

# NYCSAFERSPACES POCKET GUIDE

A resource for negotiation,  
affirmative consent, and  
building safer spaces.

## Bill of Rights

1. You have the right to be treated with respect and made to feel welcome in this space and community.
2. You have the right to be addressed by your true name and gender pronoun.
3. You have the right to your body, bodily autonomy, and personal boundaries.
4. You have the right to consent. Consent is sacrosanct in this space and community.
5. You have the right to change your mind and/or revoke consent at any time.
6. You have the right to your feelings; they are yours and no one may diminish or invalidate them.
7. You have the right to ask questions and request clarification.
8. You have the right to participate at a level of sobriety or responsible non-sobriety. If you partake in substances, you have the right to the same respect, safety, and consent as if you were sober.
9. You have the right to seek comfort and safety. Designated people [insert names/roles] have been assigned to facilitate your comfort and safety, and you may approach them at any time.
10. You have the right to fair and evenhanded judgment if you report a consent violation or are reported for a consent violation. You also have the choice to remain anonymous throughout this process.

## Affirmative Consent

Affirmative consent is a knowing, voluntary, and mutual decision among all participants to engage in kink and/or sexual activity. Consent can be given by words or actions, as long as those words or actions create clear permission regarding willingness to engage in the activity.

Silence or lack of resistance, in and of itself, does not demonstrate consent. The definition of consent does not vary based upon a participant's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

## Traffic Light System

A commonly used safeword system is the Traffic Light System. It is a way to have three distinct words to quickly communicate where you are in a scene. Red, meaning stop. Yellow, meaning slow down. Green, meaning keep going.

Though often used, they aren't universal. If you want to use this system as a safeword, talk to your play partner about what exactly the terms are going to mean during your scene.

In general if someone says "red" at a play party, it is accepted to mean stop or safeword. Here are what the three words often mean:

### GREEN

Green often means that everything is good. You are comfortable in the scene, can take more of whatever your partner is doing, and are able, willing, and ready for your partner to continue or increase the intensity of the scene.

### YELLOW

Yellow often means that things are okay, but getting intense. You have not reached your limit, but you are getting close. It is a sign to slow down what ever you are doing or change to another act. If someone yellows, you want to check in with them again in a few minutes to see if they are more or less comfortable.

### RED

Red means that you have reached your limit with whatever is happening. It can also mean you are hurt, triggered, your consent had been violated, or for any other reason need to stop whatever is happening. If someone says red, all people involved in the scene need to stop the scene immediately and tend to whomever say red. Ask what they need, take them out of any rope or other bondage they are in, give them air, water, and what ever else they need.

### REMEMBER

The only way a kink scene works is if everyone communicates and affirmatively consents. Let your partner(s) know where you are in a scene. Check in with each other often. If someone ignores any safeword/yellow/red, ask a DM or host for help.

# Negotiation Guide

## DEFINITIONS

**Top** The person who DOES something to the other person/people. It is possible for both partners to have top roles in the same scene.

**Bottom** The person who has things DONE TO them by another.

**Switching** When the bottom and top exchange roles as a component of the scene.

**Limit** A restriction on the conduct consented to over the course of the scene.

**Scene** A single incident of play, including aftercare.

**Safe words** Words or phrases used to communicate during a scene, including those which trigger the immediate end of the scene.

**DM** Dungeon Monitor, a person charged with supervising a kink event.

## NEGOTIATION GUIDE

When negotiating a scene, especially with a new play partner, the following considerations should be made, at minimum.

### L – LOGISTICS

Who will be involved in or watch the scene?

What will we do?

Will bondage or restraint be used?

Will there be any sexual contact?

What actions are prohibited (hard limits)?

What actions can only be done in certain conditions (soft limits)?

Where will we play?

When will we play and for how long?

How hard will we play, after how much warm up?

### I – INDIVIDUAL ROLES

What will be the roles of each person involved in the scene, including spectators?

Who will be top/bottom?

Will there be an element of dominance/submission?

Is playfulness/silliness welcome or do we want to be serious?

Will there be any role play? What roles do we want to take on?

Is resistance/force desired?

Should the scene create a feeling of safety vs feeling of risk?

Is switching during the scene welcome?

Is the bottom expected to follow the directions of the top?

Will a collar or other symbolic clothing/adornments be used?

What should we call each other during the scene?

### M – MARKS OR OTHER LASTING EFFECTS

Where on the body can marks be left?

What kind of marks can be left?

What about other lasting effects, like cut hair, soreness, or visible limping?

Can any permanent marks or alterations be purposefully made?

### I – INJURIES AND ILLNESS

Is anyone prone to seizures or other sudden medical issues?

Does anyone have any communicable diseases?

Does anyone have any injuries which might interfere with play?

Does anyone have allergies relevant to the play?

Does anyone have special needs in an emergency (ie, where is your inhaler)?

Is anyone on medication which might affect their physical responses?

### T – TRIGGERS OR OTHER LIMITS

Are there any words or actions which could cause unexpected or severe reactions?

Do you have any mental health problems which may be relevant to play?

Is deception of any kind allowed during play?

Are any negative emotions going to be purposefully stimulated?

Is anyone under the influence of any mind-altering substances?

### S – SAFETY AND SAFE WORDS

What training/experience do the players have?

Is the top qualified for the type of play they are doing?

Does the bottom think they can handle the play?

Does anyone have first aid training in case of an emergency?

Are all necessarily tools and supplies readily accessible like keys for all locks, sharps/biohazard container, Emergency supplies, such as safety sheers, towel, etc, first aid supplies, phone to call emergency services

How will you communicate during the scene?

Is plain language acceptable?

What safewords will be used?

What are the specific safewords meant to communicate?

What aftercare do the participants require?

What follow-up communications or actions will happen?

Adapted from the LIMIT system, created by Cross (cross@xcbdsm.com) on **XCBDSM.com**.

## Resources

**nycsaferespaces.com** A collection of documents about safer spaces, built by a NYC based restorative justice group.

**restorativejustice.org** The Centre for Justice & Reconciliation is a program of Prison Fellowship International. Its mission is to develop and promote restorative justice in criminal justice systems around the world.

**surviverape.org** a resource for those who have been harmed to get help.

**askingforwhatyouwant.com** Insightful gems about boundaries, clear communication, and your tender, fierce desire

**ncsfreedom.org** The National Coalition for Sexual Freedom (NCSF)

You can download a PDF consent handbook at: [bit.ly/saferhandbook](https://bit.ly/saferhandbook)