ability to have an orgasm, strongly consider a vibrator that will deliver at least moderate vibrations to the clitoris and vulva. If you enjoy vaginal penetration, you may want to consider a **shaft**-shaped vibrator that can also be used internally.

For someone using a vibrator for the first time, we recommend choosing one that you can experiment with using both externally and internally, like one

A versatile shaft-shaped vibe.

with a shaft shape. This allows you to try vibration in several different areas of your body to find out where you like vibration.

If you're going to be using your vibrator inside your vagina, make sure you get one that's an appropriate **width**. The easiest way to know what width you're comfortable with is to see how many fingers you're comfortable being penetrated with when you're aroused. Once you know this, you can measure the width across those fingers, and use that width to find a vibrator size that would be comfortable for you to insert vaginally.

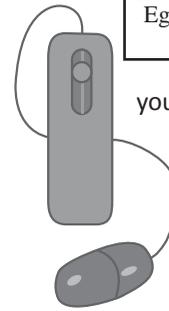
2. WHAT TYPE AND INTENSITY OF STIMULATION DO YOU LIKE?

How light or how strong do you like your vibration? How deeply do you enjoy hand or tongue pressure? If you aren't sure about the intensity of vibration, it's good to get a vibrator that has a **range** of speeds from low to high. This way, you can experiment with different intensities to see what you like best. Some women enjoy only mild stimulation, while some women like intense stimulation all the time. Still others enjoy changing the intensity during the arousal process.

Different vibrators have different **types** of vibration. Some have a "buzzy" feel to them; the sensation is on the surface of your skin. Others have a "throbbly" feel; the sensation provides a deeper tissue massage. Some women prefer one type over the other. However, it's difficult to know which you will prefer until you try it. Our descriptions in the store and on our website tell you whether each toy is buzzy or throbbly.

3. WHAT TYPE OF MATERIAL AND TEXTURE DO YOU LIKE?

Vibrators come in a range of materials to accommodate different preferences. However, we generally recommend hard plastic for first-time vibrator users. Though it may not seem like having a hard-shelled vibrator would be comfortable on your genitals, a hard material is actually an advantage.



Egg: a small, hard plastic vibe.

Why? Because it allows you to feel the full range of vibrations your vibrator has. If you get a vibrator with a soft surface, the vibrations will be muted. Hard plastic is also easier to clean.

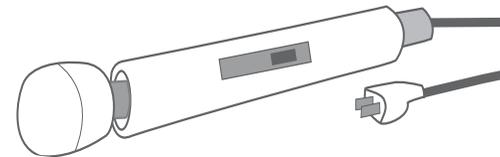
Some feel that hard-shelled vibrators are just too intense, but we encourage you to remember that it's always easier to decrease a vibrator's intensity than it is to increase it. If your vibrator feels too intense, you can always vibrate it over a towel, blanket, or hand to mute the vibration. If it isn't intense enough, however, there isn't anything you can do to make it more intense.

4. SHOULD IT BE VERY QUIET?

Vibrators produce a wide range of sounds. Apartment dwellers, people with children, and others may care about the level of noise. Our descriptions (in our catalog and on our website) tell you if they're quiet, moderately noisy, or pretty darn loud. Better yet, come in to our store to hear for yourself.

5. HOW MOBILE DO YOU WANT TO BE?

Vibrators that plug into the wall tend to be made better, last longer, and vibrate more intensely (but tend to be noisier). They also make good multi-purpose toys for when a back rub is your pleasure of choice. Battery-operated and rechargeable vibrators, on the other hand, can be used almost anywhere—you don't need to be near an outlet. However, most battery operated toys will not last as long as their plug-in counterparts.



Wand-type a powerful plug-in vibe.

6. WILL YOU BE INTRODUCING IT TO A PARTNER?

If so, you may want to take into account your partner's comfort level and preferences for size, shape, color, etc. Multi-purpose massagers don't look quite as much like a sex toy, so a shy partner may be more comfortable with one of them. If you would like to use it together, choose a shape that will fit easily between two bodies, such as one with a curve.



Pele: a water-proof vibe with a unique shape.

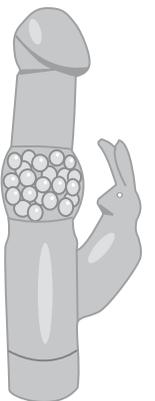
7. SHOULD IT BE WATERPROOF?

We have sections both on our website and store for the vibrators that can be used in the bath or shower, if that's something you think you want to explore.

Also, while it's true that many women enjoy vibration, some women don't like vibration on their genitals at all. If this is your first time trying it, it's best to not invest a lot of money, until you know whether you like the sensations. If you end up not liking vibration, it's better to be out only \$30 than it is to have lost \$80 on an expensive vibrator that doesn't work for you.

BUT MY FRIEND SAYS THE RABBIT PEARL IS THE BEST VIBRATOR EVER. CAN I START WITH THAT ONE?

You can if you want, but we wouldn't recommend it. The Rabbit has been highly publicized, and while many women love it, not everyone does. **The Rabbit**, and many toys like it, provide lots of stimulation to lots of areas of the genitals, and that much stimulation at once can feel overwhelming to women who have never experienced vibration on their genitals before. Keep in mind that what works for one woman doesn't necessarily work for another woman, and save your money for a time when you know you like vibration, and your genitals are ready for it.



Rabbit Pearl: great for some, but too much for others.



Dear Dr. Myrtle,

I recently read a magazine article about vibrators and I'm curious. Why would a woman want to use one?

P.S. I've heard vibrators can be addicting. Is this true?

Vibrators can be used for all sorts of things: to enhance your pleasure during solo or partner play, to arouse you as a warm-up to your usual intimacies, to help you achieve orgasm or have multiple orgasms, and even to provide a great back massage. With a vibrator, you can be pleased for as long as you wish, with you in control.

You may want to use a vibrator:

- If you want to explore another way to become sexually aroused.
- If you want assistance to achieve an orgasm or want to experience more than one orgasm.
- If your partner is tired, ill, not interested in sex when you are, or finished with sex before you are.
- If you want stimulation in addition to intercourse (using a vibrator on your clitoris and vulva can help bring you to orgasm during penetrative sex).

Also, many women find that they experience stronger, more satisfying orgasms with a vibrator's consistent stimulation. And if you need more incentive, consider that regular orgasms are good for your health! They have been proven to boost your immune system and keep your pelvic floor muscles strong and toned (for more information on the benefits of strong pelvic floor muscles, see our *Pelvic Floor* brochure).

P.S. ABOUT THAT ADDICTION MYTH:

The short answer is *no*. A vibrator may help you to have an orgasm more quickly than with manual stimulation, but it will not desensitize you to stimulation that typically leads you to orgasm. Many people grow accustomed to the speed at which they reach orgasm when using a vibrator and grow frustrated when other forms of stimulation (oral or manual) don't achieve the same results. This doesn't mean a person is addicted to a vibrator; just that they're used to its efficiency.

In fact, studies show that regular vibration actually increases growth and number of nerve endings in the clitoris—so regular vibrator use can lead to even more, better orgasms in the future. One caveat, however: it is possible to train yourself to be able to achieve orgasm only with a certain kind of stimulation. This is true whether you use a vibrator or not, so vary your technique every now and then to avoid getting into a rut. Your body benefits from being reminded how to get aroused in different ways, so it's healthy (not to mention fun!) to add a bit of variety once in a while. Who knows, you may discover something new along the way.

FUN FACTS ABOUT VIBRATORS

~The vibrator was the fifth appliance to be electrified—after the sewing machine, fan, teakettle and toaster but before the iron and frying pan.

~Vibrators were first developed in the late 19th century by physicians, to use with female patients complaining of a variety of health concerns, such as painful menstruation, infertility, “frigidity” and congestion of the pelvic organs. The physicians were tired of using their hands to massage the women to a “paroxysm” (orgasm), so they developed a mechanical appliance that would work faster and not get tired.

~The use of vibrators on the external female genitalia was not thought of as controversial because women were expected to only have orgasms through internal stimulation. The speculum and the tampon were much more worrisome at the time.

~Vibrators were advertised in many widely read magazines and catalogs in the early 20th century, such as the Sears-Roebuck catalog, *Modern Woman*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Hearst's International* and *Needlecraft*.

~Medical use of vibrators stopped after the advent of sexually explicit movies called “stag films” in the 1920s, in which vibrators were used in a sexual context to bring women to orgasm.

A HELPFUL QUIZ ON HOW TO CHOOSE A VIBRATOR

1. Would you like to use a vibrator externally, internally, or both?

- o Mostly externally
- o Mostly internally
- o Both

2. How much vibration intensity do you like?

- o Very strong
- o Fairly strong
- o Fairly mild
- o Very mild
- o Sometimes mild, sometimes strong
- o I'm not sure

3. What type of material or texture do you prefer?

- p Hard and smooth— it should transmit vibration well
- o Soft and flexible
- o I'm not sure

4. Should it be quiet?

- o Should be very quiet
- o Moderate is okay, but not loud
- o Doesn't matter

5. How mobile do you want to be?

- o Plugging into the wall is okay
- o Prefer rechargeable, so I don't need to be near an outlet or have batteries handy
- o Complete mobility is important: I prefer batteries
- o Doesn't matter

6. Will you be introducing it to a partner?

- o Yes
- o No
- o I'm not sure

7. Should it be waterproof?

- o Yes
- o No
- o Doesn't matter

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Vibrators

~Why to use a vibrator

~How to choose one that's right for you

~Tips for buying your first vibrator



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Sexuality Resource Center

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