

# AM I READY TO HAVE SEX?



## It's all you

The decision to have sex or not is yours to make. Of course you may feel some pressure about this decision. This pressure can come from your partner, your friends, your family, or from society as a whole. No matter what you choose to do, you are the one who has to feel comfortable with your choice and ready to face the responsibilities that come with making the decision to have sex.

## Think about it

It may seem like everybody is doing it, but it's important to know that most teenagers have not had sex. If you are trying to decide whether or not you are ready, here are some things to think about that can help you make a decision that is right for you:

	YES	NO	MAYBE	NOT READY TO ANSWER
1. Am I in a committed and healthy relationship?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do I feel comfortable talking about sexual intercourse with my partner?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Am I ready for the responsibility of having sex?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Am I committed to protecting myself and my partner from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do I think I'll feel good about having sex with my partner?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do I know where to go for condoms and birth control?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do my values and beliefs tell me it is okay to have sex now?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you answered "No," "Maybe," or "Not ready to answer" to any of these questions, you may not be ready to have sex. It might be best to wait. If you think you might be ready, you should talk about it with an adult you trust – ideally a parent or another family member.

## Let's talk

It's important to talk to your partner about any issues or concerns you have before making your decision about having sex. It may not be easy, but talking about safer sex with your partner can help you avoid an unplanned pregnancy and reduce the chance of getting a sexually transmitted infection. Answering the questions below can help you and your partner decide whether your relationship is ready for sex:

	YES	NO	MAYBE	NOT READY TO ANSWER
1. Do my partner and I know each other well?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do we feel connected to and part of each other's lives?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are we both committed to this relationship?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do we trust each other?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do we communicate well?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Can we talk with each other comfortably about sex, including a discussion about condoms and/or birth control?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Are we thinking about having sex because we want to, not because we feel pressure to have sex?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Can we agree on using condoms and other birth control methods every time we have sex?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Will we respect each other's right to say "yes" or "no" to each sexual encounter?.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If either of you answered "No," "Maybe," or "Not ready to answer" to any of these questions, you and your partner may not be ready to have sex. It might be better to wait until you feel your relationship can handle this responsibility.

Whenever you do first have sex, make sure it's something you choose to do, not something that just happens to you. Whatever your decision, you might want to get some more information from an adult you trust.

## Resources

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NEW YORK CITY** [www.ppnyc.org](http://www.ppnyc.org)  
A website with information about sexual and reproductive health and relationships.

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S "FACTS OF LIFE" LINE** 212-965-7015  
A 24-hour hotline offering pre-recorded messages in English and Spanish on more than 100 topics concerning sexuality and reproductive health.

**SEX, ETC.** [www.sexetc.org](http://www.sexetc.org)  
A sexuality and health newsletter and website written by teens for teens.

## For more information, contact:

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NEW YORK CITY**  
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[www.ppnyc.org](http://www.ppnyc.org)

**ABOUT PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NEW YORK CITY:** At Planned Parenthood of New York City, we have more than 90 years of experience providing quality reproductive health care in a safe, supportive environment. We offer services to women, men, and teens throughout New York City, regardless of age, income, or immigration status. When you talk to us, it's always confidential. To make an appointment at any one of our three health centers in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx, call 212-965-7000 or 800-230-PLAN.