During the last few summers, we surveyed your peers to gain insight into their thoughts on sex, dating, and relationships at Carleton. We asked them to share advice, stories, and suggestions on topics including their first kiss, communicating with a crush, abstinence, hooking up, consent, and more!

This publication is the result.

Thanks to all who submitted stories and advice!
There is immense diversity in the experiences, sexual practices, gender identities, romantic relationships, and friendships among Carls. This guide is meant to share advice and experiences of real Carleton students so that you can gain from their wisdom. Each section of this publication addresses different aspects of sex, dating, and relationships at Carleton. All excerpts are written in students’ own words.

Healthy relationships with others always begin with a healthy relationship with yourself.

I wish I had been encouraged to get to know my body better before sharing it with someone.

I wish I had known about the beauty of vibrators sooner!!!! After that, dating and sex became secondary.

Make sure you are comfortable. If you are not ready, then it’s okay to wait.

You do you. But respect yourself and your partner.

Ask yourself. Speak with yourself! Ask others. Speak with others!

I wish I had heard that you are incredibly attractive to many people, and you have so much more power than you think you do. Freshman year I didn’t think I was attractive, but by junior year I had realized I was totally cute.

I wish I had known that just because someone wants to have sex with me does not mean that I have to have sex with them, or that I should.

Explore your boundaries by yourself, go to GSC workshops like GETTING WHAT YOU WANT FROM RELATIONSHIPS, there’s an activity for that. Learn other boundaries by TALKING!
Knowing Yourself

I was scared of sex for a long time. I just wasn’t very in touch with myself physically, and sex wasn’t a part of my life. That’s fine. I finally started a long-term relationship, and then everything felt right. You’ll know when it’s the right time and the right place.

Masturbation. **Gotta feel your body out.**

Be safe, be sultry, and be consensual. Don’t feel like having sex is proving anything; do it when you’re ready and you genuinely WANT to, when it’s HOT for you.

How to know who you like: **Who makes your blood rush? Who makes you laugh?** You can like different people for different things; you don’t need to have a type.

**Take your time!** There is sometimes a lot of pressure, maybe even unconscious pressure, to move relationships along at a certain pace. What is really great though is doing what feels right when it feels right and not worrying about expectations.

Know your limits: **it’s really OK to say no.** Talk it out, because Carls are usually good about listening and respecting what you want.

**Don’t let anyone judge you.** Your decisions are yours. Stick with them. Never feel guilty about saying no and never feel like you owe anyone anything. Be confident and it will win you the most respect.

I had always considered myself straight until I started seeing my first girlfriend. She was very patient as I tried to figure out my sexuality and consent was always a part of our interactions. She simultaneously helped me challenge my own assumptions about myself while never forcing me to do anything. And by having a lot of LGBTQ upper classmen friends to talk to, I felt like I had a really good support system. All this is to say that Carleton is a very safe and supportive place to explore your sexuality whether that means discovering you’re queer or reaffirming your heterosexuality.

Think with your brain, not with your equipment below the belt. It’s been said a lot, but seriously: **think before you act.** You never know what one poor decision will result in; from personal experience, I can tell you, one moment can change our life.

Carleton is a wonderful place—it truly is—with unforgettable people and incredible resources and opportunities. **But remember that it is okay to struggle here.** Understanding your needs and wants is a lifelong process—and such an important one. Don’t be afraid to experiment here – but be sure that the choices you are making are your own and that the relationships or hookups you choose to engage in are what you want. Trust yourself. Listen to yourself. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and learn more. And have fun!

Don’t feel like you have to go crazy and meet (kiss) every cute boy/girl on campus in your first few weeks! You will have plenty of time to meet people.
A Balancing Act

Take a pause and see how you feel. Take a pause and ask your partner how they feel. Listen.

One of my favorite lines from FemSex*: AWKWARD ISN’T FATAL. Just try to learn from every experience.

I wish someone would have let me know sooner that whatever I’m feeling is totally okay and normal. My desires, needs, fears, concerns, and relationships have all changed so much in college, and my freshman year that really freaked me out. Now I’m much more comfortable with and aware of how much these always change, and I feel like I’m better able to navigate those changes.

When I was dating my ex, I made it a point to never make him the center of my world and to continue partying with my friends. This made the break up a lot easier since I still had my close friends to fall back on and my social group to support me. Often times when people get into relationships, it’s very easy to be super involved with each other and forget everyone else’s bad idea!

Listen to yourself — you know best. Do what feels right to you, but keep in mind that you are affecting someone else as well — be considerate.

I’ve found that balancing time is difficult when you’ve got a romantic relationship on top of classes and friends, but if you get everything balanced correctly, it can be really rewarding.

Go on dates! People don’t date enough at Carleton. Not everyone is looking for a meaningless hookup or a long term commitment. So ask someone on a date!

Don’t go into a relationship with the thought that the other person is filling a hole you have or is completing you. You should try to find your own identity first, and the other person is someone who should grow with you, together.

I suggest getting really settled in with friends before getting into a relationship. The friends will be WAY more important for your sanity in the long run.

The most important part of a relationship is communication and honesty. You will have enough stress at school with all your schoolwork, you do not need to be wondering what is going on in your relationship and let it distract and stress you out.

Dating — make sure you’re happy on your own! Don’t rely on your partner to bring you happiness. (Recognize that life is a very great gift not because of what it gives us but because of what it allows to give to others.) Sex, dating, and consent should be fun!

Go slow and don’t compare what you are into with anyone else. No comparing, no pressure.

*FemSex is a peer-facilitated non-credit sexuality course held in spring term.
It's okay to be single! There always seems to be a momentary panic of needing to be in a relationship when you get to college, but it is a phase. Being single (especially after a relationship) can center you. This is the time to figure out who you are and what you want in your next/first relationship.

It's okay to wait. More people than you think take sex seriously. Dating is safe.

Make sure. You never “owe” anyone a kiss, hookup, or sex.

There is no point in your life that you *have* to have a boyfriend, girlfriend, or sexual partner. Don't feel that pressure.

It's okay to not like people. It's better to be honest with yourself and with whoever it is you're trying not to hurt, because if you're not, then you run the risk of stringing them along, which, in the long run, is worse.

I have stayed abstinent (which I define as no intercourse, oral, or anal sex) for my time here at Carleton. If it is important to you, it will not inhibit your chances of meeting and dating people here.

It is okay to have sex. It is okay to not have sex.

I wish someone had told me your “number” doesn’t matter. It took a long time for me to get over the shame of having slept with more people than my friends. And that self-hate is just pointless!

I never committed to abstinence as a goal, but for me, sex is a big deal, and I never wanted to have it with someone I wasn't deeply emotionally committed to. So I guess I was abstinent for almost my entire time at Carleton, and it was fine for me. I never felt any pressure to be doing anything else. If you do, then examine the source of that pressure, and your own desires.

I was at a friend's birthday party halfway through my sophomore year, and she was mutual friends with this guy who I liked to spend time with, but didn't particularly want to get involved with. Well, at the party, he had other ideas, and after we started dancing for a little bit, he tried to make a move and kiss me. I stopped him, turned to face him, and just said "I value your friendship much more than this," and left the party. The next day, he found me in Sayles and just said "thank you". I have never been so proud of myself, or so grateful that I didn't ruin, but only helped a friendship with that decision.

I'd never dated anyone before coming to Carleton. You aren't alone!

I wish I had been more comfortable and confident. I did not have the highest self-esteem and I let myself be afraid instead of pursuing some wonderful people.
The first time I kissed a girl I saw fireworks for a whole week. I still smile whenever I walk near or through bell field.

Don’t feel guilty/ashamed about your sexual interactions or lack thereof. Just be sure to be safe and respectful.

Relax and have fun. First dates are always awkward. Carleton students are usually awkward. First dates with Carleton students will probably be awkward. Embrace it and have fun. Don’t take yourself too seriously and realize that the other person is probably just as nervous as you, if not more.

Consent is sexy, asking for it makes you sexy, and getting it is unbelievably sexy.

The inebriated hook-up is enjoyable, but have a balance because you can have trust and intimacy established from a sober interaction.

Don’t freak out if you haven’t had your first [whatever] You’re not a loser and you’re not alone. Besides, you came here to learn, right?

A first date doesn’t commit you to anything -- it’s a sampler. Don’t feel tied to someone because you’re now officially ‘dating.’

Everyone here have different levels of experience--don’t feel pressured to get sex over with if you are a virgin. Conversely, don’t be embarrassed/ashamed if you are more experienced than others.

Your first kiss and “I love you” should be things you say when you are in your right mind!

Your first kiss is probably going to be somewhat awkward, not magical. In retrospect, you will like it for sentimental reasons. Don’t have high expectations.

A lot of freshmen worry about their firsts. Their first kiss, first date, first everything. The best advice I can give the first year class is not to worry about it. As a freshmen, there will be plenty of other students who have yet to share their firsts and that's OK. Awkward people mate here. Campus culture here at Carleton is very sex positive, there's no social pressure to do anything you don't want to do!

First kisses don't have to be great, mine wasn't. But they have improved considerably over time. :)

First dates can be easy--or they can be difficult. Find something fun to do! I took someone out to Dacie Moses (the cookie house) and we baked a cake. Another time, someone took me to the Arb and we just chilled in nature for 3 hours. Make the date whatever you want it to be!

Besides, you came here to learn, right?

I’ve heard a lot of people say “I haven’t had sex yet, I just want to get it over with.” This is of course understandable, and your ‘first’ can be as meaningful or not as you want it to be. Everyone deserves for their first to be special if they want that. If you do just want to get it over with, I still highly recommend it is with someone you trust, who makes you comfortable and safe.
Ask for consent. Be honest about your feelings and be honest when someone asks you. My first time was not 100% perfect, but we talked about it and re-did it and my real first time was magical.

Don’t feel pressure to have sex before you’re ready and find someone who you care about. Plenty of people wait until it’s the right time for them.

Have fun! Do what you’re comfortable doing and give no shits. Have confidence to go for whoever you want (though be respectful and ask for consent) and have the confidence to trust your gut if you’re half-naked and don’t want to continue. Leaving is always a choice :)

Explore, have fun, get consent, and don’t be embarrassed to do what you want and try new things.

Do what you want, with who you want, and nothing more.

My girlfriend and I went on a CANOE trip and one of our first interactions was me giving her medical treatment. I tried so hard to hide my crush from her.

Never be ashamed of your first kiss. For some people it happens at 8. For others it is in high school and for those of us who like to take our time it happened in college.

A lot of people find that firsts are not nearly as big of a deal as they thought they would be. Don’t freak out!

My close group of friends has a rotation where all but one of us can get loose and drink, and one of us stays sober. It works really well for Sayles dances. When it was my turn once, I saw one of my friends dancing with someone who looked really drunk. I flashed her a thumbs up and thumbs down, she gave me a thumbs down, I cut in, and let her get on with her night.

I was hosting a party and had a lot to drink, and I saw a girl I knew I wanted to hook up with. People started to leave as the night progressed, and I kept talking to her so she wouldn’t leave. But when it was just us, she didn’t seem too interested. Rather than make a move, I texted my friend to come get her. I didn’t hook up with anyone that night, and considering the circumstances, that was probably the best drunken decision I made all year.

If you’re going to drink, make a plan with yourself about hooking up/sex before you go out. Waking up and regretting a one-night stand sucks.

Always make sure that hook-ups/sex is consensual. And remember that while drunk someone might make decisions that they will regret later.

What does hooking up mean? Well, it depends on the person and how they define their experiences.

DON’T BE AWKWARD POST HOOKUP!

There is nothing wrong with hooking up as long as it is fun, it feels good, and you are being respected.
Dealing with Alcohol

Hook ups” ie making out on the dance floor, or having a drunken make out/ maybe more session back in your dorm room will happen, and you know what? Some of them will be super awkward, but there only as awkward as you make them, so no matter what be kind and just communicate. I think that's the best policy.

It happens, it’s normal. It’s okay to hook up with random people.

Advice — enter with your own established rules and expectations for what you want. These can totally change along the way, but always go it on your terms.

Don’t use alcohol as a crutch when you are interested in someone.

When I was a freshman I was at a party with a senior girl and a friend pulled me aside and told me to have fun but realize she was too drunk to give consent and I have always respected that friend for that.

Saying no is okay.

Sex is a two way street and no one in either lane should be drunk driving.

I Want It That Way

It's still important to get consent for things you may have already done.

We played ‘would you rather’ and I straight up said: “would you rather kiss me, or not?” We dated for two and a half years after that.

Dates are so much fun! Friends complain to me that they only ever hook up, or that they are in relationships with people but never go on dates. Go on dates! They can be funny and awkward and even if they go poorly then move on and go on a date with someone else. Fun!

Don’t be reckless with other people’s hearts, don’t put up with people who are reckless with yours.

It’s good to say what you like even if you don’t know exactly how to say it. If you don’t know what you want, that’s ok to say too.

I have not met someone who thinks that consent is not sexy. It also shows respect for the other person, so ask!

When it comes to relationships one has to be just a little bit selfish. You should be in a relationship because it makes you happy not because you’re trying to make the other person happy or because you’re afraid of hurting the other person. Just be honest with the other person, and, more importantly, be honest with yourself.

My body deserves pleasure. I will recognize the privileges my body has. I will recognize that the bodies I’m attracted to aren’t the only attractive bodies. All bodies are beautiful.
When it seems like your partner wants to say no, **you can give them extra support by using phrasing that will let them feel like their choice is valid and real and they’re not just “saying no to you.”** If you say “can I take this off?” and they remain silent, seem hesitant, or say “I don’t know,” then you can follow that immediately by saying, “Would you like me to LEAVE IT ON?” so that they get to respond affirmatively/positively. Even though we all know that “saying no = saying yes to yourself,” it can be SO much easier if you actually get to literally say the word “yes” while preventing an act that you prefer not to carry out!

Example 1: Person A: “*Is this okay?*”  
B: (silence)  
A: “*Would you like me to stop?*”  
B: “Yeah, I think that might be better.”

Example 2: Person A: “Can I go down on you?”  
B: “Um, well...”  
A: “You know what, we can totally stay above the waist if you want. Would that be better?”  
B: “Actually yeah, if that’s okay.”

Ask, “What do you like?” I got asked this also for the first time during my last year at Carleton, and would you believe, I DIDN’T KNOW HOW TO RESPOND. Nobody had ever asked me that before, they just did whatever they thought people of my gender (or even theirs!) liked.

How to say yes: **LOUDLY.** Loud and proud. They’ll be psyched that you’re psyched.

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You may feel pressured to date or be sexual, but follow your own morals/ideas before anyone else. It’s okay to be you!

**Just take a moment to think “why do I want to do this?” “How will it make me feel?”**

**HEALTHY COMMUNICATION is like the most important thing.** Tell your partner what you really feel, what you expect, and what you want. **Always.**

During my sophomore year a friend of mine had an experience where someone asked her whether she was into guys or girls (I know that this leaves out gender non-conforming people) but it impacted her enough that she, and in turn our friend group, realized the types of assumptions we make so regularly, and it really helped us to be more self-aware and it definitely helped me start to change the way I interact with people (not making assumptions about sexual preference).

**Have the guts and courage to say both, ‘no’, but also ‘yes’ or ‘I want’**

Try things out with someone you trust, and be clear that you’re experimenting. Ask questions! Don’t assume!

**Communication and checking in with yourself and others is the way to go.** Even though it may feel awkward or weird at first, checking in with your partner at the beginning of the night (or day or of term?) and throughout your time together ultimately feels a LOT better than being confused or uncomfortable with how things happen.

**Always good to CALL PEOPLE OUT when they do bad stuff (even when “just drunk”).**
Ask, “Do you prefer a light touch or a heavy touch??” I got asked this for the first time during my last year at Carleton, and WOW did it ever make a difference.

The first time I hooked up with someone after being sexually assaulted was the first time I think I really understood how incredibly easy and important it is to ask for consent and communicate with a sexual partner, especially a new one. When the person I was with asked me if they could take my shirt off, it meant so much to me. It showed me that although they definitely wanted to go further, they respected my body, my desires, my comfort level, and my boundaries. I felt so happy and empowered when I answered them. It’s not hard to ask for consent, but it’s so important. Remember that you’re not entitled to anyone else’s body and no one is entitled to yours. Always ask.

It took me a week to get up the courage to ask this guy out. One day, after a sudden burst of adrenaline, I cornered him in our floor lounge. What I planned to say was, “hey, I kind of like you, do you want to go out some time?” but what came out was “so, you like me, right?” he turned white as a ghost and stuttered that he didn’t know. Panicked, I ran from the room, convinced he was never going to talk to me again. The next morning, there was a Friday Flower in my mailbox with a note that said: “I’m sorry that I said I didn’t know last night. I do like you, I was just so shocked by what you said and I panicked. Want to see a movie tonight?” We had our first date that night, and now we’ve been dating for a year and a half.

Breaking up is hard. Be honest, but remember that the person you are breaking up with is just that: a person, so try to be kind. And give yourself time to heal in whatever way you need.

It’s easy to fall into the myth that people always want to have sex when you do. Remember to take a ‘not right now’ response the same way you would want it to be taken from you.

Communication is key. That goes for any and all relationships. If you want them to kiss you, tell them. If it bothers you when they don’t let you have space, tell them. If their sexy body turns you on... That’s nice for them to know too:-)

Once, I had to explain to my boyfriend that we couldn’t make out during Star Trek, because I love Star Trek too much to ignore it. He respected this as a legitimate boundary, and invoked this idea again when we watched Doctor Who.

Communicate with your roommate about using the room. Nobody wants a Tuesday lunchtime surprise of walking into a bedroom with more nudity and sweat than the ancient Olympics... ready for sex? Send a text.

LISTEN AND RESPECT.

I had gone 19 years without having an orgasm and thought I never would. I just started dating someone and having sex regularly. We tried really hard to get me to come but nothing worked. Then, one day we gave up but were fooling around. I wasn’t expecting anything so I felt more liberated to experiment and not stick to the goofy cosmo tips and myths from my friends we’d been using and then I had it. My first orgasm. The rest, as they say, is history.

One of the best relationships I’ve had is an open one. I was abroad and my boyfriend was on campus but we decided to stay on campus. Sometimes, non-traditional relationships are the bomb.
Be proactive about consent. Be explicit, ask your partner, and if you are unsure, take a breather. Use sign language if you have to, but make sure you’re communicating! No one is a mind reader.

Asking for consent is not an engendered practice - everyone should do it!

Talk openly with your partner, and you will both know what to expect from each other.

Communicating with your crush: Just come out and say, "I'm really into you." Playing games is more trouble than it's worth.

I had a strategy where, if I had a crush on someone, I told them immediately and asked them on a date. This didn't work very well. Apparently flirting is a thing.

I wish I had known that consent isn't just sexy, it's necessary...even if you're in a committed relationship! Checking in with your partner before & during (whether you guys decide to do it verbally, or set up non-verbal cues) makes kissing and beyond waaay more pleasurable.

Communication is sexy because it usually affirms both partners.

My entire life I have felt uncomfortable when people hug me without warning, which isn't to say I don't enjoy a good hug or snuggle. In college people began to ask me before they hugged me. It was an incredible relief. Now when I hook up with people I tell them, "It makes me more relaxed and comfortable when you ask before touching me."

Don't feel obligated to enter a relationship with someone they really like you but you're unsure about your feelings. There are a lot of narratives about how you “should” grow into a sexual and relationship driven person, but it isn’t right for everyone! Go at your own pace and recognize what you personally need before considering others – depreciating yourself for another isn’t a good relationship basis.

I wished someone told me that being inexperienced is not that big of a deal. A lot of people are in the same situation. If I had known, I would not have pursued hookups in the way that I did: as cheap ways to gain sexual experience instead of opportunities to explore sexual connections with other people. ALSO, the dating pool on this campus is ridiculously small, especially for queer students. Go across the river and date an Ole. You won’t regret it.

For the love of fucking Zeus, please talk about your feels! You can be big kids and say how you feel diplomatically! Example: “I’m worried about how fast this is going.” “I’m uncomfortable with this”. BUT WAIT! You can say positive shit too! I.E.: “I love it when your tongue flicks my ear; can you surprise me with some ear nibbles?” That is all! I once farted by accident while receiving oral. If it had not been someone I loved and was comfortable with I would have been so embarrassed. But the person played it real cool and finished. I couldn’t have loved them more. My point is sex is so much better when you’re open and honest with whom you are. You can wait if you want!
I consider myself sexually fluid and have had fun kissing some of my girlfriends. But there’s one of my friends who is to put it nicely — a bad kisser. Having to tell them they are a bad kisser as drowned me anxiety the entire term. I’ve finally got it together and told her positively “I like it when you do this but HOW ABOUT THIS?” Best way to get what I want and improve Carleton kissing community.

If you feel like the overly P.C. person who always has to step up and dissuade rape jokes, try doing it subtly: “Ha ha. Not Funny.” Don’t make a big deal of it, just let the people around you know that you don’t appreciate it.

Talk to people if it helps! It’s amazing how glad people will be that you trust them enough to confide in them if you’re questioning, queer, or somewhere in between.

Speak like there’s always a survivor in the room—because statistically speaking there is: about 1 in 4 women will experience unwanted sexual contact over their life.

So I was kissing this guy, and it was pretty hot, when suddenly, I felt something more slobber-esque than usual. I parted from his pretty lips, and discovered blood. Blood on his face and on my face. He smiled, laughed, and said “I get nosebleeds sometimes.” Fast forward. Things are happening, he’s going down on me (sidenote—ALWAYS reciprocate if the other person is comfortable). When suddenly he says “wait, hold on a sec.” “What?” I look up to see blood on his face…”Shit! Oh my god! I’m so sorry! I thought my period ended yesterday!” he starts laughing. “Why are you laughing?!” He looks up, flashes a cute, albeit a little bloody smile and says “I get nosebleeds sometimes.”

If a friend says something that I find offensive, like a racist joke, I wait until the group we’re with dissipates, then pull them aside and calmly tell them that I was bothered by what they said. I then ask them if they could tell me what they were thinking or trying to say when they said it. I don’t know that this stops them from saying these things all the time, but it at least makes them think about the implications of their behavior and stops them from saying those things around me.

It’s a small campus. Treat others with the respect and love you want others to treat you with.

Be there for your friends. College is a whole new environment, and Carls bond quickly because of our tem systems. If shit goes down, you’re gonna want someone to be there for you—so reciprocate. Care for others. Care for Carls.

It’s always a good idea to check in with people no matter what the relationship is--friendship, acquaintance, dating, hooking up. Ask them how they’re doing, what they need, if you can help them, if they like what you’re doing, etc.

Help each other! Everyone is learning!

Trust your gut. If you do something once and then feel icky afterwards, take steps to not repeat yourself. Don’t beat yourself up if you do something once and realize afterwards that it was outside your boundaries. You’re learning and learning takes a lot of practice, and, unfortunately, failure too.
Creating the Community We Want

If someone has made you feel uncomfortable through their sexual advances and you’ve told them no, then it’s sexual harassment. I wish I had been brave enough to alert someone about the situation before it got out of hand for me. **Don’t be afraid to fill out a community concern report.**

**Call out problematic shit, cause that shit ain’t cute.**

I was in the closet during high school, and coming out to my roommate 8 weeks into fall term was one of the most terrifying moments of my life. I was afraid that I would completely destroy our still-solidifying friendship if I told the truth, but at the same time I couldn't stand to keep such a significant secret any longer. It took me an hour to work up to it, and I was physically shaking for another hour afterwards. Contrary to my fears, coming out made our relationship stronger, not weaker, and every time I told someone else, it got a little easier. Ironically, **the more people who knew the truth about my sexuality, the smaller and less significant it became.**

**Calling people out on their harmful language is an act of bravery and friendship. It is not “up tight”, it is caring.**

I had an experience with a friend that was really pushy and pressured me to go further than I wanted to. I talked to him about it the next week and he felt really bad and apologized profusely. **It doesn’t make it right what he did but it made a difference to me that he cared and that he hopefully wouldn’t do that again to another girl.**

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Creating the Community We Want

**Ask for consent directly and bluntly with no hanging questions. Anything besides “yes” means “no”.**

**CONSENT! Ask for consent. LISTEN! Listen to those around you. Just listening to those who may not feel safe on campus makes an enormous difference.**

An older person was aggressively hitting on a freshman girl who was clearly uncomfortable. I didn’t feel comfortable stepping in but I called her over to go the bathroom with me. **If your friend is uncomfortable STEP IN. It can be simple as asking a question.**

**Always ask and wait for enthusiastic consent.**

In such a small community, some awkwardness is inevitable, but as long as you treat the other party with the respect they deserve, and ask for that same respect, things often work out. **Getting over awkward situations and maintaining a happy and healthy relationship is very much a two-way street.**

Grinding on random people at a dances is not attractive. **Just ask. :)**

**Support survivors, create a zero-tolerance space for joke sand shaming about survivors/sexual assault, preach and practice communication and consent.**
“Can I…”

I get really turned on by ______ is really sexy.

“PLEASE COME CUDDLE WITH ME RIGHT NOW” in a text to my friend. Just ask. Believe me, there are ways to make it sexy.

Are you doing ok? Do you like this? Are you comfy? Are you feeling good?

Directly. The person should just straight up say: “Can I kiss you” or “Are you down with me kissing you?” The more directly the person asks, the sooner and more directly I can answer and move on.

I like to just straight up ask. Also, the mailbox system is wonderful and allows you to write notes that can ask questions that you may not be comfortable asking in person yet. There is something so intimate about a hand written note!

How would you feel about x?, Where x is anything you want it to be. How would you feel if I did x to you? Is also a nice variation.

Is this okay? Does this feel good? What do you want to do? What would feel good for you?

“Can I kiss you?” has literally worked every single time I’ve used it or when it’s been used on me. It sounds cheesy, yes, but it shows the other person that you respect them and that you are attracted to them. Believe me, whether it works or not, you get lots of points for asking.

I was infinitely grateful when asked “Are you sure you want to do this?” because I was able to answer “No” and avoid a hook-up that would have made me extremely uncomfortable.

Whenever I get my grind on I like to politely ask or be asked, “Do you want to dance?” just because it’s fun and cute. Either party can do this and it lays the foundation for communication early in the night.

Do you like this?
Should I keep going?
Can I do _____?
“I really like it when you…."

“Is it cool if I …”

Zimbra.

“Should we slow down?” It gives someone a chance to think about what they want without forcing them to feel awkward about rejecting any advances.

Want to make out?

Like a true nerd: I want to kiss you. Can I kiss you?

I am usually a little awkward about it (“so like, err, would you be okay with…..”) and fortunately find people who think that’s endearing.
How to Ask for Consent

Someone actually asked “Can I kiss you” and it made me really happy! (And I then was more excited to kiss him)

Just because you have been drinking doesn’t mean that everything goes out the window. Ask for consent!

Consent is sexy. But I’m not sure I ever thought it wasn’t. I don’t find the word “sexy” sexy. But the word “consent” is pretty sexy. And the word “is” is, like, just, wow, up there with “ontological”.

I love to ask what I can do for the person I’m with. What do you want to do? Do you like this? Does this feel good?

Sexily.

My favorite way to be asked is “is this ok?” because sometimes I don’t know how I feel about something before it starts. However, I will always say that beforehand so they know that just because we start doing something doesn’t mean we won’t quickly stop.

I really enjoy a good road map. “I wanna do this to your blank. How do you feel about it?”

Supporting Others

If you’re in a position where you’re supporting the survivor, your goal should be focused on them and how they are doing. How angry you are or what you wish would happen to the person who assaulted them detracts from this goal, because it takes away attention from the person you’re trying to help. Listen, ask questions, and let them tell you how you can best help them. Lastly, if you’re not the person they want to talk to, make it easy for your friend to kick you out. The best thing you can do might just be giving them the space they need.

Have an open ear and mind. A friend needed advice on her relationship and although I didn’t agree with her choices I helped the best I could.

Listen first. Sometimes people need to vent. Be conscious of a friend looking for advice or support.

LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN! Be supportive, but know your limits - you are not responsible for being a friend’s therapist or psychologist. Take care of yourself too. It’s ok to say, ”this is too much for me.” Talk to a Dean or Student Health and Counseling if you’re concerned a situation may be getting out of hand.

If you experience a non-consensual sexual encounter, PLEASE consider reporting it. Carleton is full of amazing, supportive people who will help you navigate the process and deal with the range of emotions that come with it. No one at Carleton should have to feel powerless and scared in our community. Reporting sends the message that non-consensual behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
One of my closest friends had a really awful first sexual encounter at Carleton fall term of our freshman year. It wasn’t just a sloppy, “first timer” type of thing, it was forced and unwanted. Although she said no, repeatedly, her partner was unrelenting. She came out of the situation scared and confused with seemingly limited places to turn. When she came to me I was shocked, angry and sad for her and disappointed that this had happened so early in our Carleton career. She felt like she had brought it on herself when in reality no one asks for that to happen. I helped her get to talk about it a bit more and get to counseling if she needed it. She ended up opting not to go to counseling or to report it anonymously. I chose to support her in all of her decisions, even though I would have liked to see her get the justice she deserves.

If you do need to help a friend, get extra support, reach out to some of the resources on campus. That’s what they’re there for.

Be a fucking bro. Broship knows no genders. Just fucking be one. Preferably to everyone.

After experiencing a sexual assault, I was blown away by the unwavering support I received from my friends here. None of them doubted me or judged me. They made the healing process 100% better.

Sometimes the best thing you can do for a friend is to know your personal limits in how much you can do for them. I’ve been on both sides of this. If you don’t have the capacity to support a struggling friend on your own (whether that’s because you have your own stressful things to deal with or you don’t know HOW to help), it’s good to get in touch with someone who knows what resources might help (a peer leader, SHAC, a Class Dean, whatever is appropriate).

Listen. Everyone has a story behind them, you can be a support - but it isn't up to you alone.

It never hurts to check in with a friend - especially while under the influence, to ask if they actually want to be doing what they’re doing, better to interrupt than to wish you had later.

Helping a friend through a tough relationship/breakup is hard. I tried to be there as much as possible for my friend and supporting her through the breakup by listening to her and comforting her. After some time though, I realized she was pulling me down with her and I wasn't dealing with my own emotions. It's great to be there for your friend, but make sure you know where you are.

I’ve known many women in bad relationships who were scared to get out because they were never told that it was okay to be selfish; to look out for yourself first and foremost. It's important that you are the most important.
Friday Flowers are a great way to communicate with your crush. It's easy to do it anonymously at first, and then you can approach them with those lovely flowers as a head start.

As a survivor the most wonderful thing is when people listen without judgment.

Carleton actually helps you to find more people attractive, which sounds weird at first but is actually pretty cool. Also, lube is a game-changer and can be made organically using vegetable glycerin, xanthan gum, and water (totally safe).

You can always relate to people regardless of similar sexual experiences. Carleton likes to make things about sex a lot, but sex is deeper than a few specific sex moves, or even physical relationships at all.

The end goal of flirting does not have to be should never be (just) sex! Be happy with yourself, by yourself--you are always in your own company.

Make sure people get home with friends if they are wasted.

Get it! (if you want it) (and they want it)

Give lots of hugs, especially during winter term.

We have a code. In the crew, whenever a girl feels uncomfortable dancing with a boy or talking with a boy, all you gotta do is throw up the 2, the peace sign, and someone will come and rescue you.

PLEASE take advantage of AHA*. The condoms are inexpensive, easy to order, and confidential. Condoms are expensive in real life but it's important to protect yourself and you can get so many condoms delivered right to your mailbox for so cheap! And the AHA workers might just give you a few extra if you write them a nice note :]

Try new things. learn from them, laugh about them, and then make new mistakes. If you like someone, tell them. If you had fun hooking up with someone but don't want to again, don't say that you do. Don't compromise honesty for being polite. Honesty is the best. Don't lead people on, it's cruel.

The GSC is a great resource, as is CAASHA (Campus Advocates Against Sexual Harassment & Assault)--even if you just have questions, and don't have anything pressing to discuss and just want to talk generally about issues around consent, sex & sexuality, etc. HRC dinners and events are a great resource too.

The GSC also has an awesome library with books that are great resources.

Sex is way better if it's a “hell yes” rather than just “sure, ok.” Have “hell yes” sex (and the only way you can get that is with super clear consent!)

Carleton is small. You'll see that person you hooked up with last weekend.

Be nice to hookups and be clear with what you want.

*AHA! is AIDS/HIV Awareness ** HCR is Healthy Community and Relationships Dinner
**Real World Tips**

**FEMSEX. Ladies, take it. Seriously.** One of the best decisions I have made at Carleton was to take FemSex. It provided an intimate, encouraging, and non-intimidating space to share thoughts and advice on a variety of topics relating to sexuality and relationships.

When confessing your feelings to your crush via email or giving a Friday Flower, make sure you get the right last name. Even when you think there couldn't possibly be another “Marika” or “XinXin” on campus, odds are there is another one and they are probably best friends.

This is cliché as fuck, but only have sex with people you are fully comfortable with. Don't get backed into something because you feel guilty of it. The GSC has great, welcoming, friendly people that live for your awkward questions, so don't even worry about asking them.

**Go to the sex-ed presentations in college.** You may have more to learn than you think. High school sex-ed tends to focus on protection, infections, and abstinence. There is so much more to gender and sexuality, so take advantage of opportunities to expand your knowledge. Be open to learning about others’ experiences and points of view. The GSC and Student Health and Counseling organize and sponsor many great educational programs ranging from informal student panels to talks by nationally-recognized sex educators.

I'm not going to go into specifics, but getting caught by security “in a place you should not have been, doing something you should not have been doing” is embarrassing for all (also funny). Shoutout to security for being rad troopers and dealing with our relationships (and more) in public places.

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**Resources: On Campus**

**Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Resources**
For further details and information visit the website:
[go.carleton.edu/sexual_misconduct](go.carleton.edu/sexual_misconduct)

**Gender and Sexuality Center**
Offers resources and support on issues related to diversity in gender and sexuality, including one-on-one advising, peer-led workshops, and events.
Ground Scoville 507-222-5222

**Student Health and Counseling**
Confidential medical and mental health services provider for Carleton students.
Ground Davis 507-222-4080

**Chaplain’s Office**
Confidential support from a faith-based perspective.
Chapel 507-222-4003

**Dean of Students Office**
Associate Dean Joe Baggot (1st years), Associate Dean Julie Thornton (2nd years) and Associate Dean Cathy Carlson (3rd and 4th years)
Severance 110 507-222-4075

**Community Concern Form**
This form can be filled out by anyone on campus about an issue that raises levels of concern—sexual or otherwise. The Dean of Student’s Office will contact you in 24-48 hours to offer support and talk next steps.
[go.carleton.edu/concern](go.carleton.edu/concern)

**HOPE Center**
Advocates for sexual assault survivors, battered women, and abused children in Rice County.
[hopecentermn.org](hopecentermn.org)
1-800-607-2330
ACE
ACE provides a safe space to discuss personal experiences with asexuality, and aims to increase knowledge and awareness in the general Carleton community.

AHA: AIDS and HIV Awareness
Offers condom distribution on campus & organizes events

CAASHA: Campus Advocates Against Sexual Harassment and Assault
A group of students dedicated to supporting and empowering Carleton students affected by—or with questions about—sexual harassment or assault.

ClaO: Carleton In and Out
An informal, weekly discussion group that looks at issues from an LGBTQA perspective.

CWI: Collective for Women’s Issues
A discussion and support group for women on campus exploring issues from a female perspective.

COWOC: Coalition of Women of Color
Creates an environment for women of color on the Carleton campus that is supportive and fun.

QTPOC: Queer, Questioning, or Trans People of Color
This group seeks to create a space for students to explore the intersections of their gender, racial, sex, class, and national identities.

GDG: Trans/Gender Discussion Group
A discussion group for students to talk about gender.

SAGA: Sexuality and Gender Activism
Student activist group working on issues of gender and sexuality.

Resources

Birth Control and Safe Sex:
If you need access to safer-sex materials you can check out:

- AHA! Condom and Lubricant Distribution at http://apps.carleton.edu/student/orgs/aha/
- Free Condoms available in the GSC
- Self-service area in SHAC (right side of reception door) A donation of $0.10 for an individual condom or $1.00 for a bag of 10 condoms is appreciated.

If you need access to hormonal birth control you can check out:

- Student Health and Counseling (SHAC)
- The Rice County Family Planning Program at www.dhs.state.mn.us/familyplanning or call for an appointment at 507-332-6111.
- Planned Parenthood in Apple Valley and Burnsville. Call 1-800-230-PLAN for more information.
A Community Concern Form is like a little note to the Dean of Students Office saying, “Hey...I’m worried about something and I don’t know what to do.” By submitting a Community Concern, you are demonstrating that you care about the people in our Carleton Community and you expect that they will treat each other with respect. Thank you for your care. We will likewise take care to respect your privacy and offer you the support and resources you deserve.

go.carleton.edu/concern

In order to create a campus that supports positive, safe, and healthy relationships, the Gender and Sexuality Center empowers community members to explore and affirm the diverse experience and multiple identities of themselves and others. The GSC offers a comfortable space in the basement of Scoville where students can drop by anytime to browse through the library, read a magazine, chat with the staff, or have a cup of tea. We offer programming that deals with the range of gender identities, LGBTQIA experiences, allyship, comprehensive sex education, survivor support, and healthy communities and relationships.

Workshops offered by the GSC

- Gender 101
- Ally 101
- LGBTQIA Panels
- Getting What You Want From Relationships
- The Anatomy of Pleasure
- Survivor Support
- Bystander Intervention
- Sexcapades

Upcoming

RAINBOW RECEPTION
Sunday, September 14th, 1-2 in the GSC (Scoville).
Stop by the GSC to learn more about the LGBT community and meet the friendly folks of the Gender and Sexuality Center.

QUEER PEERS SIGN-UP
New to Carleton or new to coming out at gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender queer or as an ally? Join the QP program and we will pair you with a junior or senior who will help you learn about being out at Carleton. Confidentiality guaranteed. Sign up at https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/gsc/students/qp/application/
About the GSC

GSC Staff

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Emily Scotto ’15
Jordan Palacios ’15
Jordyn Adeboye ’15
Kat George ’16
Lindsey Myrick ’15
Moriah Arnold ’17
Ryan Gorey ’17
Will Sheffer ’15
Zoe Levin ’15

Bystander Intervention

Bystander Intervention is about making a choice to do some sort of action that promotes safety and communicates intolerance for any behaviors that can cause harm to someone.

The 4D’s of Bystander Intervention Approaches

Direct: directly confronting behavior

Distract: distracting the individual causing the concerning behavior in order to assist another person

Delegate: finding someone else who can help, who you believe is in a better position to do so

Delay: checking in one someone who was involved with and incident, whether you acted in the moment or not.

We are all bystanders. We have the numbers on our side – people who are nonviolent outnumber those who are!
There are many opportunities to talk about issues like this on campus! Write any thoughts or questions you have here and bring it to workshops like Getting You Want From Relationships or bring them to GSC events like Dr. Love or HCR Dinners.