

# Where to get a good used condom

One buys tires with care. And condoms can do just as much to save your life. *Caveat emptor.*

*But it's not romantic.*

*Just give me a condom and I'll show you how romantic it can be.*

*Why do I need to use a condom if I'm on the pill?*

*The pill can't provide protection from germs that cause STDs including AIDS.*

*But we have been having sex without condoms.*

*We can still prevent infection or reinfection.*

*What! Don't you trust me? It's not a matter of trust. It's a matter of health.*

Buying condoms is not a skill taught by most parents to their offspring. Young innocents are taught to buy the melon with the squishiest stem-base or the hammer with a kryptonite shaft. Most of us however, come out of adolescence knowing little about condoms beyond the fact that they come in various colours and flavours (Baskin-Robbins and Ramses are said to be working on a joint venture -- 32 flavours).

There are some important things that every wise consumer should look for in a condom.

**Always use latex condoms.** Lambskin condoms are able to block sperm but not the viruses and other various little beasties that cause most STDs. You may also want to ask yourself if you really *want* to wrap your private parts in or around a strip of sheep intestine. Haggis is disgusting enough without putting it on and/or in yourself.

**Lubricants.** If you buy lubricated condoms, Nonoxynol 9 is spermicide that can give you added protection from the HIV virus. A well lubricated condom is also less likely to break (and although there are probably many men out there who find the idea of breaking a condom attractive, it kind of defeats the purpose). Be sure to use *only* a water based lubricant like K-Y Jelly or AstroGlide with your latex condom; oil-based lubricants like vaseline, mineral oil, cold cream and hand lotion can destroy the latex. No matter what kind of a lubricant you

buy always read the label to see that it is safe to use on latex. Keep in mind, of course, that Nonoxynol 9 tastes only slightly better than a used tractor tire.

**Reservoir tip.** Make sure that your condom of choice has a bubble or nipple at the closed end where semen can collect (the air should be squeezed out of the nipple before the condom is put on, otherwise there will be a pretty little balloon where perhaps you won't want one -- balloons tend to burst.) The condom should also be long enough so that a surplus of rubber at the open end forms a rolled ring at the base of the penis. This is to ensure that the condom doesn't shoot off at an inopportune time or in an inopportune place.

**Best Before...** Always check the expiry date and store your condoms in a cool, dark, dry place to ensure that the latex won't deteriorate. Just remember to treat your condoms like you would a potato (without actually eating the condom or having sex with a potato that is -- unless your tastes bend in these directions).

**Dental Dams.** By cutting a condom up one side from the end to the tip and unfolding it, you can create your very own dental dam for use during oral-vaginal or oral-anal sex. When buying condoms for this purpose you may want to pay a little more attention to the Baskin-Robbins varieties and steer clear of spermicides and lubricants.

*Editor's Note:*

*This article and the following one are not to be construed as promoting promiscuity. Acknowledging the reality that many university students already are or will become sexually active in some way, this article is meant to caution and educate such individuals. The best, if not widely accepted as practical, method of protection from the dangers of sexual maladies remains abstinence.*

Mac Fenwick  
The Fulcrum

*Condoms are for people with diseases. Do I look sick to you?*

*Unfortunately only medical tests can tell you if you have STD. You can look and feel healthy -- and still be infected.*

*Intercourse is the only way to have sex. Many people have great sex without having intercourse. Let me show you.*

*I don't use condoms. I use condoms every time.*

*But I love you. Being in love can't protect us from AIDS.*