

# Fingering (sexual act)

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**Fingering** is the use of fingers or hands to sexually stimulate the vulva, vagina or the anus. It may be done for sexual arousal or foreplay, mutual masturbation, or constitute the entire sexual encounter. To "finger oneself" is to masturbate in this manner. It is analogous to a handjob (the manual stimulation of the penis), and may be used as penetrative or non-penetrative sexual activity.

Vaginal fingering is legally and medically called *digital penetration of the vagina*, and may involve one or more fingers.



Illustration showing fingering

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## Genital fingering

### Outside the vagina

Massage of the vulva, and in particular the clitoris, is the most common way for a woman to achieve an orgasm.<sup>[1]</sup> The clitoral glans or shaft may be massaged, usually through the skin of the clitoral hood, using up-and-down, side-to-side, or circular motions.<sup>[2]</sup> The rest of the genitals are also stimulated by fingering.<sup>[2][3][4]</sup>

### Inside the vagina

Fingering the vagina is often performed in an effort to stimulate the G-spot. The G-spot is reportedly located roughly 5 cm (2.0 in) up on the anterior wall of the vagina, forwards toward the navel. It is described as being recognized by its ridges and slightly rougher texture compared to the more cushion-like vaginal cavity walls around it. Fingering this



Manual stimulation of the outer genitalia is the most common form of masturbation

spot, and in effect possibly stimulating the Skene's gland, is commonly cited as a method that may lead to female ejaculation.<sup>[5]</sup> Parallels are sometimes drawn with the fingering or other manipulation of the male prostate through the anus.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

Some women have cited the "come hither" approach as a significant catalyst to orgasm. This technique involves the middle finger, sometimes additionally the index or ring finger, making a hand gesture like "come here" with the palm facing upwards towards her pubic bone. Medical professionals suggest washing the hands before contact with the vagina, to ensure proper hygiene, especially when moving between different orifices.<sup>[8]</sup>

## Anal fingering

The practice may be pleasurable because of the large number of nerve endings in the anal area, and because of the added stimulation gained from stretching the anal sphincter muscles while inserting the finger. A good quality personal lubricant is advisable to both increase the pleasurable sensation and aid insertion. Some people prefer to simply stimulate the outer ring of the anus, while others will follow this by inserting one or more fingers. Fingering may be seen as an act in itself, or as an arousing prelude in preparation for further anal sex. Anal fingering can arouse the receiver, allowing them to relax their anus and prepare them for the insertion of a penis or any other sexual instrument. Anal fingering is also an effective way of stimulating the prostate in males, and thus may bring the receiver to orgasm.<sup>[9][10][11]</sup> Anal fingering can also stimulate the perineal sponge in females.

## Safety

The practice is generally considered safe sex as long as there are no open wounds on the fingers. The nails should be trimmed and filed; long, sharp or jagged nails can cause cuts, injury, or severe infection. If there are cuts, infections, or open wounds on the fingers extreme protection and care is necessary. If finger cots are used they may slip off and remain inside the receptive partner. The hands should be thoroughly washed with soap and warm water before practicing any other activity to avoid spreading bacteria or germs. In stimulating both the anus and vagina, separate latex gloves are to be used for each to avoid cross-contamination.

## See also

- Fisting



Fingering as a practice for mutual masturbation



Wikimedia Commons has media related to ***Fingering (sex)***.

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