

# What counts as sexual violence?

KEY WORDS

coercion | rape | intimidation | humiliation | harassment | isolating





Sexual violence is any attempt or committed act of a sexual nature **without the active consent of all parties**. As discussed in other texts, consent refers to the voluntary and enthusiastic agreement of all people involved to have a sexual interaction.

Sexual violence may involve **using physical force, coercion, intimidation, humiliation, or taking advantage** of another person's drug or alcohol intoxication, or their inability to consent.

Sexual violence includes (but is not limited to):

- Rape (which can be caused by strangers or acquaintances, but even occur in marriage or on dates)
- Unwanted touching
- Sexual harassment and all of its forms (verbal, non-verbal and physical)

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- Unwanted sexual comments or advances, including sending sexts over digital media
  - Threats of violence related to harming someone sexually, such as abusing their private parts (genital mutilation)
  - Threats of other consequences such as job loss unless sexual behaviour is performed
  - Sexual abuse of those that are too young to consent, such as teenagers and children
  - Sexual abuse of physically or mentally disabled persons
  - Prostitution or forced human trafficking
  - Forced marriage or cohabitation (isolating someone to live with you)
  - Recording or sharing sexually explicit photos or videos without consent
  - Denying someone the right to use contraception or to take steps to protect the spread of sexually transmitted diseases
  - Inspecting someone's private parts to see if they're a virgin

**Listen to your gut if it's saying that something is wrong.** If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual violence, here's what you can do:

- Prioritise safety by calling emergency services: report to the police and seek medical attention for any injuries.



- Seek support from friends or family.
- Connect with helplines for guidance.
- Preserve evidence if possible, so that you can pursue legal action.
- Consider counselling services for emotional support.
- Familiarise yourself with educational resources online.

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**Seeking help is a sign of strength**, and there are people ready to provide support and guidance. Never silence yourself to protect someone else!



**INCLUSION AND  
STAYING SAFE**

