

Common BDSM Terminology

Common Terminology:

- BDSM – Bondage and Discipline, Dominance and Submission, Sadism and Masochism.
- SSC – Safe, Sane, Consensual
- RACK – Risk Aware Consensual Kink
- PRICK – Personal Responsibility Informed Consensual Kink
- Scene – Both the BDSM Community as a whole and a play interaction.
- “Thud” – Sensation produced when struck with broad/heavy/soft toys – e.g .floggers, big paddles.
- “Sting” – Sensation produced when struck with thin/light/hard toys – e.g. cane or single tail.
- Dungeon – a (public or private) play space.
- DM (Dungeon Monitor) – Public playspace lifeguard.
- Squick – Something that viscerally turns you off. The sound of your parents fucking on the kitchen table.
- BBW – Big Beautiful Woman
- Sub Frenzy – The desire to try everything when one is new to the scene.
- Subspace – An altered state often resulting from endorphins released through sensation/impact play.
- Sub Drop/Top Drop – Temporary depression sometimes experienced (hours or days) after intense play.

Safeword – a word or phrase used to pause or stop play.

- Stop!/No! - If you're a beginner, keep it simple, no means no, stop means stop.
- Safeword!/Red! – Stop now! Something is seriously wrong. DMs/bystanders requested to help.
- Yellow/Mercy – I can't take much more, need a break, please check in.
- Green – I'm having a good time, please continue!
- Beige – I'm so bored I'm thinking about what color to paint the ceiling.

Roles:

- Top/Bottom – Enjoy physical play (bondage, flogging, whipping, etc.)
- Sadist/Masochist – Enjoy inflicting/receiving pain (intense physical sensation).
- Dom/Sub – Enjoy mental power exchange (following orders, serving, etc.)
- Master/Slave – Enjoy long term owner/property relationship.
- Daddy/babygirl – Enjoy power exchange that is based on play and growth.
- Switch – Enjoy roles on both sides of the slash with same or different partners.
- Brat/Uppity Bottom/SAM (Smart-Assed Masochist) – A bottom that enjoys struggling against control.
- Vanilla – Anything (or anyone) that isn't kinky. The rest of your life (family, job, school, ...).

Bondage Toys:

- Rope – Typically 1/4 to 5/8 inch diameter. Nylon, cotton or hemp. Recommended lengths: 15', 25', 50'
- Belt – Can be used to tie wrists/ankles (may require extra holes).
- Cuffs – handcuffs (note that they are designed to be painful if you struggle).
Leather/fur cuffs are much more comfortable, still quick to put on/take off.
- Spreader bar – Used with rope or cuffs to keep ankles or wrists apart.
- St Andrews cross – an X shaped cross with bondage points at the four ends.

Sensation Toys:

- Fingers/finger nails/hands – stroke, rub, scratch or pinch, massage, kneed, spank!
- Teeth – I'm not biting you, I'm hugging you with my teeth. Nape of the neck is a sweet spot.
- Blindfold – Heightens other senses.
- Gag – (cloth, ball, ring or bit with a strap around the back of the head) – Restricts speech.
- Clothes pins, nipple clamps – Pinch and constrict. May hurt more when removed.
- Feather/fur – light/tickling sensation.
- Wartenberg wheel – pinwheel with a handle – touches one small spot at a time.
- Violet wand – Produces high-voltage/low current electric shock safe for most areas of the body.

Impact Toys:

- Cane – Any thin rod (metal, wood, bamboo, plastic, ...)
- Paddle – A wide flat surface with a handle (wood, metal, plastic, ...)
- Flogger – a whip typically consisting of 1-4 dozen thin loose leather strips tied to a handle
- Single-tail – a whip braided to a single tip, often with a nylon string “cracker” at the tip.

BDSM Etiquette Primer

General Etiquette:

- Don't intrude on the personal space of others.
- Ask permission before you touch people or things that don't belong to you. No one has a right to touch you or demand anything of you by virtue of your chosen role alone.
- Don't ask too many personal questions of people you've just met.
- **Be prepared to take no for an answer. Do not persist!**
- Collars could be just a fashion statement or the equivalent of a wedding ring. If in doubt, ask "Who speaks for you?" Speak to that person (or back off). Do not persist.
- Don't assume gender pronouns. If in doubt, ask.
- Bring a date to play parties. Pickup play is possible, but is not the norm in this area.

Munches:

- Most munches are at a restaurant.
- A "wet munch" is at a bar (21+ only).
- Support the venue! Order food/drink where offered. Tip the wait staff.
- Do NOT bring in outside food and/or drink. (Not even a water bottle.)
- See specific munch event listings on Fetlife or Eroby calendar for other guidelines.

Nudity:

- Most play spaces are clothing optional. Don't gawk or stare.
- Put something that belongs to you between your bare butt and what you're sitting on.
- Don't put your dick (or cunt) in the dip! Put something on before going near the food.

When watching others play:

- Voyeurism is welcome in most play spaces, however...
- Keep your distance from scenes in progress – don't intrude, don't be an "energy vampire".
- Don't make eye contact with those playing. It draws their energy away from the scene.
- Don't talk to people that are playing and give them some space for a while after they're done.
- Socialize in the social area, not the play area.
- Don't sit on play equipment – someone else may want to use it
- Open masturbation is generally not welcome. If it is, contain your fluids.

When playing:

- Most venues/parties have rules. Read them before you start your scene.
- Share the space. Keep your scene and gear confined to a reasonable area.
- Don't lay your toys on surrounding play equipment – someone else may want to use it.
- Limit your time on popular equipment to allow others a chance to use it.
- Keep the volume of your scene to a reasonable level. Use a gag if your bottom is too loud.
- Clean up after yourself! – Most play spaces provide cleaning supplies. Use them!

Confidentiality

- Do NOT divulge personal information about others without their permission!
- Do NOT talk or write about who was at an event, what they did, what they said, who they were with.
- Do NOT take pictures, video or recordings of others without the permission of all being recorded. In many cases you need permission of the event/venue host(s) as well.
- Do NOT out people! If you meet someone kinky in a vanilla context, assume they're with their family, vanilla friends or coworkers. Do NOT address them by their scene name or mention where you saw them. While many are "out", many others could still lose their job, family, children, etc. if outed.

BDSM Safety

Meeting new people:

- Give new friends your first name / scene name / Fetlife name / scene specific E-mail address NOT your last name, home address, where you work, phone number, etc.
- Meet new people in public places. (Munches/socials/classes/open dungeon parties.)
Play with new people in public play spaces.
If someone refuses to meet you in public, that's a big red flag!
- Get references. Check people out with others in the scene that you trust.
Pay attention to what people don't say as well as what they do say.
- Check ID if you're in any doubt someone is of age.
- Don't play under the influence of alcohol, drugs or with someone under the influence.

Safe calls: (Useful when playing privately with someone you don't know well.)

- Tell a trusted friend (who will not be with you) who and where you will meet.
- Arrange a time to check in. Arrange secret words you will say if you are OK or need help.
- Before agreeing to go somewhere else, tell your safe call where you are going.
- Arrange a time by which they should expect to hear from you.
- Call them (so they hear your voice) after you are away from your date (back to a public place).

Negotiate play with your clothes on! (And out of bondage) Things to discuss:

- Safewords to be used. Do you get non-verbal when in subspace?
- What you know you want and what you know you don't want.
- How long you expect to play.
- Any physical limitations, existing injuries, disabilities, medications you are taking.
- Whether bruises or other marks are acceptable and where on your body they are okay.
(Do you have a doctor appointment or workout at the gym scheduled soon?)
- Dump out the toy bag! Put toys you don't want used on you back in the bag.
- Is sex on the menu? Don't make assumptions! Don't expect your partner to read your mind or "hints".
- Discuss aftercare needs before the scene starts!
- Once the scene starts, don't "negotiate up" (Don't ask for, or agree, to something not negotiated before starting).
- It is okay to "negotiate down" or call an end to the scene, as either a top or bottom, if something doesn't feel right.

Impact play:

- Stick to the meaty areas of the body: Butt, thighs, upper back/shoulders
- Avoid impact to: kidneys (lower back), other vital organs, neck/spine, joints, mucus membranes, eyes, ears, previous injuries.
- Avoid "wrapping" the tail of whip around torso, arm, etc. Tip(s) will hit hard.

Hygiene:

- Clean equipment before and after use.
- Practice safe sex with new partners!
- Use appropriate barriers to avoid semen to blood or blood to blood contact.
- Put latex (or nitrile) on body parts that will come in contact with mucus membranes.
- Contain your bodily fluids. Use condoms/towels/"chucks"/tarps if necessary.
- Put gloves on before handling sharps containers.
- Don't fling whips that already have blood on them.
- Carry plastic bags to put contaminated toys in.
- If you get blood or other bodily fluids on a toy that can't be cleaned, use it only on that person from now on. (Present it as a gift or bag and label it in your toy bag.)

Emotional Safety:

- Don't put your dick in crazy! Don't wrap your holes around crazy!
Not everyone is well adjusted. Free sex may not be worth the price.
- Check in with your partner the day after play.
- Don't let anyone tell you there is only one true ("twue") way to do BDSM.
- If you feel your consent has been violated, speak up as soon as you are able.
- Don't put blind trust in "community leaders".

BDSM Resources

Suggested Reading List:

(Please note that “50 Shades of Grey” is NOT on the list! It bears no resemblance to real life BDSM play.)

- S/M 101 – Jay Wiseman
- The Ethical Slut – Dossie Easton & Catherine Liszt
- The New Topping Book - Dossie Easton & Janet W. Hardy
- The New Bottoming Book – Janet W. Hardy & Dossie Easton
- Exhibitionism for the Shy – Carol Queen
- Screw the Roses, Send Me the Thorns – Philip Miller & Molly Devon
- When Someone You Love is Kinky - Dossie Easton & Catherine Liszt
- The Loving Dominant – John and Libby Warren
- Juice: Electricity for Pleasure and Pain – Uncle Abdul
- Bondage Basics: Naughty Knots and Risque Restraints You Need to Know – Lord Morpheous
- The Seductive Art of Japanese Bondage – Midori
- Shibari You Can Use – Lee Harrington
- Complete Shibari – Douglas Kent

Bay Area BDSM Gear Manufacturers and Retailers:

- Mr S – mr-s-leather.com - San Francisco
- Leather Etc. - leatheretc.com - San Francisco
- Good Vibrations – goodvibes.com - San Francisco, Berkely, Palo Alto

Web Sites:

- www.Fetlife.com – Facebook for kinky people
- www.erobay.com – Calendar of Bay Area BDSM events

Personals:

- www.alt.com
- www.bondage.com
- www.collarspace.com