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## GOOD IN BED SURVEYS

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### Report #2

### Sexual Adventurousness

#### OBJECTIVE

In our last survey on the topic of “relationship boredom”, participants disclosed that many of them would be willing to try something new with their partner in the bedroom to help combat boredom. Therefore, the purpose of the current study on the topic of “sexual adventurousness” was to examine what types of behavior men and women engage in or are willing to engage in, as well as explore the gender differences in the ways in which men and women approach sexually adventurous activities. Additionally, we were interested in further understanding the satisfaction associated with each sexual behavior in addition to the perceptions of partner satisfaction and partner willingness.

#### KEY FINDINGS

- Overall, participants indicated that engaging in sexually adventurous behaviors increased their sexual satisfaction, with a large majority of participants indicating that their partner’s satisfaction was also improved with engaging in the behaviors.
- Women were significantly more likely than men to have engaged in a wider variety of sexual activities, indicating that women are perhaps more sexually open than society often constructs them to be. For example, women were significantly more likely to have engaged in talking dirty during sex than men, as well as sharing fantasies verbally.
- Couples who are more sexually adventurous are more likely to be sexually satisfied. The greater number of sexually adventurous activities an individual engaged in with their current partner, the greater their level of relationship satisfaction.
- Sexual adventurousness was significantly related to relationship length, such that the longer the duration of the relationship, the greater the number of sexual activities engaged in.
- Stereotypically taboo behaviors are more common than previously thought. For example, nearly 50% of respondents have watched porn together.
- Most commonly reported sexual behaviors for women included:

1. Sex with the lights on – 92%
  2. Wearing sexy lingerie – 89%
  3. Having sex at home but outside the bedroom (e.g., kitchen, bathroom) – 85%
  4. Using lubricants during sex – 78%
- Most commonly reported sexual behaviors for men included:
    1. Sex with the lights on – 90%
    2. Having sex at home but outside the bedroom (e.g., kitchen, bathroom) – 83%
    3. Using lubricants during sex – 82%
    4. Talking dirty during foreplay or sex – 63%.

## **BACKGROUND**

Sexual adventurousness has received little empirical attention, and when attention has been paid, engaging in adventurous sexual behaviors has been placed under the lens of risk or compulsivity rather than as a potential means for improving sexual satisfaction in sexual and/or romantic relationships. However, one of the most cited suggestions for “spicing up” ones sex life is introducing new sexual behaviors to the sexual repertoire of a couple. Therefore, it may be important to approach adventurous sexual experiences from a pleasure-perspective by focusing on the sexual satisfaction it may contribute to couples. Additionally, societal stigma toward some sexual activities have shifted and resulted in some sexual activities being more common than previously thought.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Data was collected through an online survey. Participants were recruited through various online forums (e.g., email listservs, online articles, social media websites) and directed to the study website. Potential participants were informed that a small incentive would be offered for involvement in the study (a code to redeem a free e-book from goodinbed.com, worth \$5.95). There was an 89.9% completion rate with 3449 beginning the survey and 3126 participants completing the survey. Once all missing cases and participants who reported being under the age of 18 ( $n = 26$ ) were removed the final sample consisted of 3100 participants: 1731 men (55.8%) and 1369 women (44.2%). For sample characteristics broken down by gender, see Table 1.

Upon accessing the survey, participants were presented with a number of questions that assessed various demographic variables and current (or most recent) relationship dynamics followed by stem questions of 22 sexual behaviors. Those participants who were in a relationship at the time of data collection were instructed to answer the questions with regard to their current partner. Those participants who were not in a relationship at the time of data collection were instructed to answer the questions with regard to their most recent relationship. The majority of the sample was married (56.5%), although 22.0% were seriously dating one person, 8.7% were single (not dating anyone), 7.1% were casually dating one or more person(s), 3.7% were engaged, and .4% were widowed at the time of data collection.

Participants were asked to report whether they had engaged in these 22 activities with their current partner (for those in a relationship at the time of data collection) or with their most recent partner (for those not in a relationship at the time of data collection). If participants had engaged in a behavior, they were asked about their satisfaction and their perception of their partner's satisfaction with the particular sex act. If the participant had not engaged in the behavior, they were asked if they would be willing to engage in the behavior and whether they perceived their partner would be willing to engage in the behavior.

This study used a web-based data collection method. Internet surveys provide a more comfortable environment to collect data on sensitive issues such as sexuality, and therefore individuals were more likely to submit accurate sexual and relationship information online. All responses were completely anonymous and we did not collect any identifying information from participants.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 1731 men (55.8%)
- 1369 women (44.2%)
  
- 91.0% heterosexual, .8% gay or lesbian, 6.2% bisexual, 1.0% uncertain or questioning, 1.0% other
  
- 8.7% single (not dating anyone)
- 7.1% casually dating one or more person(s)
- 17.2% seriously dating one person
- 3.7% engaged
- 56.5% married
- 4.8% common-law or living together
- .4% widowed
  
- 9.0% have been in their relationship for 6 months or less
- 5.9% have been in their relationship one year or less
- 13.2% have been in their relationship between 1 and 3 years
- 14.3% have been in their relationship between 3 and 7 years
- 20.1% have been in their relationship between 7 and 15 years
- 28.5% have been in their relationship for more than 15 years
  
- 61.3% have children – of those, 12.9% have 1 child, 26% have 2 children, 13.7% have 3 children, 5% have 4 children, 3.5% have 5 or more children
- 38.5% don't have children

**Table 1. Demographic variables by gender**

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	1731	--	55.8%
Female	--	1369	44.2%
<b>Age</b>			
18-24	100 (5.8)	363 (26.5)	14.9%
25-29	157 (9.1)	268 (19.6)	13.7%
30-34	194 (11.2)	190 (13.9)	12.4%
35-39	250 (14.4)	167 (12.2)	13.5%
40-44	242 (14.0)	149 (10.9)	12.6%
45-49	239 (13.8)	105 (7.7)	11.1%
50-54	211 (12.2)	62 (4.5)	8.8%
55-59	151 (8.7)	37 (2.7)	6.1%
60-64	100 (5.8)	18 (1.3)	3.8%
65-69	58 (3.4)	5 (.4)	2.0%
70 or older	29 (1.7)	5 (.4)	1.1%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
Heterosexual	1642 (94.9)	1179 (86.1)	91.0%
Gay or Lesbian	17 (1.0)	9 (.7)	.8%
Bisexual	54 (3.1)	137 (10.0)	6.2%
Uncertain/Questioning	12 (.7)	20 (1.5)	1.0%
<b>Relationship Status</b>			
Single (not dating anyone)	111 (6.4)	158 (11.5)	8.7%
Casually dating 1+ person	67 (3.9)	153 (11.2)	7.1%
Seriously dating 1 person	240 (13.8)	442 (32.3)	22.0%
Engaged	46 (2.7)	70 (5.1)	3.7%
Married	1248 (72.1)	505 (36.9)	56.5%
Widowed	9 (.5)	3 (.2)	.4%
<b>Relationship Length</b>			
6 months or less	90 (5.2)	189 (13.8)	9.0%
1 year or less	65 (3.8)	119 (8.7)	5.9%
1 to 3 years	149 (8.6)	260 (19.0)	13.2%
3 to 7 years	218 (12.6)	225 (16.4)	14.3%
7 to 15 years	393 (22.7)	229 (16.7)	20.1%
15 years +	696 (40.2)	186 (13.6)	28.5%
<b>Children</b>			
No Children	447 (25.8)	746 (54.5)	38.5%
1 Child	219 (12.7)	180 (13.1)	12.9%
2 Children	568 (32.8)	239 (17.5)	26.0%
3 Children	308 (17.8)	118 (8.6)	13.7%
4 Children	107 (6.2)	47 (3.4)	5.0%
5 Children +	73 (4.2)	35 (2.6)	3.5%

## QUANTITATIVE RESULTS SUMMARY

### Most commonly reported sexual behaviors for **women**:

- Sex with the lights on – 92%
- Wearing sexy lingerie – 89%
- Having sex at home but outside the bedroom (e.g., kitchen, bathroom) – 85%
- Using lubricants during sex – 78%

### Most commonly reported sexual behaviors for **men**:

- Sex with the lights on – 90%
- Having sex at home but outside the bedroom (e.g., kitchen, bathroom) – 83%
- Using lubricants during sex – 82%
- Talking dirty during foreplay or sex – 63%

### Least commonly reported sexual behaviors for **women**:

- Having sex with others in the context of the relationship (e.g., threesome) – 10%
- Exploration of a fetish – 12%
- Reading erotica together – 18%
- Making a sex tape with partner – 21%

### Least commonly reported sexual behaviors for **men**:

- Having sex with others in the context of the relationship (e.g., threesome) – 6%
- Exploration of a fetish – 11%
- Engaging in roleplay with partner – 17%
- Reading erotica together – 20%

Stereotypically taboo behaviors were fairly common in our sample. For example, 43% of our participants had engaged in receptive or penetrative anal sex. In the current sample, 61% had engaged in sex with their partner with the chance of being overhead and over half of the sample (57%) had engaged in exhibitionist-like behavior with their partner such as masturbating for their viewing pleasure.

Sexual adventurousness was significantly related to relationship length, such that the longer the duration of the relationship, the greater the number of sexual activities engaged in. This intuitive finding could be due to the longer period of time that longer-term relationships allow for certain sexual activities to take place, or it could be due to the increased comfort level that can be found in longer-term relationships that lend themselves to exploring more sexually adventurous activities.

**Table 2.** Number of men and women who have engaged in each sexual behavior with current or most recent partner.

	<b>Men</b> n (%)	<b>Women</b> n (%)	<b>Total</b>
Talked dirty during foreplay/sex	1094 (63.2)	1042 (76.1)	68.9%
Shared fantasies verbally	874 (50.5)	875 (63.9)	56.4%

Read erotica together	342 (19.8)	244 (17.8)	18.9%
Watched porn together	840 (48.5)	697 (50.9)	49.6%
Kept the lights on during sex	1556 (89.9)	1262 (92.2)	90.9%
Incorporated a sex toy (such as a vibrator) into partnered sex	1077 (62.2)	823 (60.1)	61.3%
Used lubricants during partnered sex	1418 (81.9)	1066 (77.9)	80.1%
Used intimacy enhancers (e.g., arousal gel or cream) during partnered sex	559 (32.3)	414 (30.2)	31.4%
Exhibitionist sexual behavior with a partner (e.g., masturbated for partner)	848 (49.0)	909 (66.4)	56.7%
Voyeuristic sexual behavior with a partner (e.g., watching partner masturbate)	1071 (61.9)	871 (63.6)	62.6%
Had sex in your home but outside the bedroom (e.g., in the kitchen or bathroom)	1431 (82.7)	1166 (85.2)	83.8%
Had sex with a chance of being seen/overheard (e.g., in a friend's home)	947 (54.7)	934 (68.2)	60.7%
Stripped for your partner	579 (33.4)	610 (44.6)	38.4%
Wore sexy lingerie or underwear	768 (44.4)	1224 (89.4)	64.3%
Penetrative or receptive anal sex	664 (38.4)	670 (48.9)	43.0%
Light kinky behavior with partner (e.g., handcuffing your partner)	701 (40.5)	726 (53.0)	46.0%
Had sex with more than just the two of you in context of relationship (e.g., threesome)	111 (6.4)	131 (9.6)	7.8%
Made a sex tape with your partner	362 (20.9)	291 (21.3)	21.1%
Used technology to have long-distance sex (e.g., sexting/phone sex/skype sex)	641 (37.0)	763 (55.7)	45.3%
Role playing (e.g., acting out a scenario, used props/costumes)	286 (16.5)	314 (22.9)	19.4%
Spanking during sex	759 (43.8)	927 (67.7)	54.4%
Explored a fetish (e.g., foot fetish, rubber fetish)	193 (11.1)	161 (11.8)	11.4%

Of those who had engaged in a fetish, below is a word cloud of the most commonly cited fetishes engaged in, with larger text indicative of more frequently cited fetishes:

Anal Fetish **Ass** **BDSM** **Biting** **Bondage** Boots Cross  
Dressing Face Sitting **Feet** Food **Foot** Golden Showers Hair  
Pulling **Latex** **Leather** Lingerie **Nipple** Nylons Oral  
Pantyhose **Partner** Pee **Play** Relationship **Rubber** **Sex**  
**Toes** Watersports

## GENDER DIFFERENCES

There were not any vast differences in terms of what men and women had engaged in with their current/most recent partner however, some significant differences did emerge and women were significantly more experienced than men when it came to the adventurous sexual behaviors we asked about.

### Women were significantly more likely than men to have engaged in:

- Women were significantly more likely to have engaged in **talking dirty** during foreplay/sex than men,  $X^2(1) = 59.49, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely to have engaged in sharing **fantasies** verbally than men,  $X^2(1) = 56.03, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely to have engaged in keeping the **lights on** during sex than men,  $X^2(1) = 4.86, p < .05$
- Women were significantly more likely to have engaged in **exhibitionist** sexual behavior with a partner (such as masturbating for a partner) than men,  $X^2(1) = 94.36, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely than men to have engaged in sex with a chance of being **seen/overheard**,  $X^2(1) = 58.53, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely to have **stripped** for a partner than men,  $X^2(1) = 39.90, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely than men to wear **sexy lingerie** or underwear,  $X^2(1) = 675.21, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely to have engaged in some form of light **kinky behavior** with their partner than men,  $X^2(1) = 48.35, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely than men to have engaged in sex with more than the two of you in the context of the relationship (such as a **threesome**),  $X^2(1) = 10.58, p < .01$
- Women were significantly more likely to have used **technology** to have long-distance sex (such as sexting, skype sex, or phone sex),  $X^2(1) = 10.79, p < .001$

- Women were significantly more likely than men to have engaged in role play with their partner,  $X^2(1) = 20.15, p < .001$
- Women were significantly more likely to have engaged in **spanking** during sex than men,  $X^2(1) = 175.51, p < .001$

**Men were significantly more likely than women to have engaged in:**

- Men were significantly more likely to have **used lubricants** during partnered sex than women,  $X^2(1) = 7.88, p < .01$

For those who had not engaged in a behavior, Table 3 displays is the extent to which participants would be willing to engage in each behavior. Scores range from 1 to 5 with higher mean scores indicative of higher willingness to engage in the activity. The willingness of participants to engage in activities they had not previously engaged in with their current/most recent partner were varied depending on the activity and the gender.

**Table 3.** Mean scores of willingness to engage in sexual behaviors that had not previously been engaged in with current/most recent partner.

	<b>Men</b> Mean (SD)	<b>Women</b> Mean (SD)
Talked dirty during foreplay/sex	3.76 (1.20)	3.47 (1.19)
Shared fantasies verbally	3.77 (1.16)	3.58 (1.14)
Read erotica together	3.49 (1.39)	3.53 (1.34)
Watched porn together	3.26 (1.56)	3.24 (1.44)
Kept the lights on during sex	3.79 (1.31)	3.15 (1.36)
Incorporated a sex toy (such as a vibrator) into partnered sex	3.47 (1.48)	3.66 (1.31)
Used lubricants during partnered sex	3.28 (1.51)	3.47 (1.40)
Used intimacy enhancers (e.g., arousal gel or cream) during partnered sex	3.29 (1.32)	3.20 (1.36)
Exhibitionist sexual behavior with a partner (e.g., masturbated for partner)	3.16 (1.36)	2.91 (1.21)
Voyeuristic sexual behavior with a partner (e.g., watching partner masturbate)	3.54 (1.39)	3.19 (1.32)
Had sex in your home but outside the bedroom (e.g., in the kitchen or bathroom)	4.16 (1.21)	4.10 (1.25)
Had sex with a chance of being seen/overheard (e.g., in a friend's home)	2.82 (1.41)	2.59 (1.38)



Stripped for your partner	2.99 (1.25)	3.24 (1.25)
Wore sexy lingerie or underwear	2.70 (1.30)	3.88 (1.29)
Penetrative or receptive anal sex	2.93 (1.58)	2.01 (1.31)
Light kinky behavior with partner (e.g., handcuffing your partner)	3.18 (1.40)	3.45 (1.30)
Had sex with more than just the two of you in context of relationship (e.g., threesome)	2.42 (1.53)	1.98 (1.34)
Made a sex tape with your partner	2.63 (1.48)	2.08 (1.28)
Used technology to have long-distance sex (e.g., sexting/phone sex/skype sex)	2.71 (1.40)	2.71 (1.44)
Role playing (e.g., acting out a scenario, used props/costumes)	2.87 (1.32)	3.05 (1.29)
Spanking during sex	2.49 (1.25)	2.50 (1.30)
Explored a fetish (e.g., foot fetish, rubber fetish)	2.31 (1.19)	2.31 (1.20)

For those participants who had engaged in the behavior, they were asked whether engaging in the behavior was satisfying or not and whether they perceived their partner was satisfied with the sexual experience. Table 4 displays the mean scores for satisfaction. Scores range from 1 to 5 with higher scores indicating higher levels of satisfaction from the experience.

Overall, participants indicated that engaging in the sexual behaviors increased their sexual satisfaction, with a large majority of participants indicating that their partner's satisfaction was also improved with engaging in the behaviors.

**Table 4.** Mean scores of satisfaction of sexual event that had previously been engaged in with current/most recent partner.

	Self-Satisfaction of Sexual Event		Perceived Partner Satisfaction of Sexual Event	
	Men M (SD)	Women M (SD)	Men M (SD)	Women M (SD)
Talked dirty during foreplay/sex	4.26 (.76)	4.25 (.83)	3.99 (.94)	4.44 (.82)
Shared fantasies verbally	4.14 (.93)	4.19 (.89)	3.90 (1.10)	4.31 (.96)
Read erotica together	4.32 (.78)	4.36 (.79)	4.15 (.97)	4.23 (.89)
Watched porn together	4.34 (.79)	4.12 (.93)	3.91 (1.06)	4.36 (.85)

Kept the lights on during sex	4.06 (.94)	3.52 (1.08)	3.49 (1.07)	3.94 (1.06)
Incorporated a sex toy (such as a vibrator) into partnered sex	4.28 (.86)	4.57 (.70)	4.36 (.98)	4.24 (.91)
Used lubricants during partnered sex	4.31 (.79)	4.42 (.81)	4.35 (.84)	4.29 (.88)
Used intimacy enhancers (e.g., arousal gel or cream) during partnered sex	3.77 (1.02)	4.03 (1.06)	3.77 (1.14)	3.86 (1.02)
Exhibitionist sexual behavior with a partner (e.g., masturbated for partner)	4.35 (.74)	4.22 (.88)	4.14 (.86)	4.64 (.62)
Voyeuristic sexual behavior with a partner (e.g., watching partner masturbate)	4.50 (.65)	4.29 (.83)	3.88 (1.01)	4.26 (.92)
Had sex in your home but outside the bedroom (e.g., in the kitchen or bathroom)	4.30 (.74)	4.27 (.82)	4.03 (.90)	4.30 (.86)
Had sex with a chance of being seen/overheard (e.g., in a friend's home)	4.00 (1.01)	3.76 (1.22)	3.67 (1.15)	3.81 (1.18)
Stripped for your partner	4.01 (.79)	4.01 (.84)	4.01 (.80)	4.52 (.75)
Wore sexy lingerie or underwear	4.32 (.76)	4.16 (.87)	4.00 (.87)	4.32 (.91)
Penetrative or receptive anal sex	4.40 (.90)	3.61 (1.44)	3.47 (1.43)	4.40 (1.02)
Light kinky behavior with partner (e.g., handcuffing your partner)	4.43 (.68)	4.51 (.71)	4.13 (.97)	4.37 (.86)
Had sex with more than just the two of you in context of relationship (e.g., threesome)	4.55 (.96)	4.03 (1.24)	4.16 (1.33)	4.12 (1.43)
Made a sex tape with your partner	4.47 (.71)	3.87 (1.16)	3.75 (1.14)	4.36 (1.12)
Used technology to have long-distance sex (e.g., sexting/phone sex/skype sex)	4.18 (.80)	4.13 (.90)	3.89 (1.11)	4.17 (1.02)
Role playing (e.g., acting out a scenario, used props/costumes)	4.42 (.72)	4.35 (.74)	4.33 (.77)	4.34 (.94)
Spanking during sex	4.11 (.73)	4.22 (.90)	4.01 (.89)	4.28 (.81)
Explored a fetish (e.g., foot fetish, rubber fetish)	4.34 (.88)	4.25 (1.08)	3.86 (1.15)	4.39 (1.02)

## OVERALL SATISFACTION

**Relationship satisfaction** of the survey participants:

- 40.3% of the respondents indicated they were “very happy”, “extremely happy”, or thought their relationship was “perfect”.
- 20.5% of the respondents indicated they were “happy” in their relationship.
- 31.9% of the respondents indicated they were “a little unhappy”, “fairly unhappy”, or “extremely unhappy” with their current relationship.
- Men and women significantly differed in their reported levels of relationship satisfaction,  $X^2(7) = 69.10, p < .001$ 
  - Women were significantly happier with the relationship than men

In the current sample, the greater number of sexually adventurous activities an individual engaged in with their current/most recent partner, the greater their level of relationship satisfaction,  $F(1, 3098) = 49.59, p < .001$ . Previous research indicates that sexual satisfaction is incredibly intertwined with relationship satisfaction. Therefore, it is important to also examine the sexual satisfaction of the sample as well.

**Sexual satisfaction** was measured with the *New Sexual Satisfaction Scale* (Stulhofer, Busko, & Brouillard, 2010), a scale that measures sexual satisfaction on two dimensions: ego-focused and partner-focused. Scores on each subscale range from 10 to 50, with lower scores indicative of lower levels of satisfaction. In the current sample, the mean score was 34.53 on the ego-focused subscale and 30.07 on the partner-focused subscale, indicating that participants were moderately satisfied in their current relationship.

- Men and women significantly differed in their reported levels of ego-focused sexual satisfaction,  $X^2(48) = 65.59, p < .05$ 
  - Women were marginally significantly happier than men with sexual satisfaction related to the self
- Men and women significantly differed in their reported levels of partner-focused sexual satisfaction,  $X^2(50) = 303.61, p < .001$ 
  - Women were significantly happier than men in terms of partnered sexual satisfaction

In the current sample, we found that sexual adventurousness significantly predicted sexual satisfaction levels,  $F(1, 2947) = 540.02, p < .001$  such that the greater number of sexually adventurous activities a person engaged in, the higher their overall sexual satisfaction with that partner. Therefore, couples who are more sexually adventurous are more likely to be sexually satisfied.

## CONCLUSION

Our last survey indicated that a good majority of folks were interested in trying something new in the bedroom with their partner in order to combat boredom. The current survey provided us with a series of activities that could be engaged in and an idea about whether people are willing to engage in these adventurous sexual behaviors.

Also, those men and women who had tried these behaviors overwhelmingly reported the activities as satisfying.

Please visit <http://www.GoodinBed.com/Surveys> for more information on this study and our Survey Director, Kristen Mark.