

Caressing Women: Advanced Erotic Tips For Men

By Michael Castleman

Compared with men, it takes most women longer to feel erotically warmed up enough to enjoy breast and genital fondling and intercourse (if the sex involves it). How much longer? For most women, a lot longer. “It takes me a good 20 to 30 minutes,” says Betty Dodson, Ph.D., a noted New York City sex educator. “It takes other women even longer.” Before you reach for a woman’s breasts or between her legs, caress the rest of her. Gently run your fingers through her hair. Fondle her ears, her face, neck, shoulders, arms, the small of her back, her buttocks, her sides, the backs of her knees. All these spots can feel charged with erotic sensation—and help her warm up to be the enthusiastic lover men hope for.

“Coach Me”

But don’t just caress these spots—and everywhere else. Ask how it feels when you do. Frame your questions carefully. It’s much easier to say that a certain feels good than it is to say that it feels uncomfortable or hurts. Try to frame your questions to minimize the need for the woman to say: “That hurts.”

Instead of asking “Does this feel good?” which might elicit “No, it’s uncomfortable,” try saying, “Would you prefer lighter touch here?” That way, “yes” is a request for an adjustment, and “no” means all’s well. You might also ask, “Would you prefer firmer touch here?” Or try asking, “Would you prefer me to touch you somewhere else?” Or just invite her to tell you what she enjoys by saying, “Coach me.”

“Yes” or Silence

Another way to identify places a woman enjoys being caressed is to suggest that whenever she enjoys your touch, she should say “yes,” and whenever she feels discomfort, she should remain silent. It shouldn’t take long to discover all her “yes” spots and the pressure that makes her say “yes.”

Ticklishness Means Discomfort

Watch out for ticklishness. Sometimes, it can be fun to be tickled, but in lovemaking ticklishness often means discomfort. Different women have different spots that feel ticklish. Often ticklishness depends less on the spot, and more on the way it's touched. A finger tracing figure eights on a woman's belly might feel ticklish, while a warm palm placed gently on the same area might not.

The Subtle Art of Kissing

One crucial form of erotic touch that rarely gets its due in sex manuals is kissing. "A kiss," a wit once said, "can be a comma, period, question mark, or exclamation point." Don't just clamp your lips on a woman's or thrust your tongue into her mouth. Kissing is a dance. It involves a constant interplay of lips and tongues and moist warm breath. Brush her lips with yours. Nibble at each other's lips. Run your tongue over her lips. Let your tongues chase each other as they dart in and out of each other's mouths. Run your tongue over her teeth. The poet Percy Bysshe Shelley defined kissing as "soul meeting soul on lovers' lips." Put your soul into it.

Breast Play: The Best Way

In pornography, the men often maul women's breasts and pinch, twist, and suck their nipples roughly. This is a big mistake. Nipples are very sensitive, and if you treat them callously, the woman may get turned off, and your erotic connection may be destroyed. Be very gentle with women's nipples. Caress them lightly with your fingers, lips, and tongue. Once aroused, some women enjoy somewhat firmer nipple caresses. Check in with your lover about when she likes what kind of nipple fondling.

Leisurely, Playful, Whole-Body Sensuality

In porn, the men and women say "hello," and then almost immediately, the men are reaching between the women's legs. Another big mistake. It takes most women quite a while to become sensually aroused enough to welcome genital caresses. That's the whole point of leisurely, playful, whole-body sensuality. Touching everywhere else first allows women the time they need to warm up to sensual pleasure and feel receptive to genital explorations.

Now, some men like to have their penises fondled early in lovemaking. But instead of asking for it directly, they try to communicate this request obliquely by reaching

between the woman's legs in an effort to encourage her to reach between theirs. Meanwhile, if the woman feels like her lover grabs her genitals before she feels ready for such intimate touch, she might make a point of *not* reaching for his penis early on, hoping that this might encourage the man to refrain from doing the same to her.

If you like your penis fondled shortly after the first kiss, fine. There's nothing wrong with that. Ask for it directly: "You know, when we make love, I'd really like it if you'd start stroking my penis early on, almost as soon as we get started." Then ask how much nongenital caressing your lover would like before you touch or kiss her between the legs. Better yet, make this offer: "I'm not exactly clear when you feel comfortable with me touching you between the legs, so I'm not going to touch you there at all—until you take my hand and move it down there yourself." For many women, this would be a godsend, allowing them to postpone genital play until they feel truly ready.

Be Extra Gentle Down There

Once you're clear that a woman is open to having her vulva caressed, treat it very gently. In porn, the men often pry open the vaginal lips as though they're opening a zip-loc plastic bag. Major mistake. The vaginal lips develop from the same cells that, in men, become the scrotum. Do you like yours pinched, gouged, or treated roughly. Probably not. Be gentle with the vaginal lips. Don't pull them apart. As women become sexually aroused, their vaginal lips eventually begin to part on their own.

Even worse, the men in porn often go at the clitoris like they're polishing shoes or scooping fingerfuls of peanut butter out of the jar. Huge mistake. The clitoris has just as many touch-sensitive nerve endings as the head of the penis, but it's much smaller, so all those nerve endings are concentrated, packed tightly together, and super-sensitive to touch. Be extremely gentle with the clitoris.

In fact, when initially caressing a woman's vulva, don't try to open it up at all. Simply lay the palm of your palm between her legs, press gently, and invite the woman to move in ways that give her pleasure. Once her outer and inner lips part, there's plenty of time to fondle, kiss, and lick her inner vulva and clitoris.

When Are Women Ready for Intercourse?

In young men, assuming that everything works as it should, erection is the *first* sign of sexual arousal. In women, it's vaginal lubrication. A wet vagina does *not*

necessarily mean the woman feels ready for intercourse. All it means is that she is *starting* to become sexually aroused.

When are women ready for intercourse? That varies from woman to woman. Many women would feel deeply appreciative if men said, “I’m not exactly sure when you feel ready for intercourse, so I’m not going to go for it until you invite me in.” You might arrange a nonverbal signal, for example, she might tug on your ear lobe. Or she might say, “Ready.” Do what works for you. Just remember that despite what you see in porn, wet doesn’t necessarily mean ready.

Appreciate Afterglow

Finally, like kissing, afterglow rarely gets the sensual respect it deserves. Many women complain that after orgasm, men just roll over and fall asleep. Most lovers focus on the “after” when they could have more fun—and feel more sensually intimate—if they appreciated the “glow.” Try exploring the unique possibilities of post-orgasmic sensuality. Hold each other close. Kiss one another in unusual places. Try some light massage. Facial massage of the forehead, cheeks, nose, and jaw can feel wonderful especially if you gaze deeply into each other’s eyes. (Don’t press on the eyes. Most people find this unpleasant.) For a final sensual touch, try cupping your palms gently over your lover’s ears. Closing off external sounds ushers the recipient into a womb-like world of breath and heartbeat. The fact is, the term “afterglow” is a misnomer. In truly sensual lovemaking, it should be called “et cetera.”

Ancient Secrets of the Kama Sutra

For more on sensual lovemaking, a wonderful video is *The Ancient Secrets of the Kama Sutra: The Classic Art of Lovemaking*. Produced in consultation with noted Los Angeles sexologist Patti Britton, Ph.D., this 60-minute, lavish, erotic tour de force is a wonderfully sensual take on the ancient Indian Kama Sutra’s eight stages of lovemaking: preparation (bathing), massage, ambiance (candlelight, music, etc.), seduction (undressing), kissing, lingual love (oral sex), intercourse (many positions), and union (intimate spiritual merging during afterglow). Each stage is enthusiastically enacted by attractive lovers who are clearly enjoying themselves. While *The Ancient Secrets of the Kama Sutra* is explicitly sexual, unlike pornography, it’s very sensual, and beautiful to watch, a unique work of video art. You can use this video for instruction or entertainment or arousal—or all three. *The Ancient Secrets of the Kama Sutra* is available from Amazon.com \$19.95.

For more information on sensual caressing, consult a sex therapist. To find one near you, visit aasect.org, the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists, or sstar.net, the Society for Sex Therapy and Research.