

Glossary of BDSM Terms

It's sometimes common for people to have a misunderstanding of what BDSM is all about, on the mistaken idea that being involved in BDSM means being into everything from pain to extreme sadomasochism. In fact, nobody is into everything, not everyone has the same tastes, limits or the same ideas. I am hoping that the definitions below will give you some insight into the world of BDSM.



A

Abrasion – Any form of sensation play involving stroking or brushing the skin with rough, textured objects such as sandpaper, emery boards etc.

Abuse – treating another person with physical or mental cruelty, usually on a regular basis and against their will. A fundamental difference between BDSM and abuse is that the former is consensual but the latter isn't.

After care – A period of time after intense BDSM activity in which the dominant partner cares for the submissive partner. It is here that a submissive partner may need a psychological space to unwind and recover after an intense session.

Age Play – between adults involves adopting different roles to express a fetish based on age, for example it can take the form of teacher and naughty schoolgirl or mommy and child.

Algophilia – Sexual arousal from receiving pain.

Alpha Sub – In a relationship where one dominant has more than one submissive, the submissive accorded the greatest power or respect among all the submissives.

Anal Sex or Anal Play - any sexual or fetish practice that centres on the anus (known more colloquially as the ass-hole).

Anal Training - is designed to allow the anus to accommodate larger objects more easily.

Anilingus - is anal-oral sex (or ass-licking)

Animal Play - is consensual role-playing where one or more of the participants adopts the role of an animal, such as a pony or a puppy, not to be confused with bestiality

Ankle Cuffs – Any cuffs specifically designed to be affixed to a person's ankles. They are often made of leather, but may also be made of cloth, rope, metal and wood.

Arm binder – A restraint device consisting of a long sleeve, into which both arms are placed, often fitted with laces or straps to hold the arms securely together. An arm binder may also include an integrated collar to prevent the wearer from withdrawing the arms. Also referred to as a single-glove.

Asphyxiation - asphyxiation is the unconsciousness and ultimately death, which happens when the supply of oxygen to your brain is cut off. This can happen in auto-erotic strangulation or other breath-control play.

Asymmetric bondage – Any bondage technique in which a person is bound in an asymmetrical pose.

Auction – a situation set up to auction off submissives to the highest bidder.

Auto-Erotic Strangulation - occurs when people try to enhance their sexual experience by deliberately choking themselves or letting others do it to them. Dangerous. Don't ever do it alone... or at all for that matter

B

Ball Busting – An activity involving the dominant kicking, kneeling or striking (using fists) a submissive in the genital area, particularly the testicles.

Ball Gag – A gag consisting of a ball, usually made of rubber, which is attached to a strap. The ball is placed in the mouth, with the strap tied around the head to hold it securely in place.

Ball Hood – A specific type of hood, often without openings for the eyes or ears and sometimes containing integrated bladders designed to be inflated with air to press the hood tightly against the head, used as a means of rendering a person unable to hear, see or speak.

Ball Tie – A specific type of bondage in which a person is bound in a seated position with the knees up, the head bent down over the knees, and the hands behind the back. This posture quickly becomes tiring and should not be attempted by those unaccustomed to it.

Bandage Scissors – Specialised scissors often used by emergency medical personnel, consisting of a pair of scissors with one sharp blade and one blunt blade with a rounded end. The blunt blade can be slid beneath bandages or anything else wrapped tightly around a limb without risk of cutting or injuring a person.

Bastinado – Any form of pain play, involving infliction of pain on the soles of the feet, often by striking, cropping or whipping them.

Bat – A thin, flexible instrument used for striking, consisting of a rigid but flexible shaft wrapped or braided with leather or cloth, very similar to a crop, but usually shorter and with a wider leather striking tip.

BDSM – originated on the internet as an all-inclusive term to bring together the distinct but related activities of Bondage and Discipline (BD), Dominance and Submission (D/s), and Sado-Masochism (SM).

Bestiality – is sexual intercourse or other sexually motivated activity between a person and an animal.

Birch – An implement used for striking. Consisting of a bundle of light, thin wooden rods, typically made of birch.

Blindfolds – are devices which block vision and are used in BDSM play to create feelings of helplessness and disorientation.

Bloodsports – are BDSM activities, which break the skin and result in blood being shed. It could, for example, be cutting with a knife or razor, a hard whipping or caning, branding or piercing. A few Goths who dabble on the fringes of BDSM are heavily into the 'vampire' thing and see themselves as bloodsuckers, but Dracula of course didn't have to contend with AIDS.

Body Bag – A long, heavy bag, often shaped like a narrow sleeping bag. Typically made from canvass, rubber or latex. It is used to restrain a person very tightly. Sometimes includes integrated straps, which wrap around the person within the bag.

Body Harness – A harness consisting of a series of straps designed to be worn around the torso, which may optionally include a mechanism for locking the harness into place and may also include rings or other attachments for ropes, cuffs or chastity belts.

Body Fluid Monogamy – involves both partners in a steady relationship deciding to share body fluids only with each other to avoid the risks of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, only having sex outside of the relationship by practising strict safe sex.

Body Modification - is an inclusive term covering piercing, tattooing, and other practices, which decorate or change the body for erotic or fetish purposes. Now often used in mainstream culture simply as a fashion statement rather than an indication of an alternative lifestyle.

Body Worship - is any practice of physically reverencing a part of another person's body, and is usually done as a submissive act in the context of BDSM. Typical kinds of body worship are muscle worship, foot worship, pussy worship, cock worship (or oral servitude), and ass worship. Body worship is popular among people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Usually accompanied by prostration, re-enforcing a sense of inferiority, a "sub" generally licks, kisses and sucks their dominant's body part, and is not allowed to touch it in a more conventional way. The aspect of erotic humiliation is perhaps appreciated by bearing in mind the commonplace phrase "kiss my ass." Face sitting and smothering are forms of body worship which differ chiefly because of their aggressive approach.

BOI – A person, usually biologically female and often boyish of "butch" in manner, appearance and dress, who is

submissive. Commonly but not exclusively used in lesbian D/s relationships.

Bondage - involves being rendered helpless by restraints. For many people, the knowledge that they are powerless, that someone else can do things with their body and they can't prevent them, is a powerful turn-on. For others, the physical sensation of bondage feels erotic.

Bondage Belt – A belt used to restrain a person, which consists of a heavy band of leather or similar material, which can be strapped or locked about the waist and which has several attachment points to which the subject's wrists may be bound.

Bondage Bunny – A person who enjoys being tied or bound. Often implies that the person described is not necessarily submissive, but enjoys bondage and takes pleasure from being restrained.

Bondage Tape – A vinyl tape material, available in many colours, which sticks only to itself but not to other materials such as skin, clothing, making it ideal for bondage.

Boot Boy - is the name given to a submissive (usually gay) male who has a fetish for leather boots worn by dominants, and who often works at a leather bar or charitable event shining shoes. The conclusion to the shoe shining may be oral service to the boots.

Bottom - is the word used in BDSM to describe a person who receives pain or sensation, and a 'top' is the person who gives it. There is no implied domination or submission. The term 'bottom' includes anyone who is on the receiving end of BDSM activities like bondage, corporal punishment, spanking etc. The words are sometimes also used as verbs (as in to 'top' someone, or to 'bottom' for someone).

Bottom Drop – A sudden, abrupt feeling of depression, unhappiness, or similar negative emotion in a submissive, which may occasionally occur immediately after a BDSM activity.

Bottom Space - is a euphoric state reportedly experienced by some 'bottoms' during BDSM play when they are receiving pleasure or pain, allegedly triggered by the release of endorphins. Also known as sub-space, endorphin-high, or 'flying'.

Boundaries – are also called 'limits', and are the personal lines that people don't wish, or aren't prepared, to cross, for example refusing any activity that involves children, animals, bloodsports, 'scat', (shit), or any subject or situation which either the dominant or submissive finds frightening or repulsive.

Boy - is a term sometimes used for male submissives, which has a special meaning in gay leather culture where it may also refer to the submissive partner in a Daddy/boy relationship. The word is also used in lesbian culture to denote a male-identified (but biologically female) bottom.

Branding - is burning the skin with heated metal to produce scarification in a design or pattern. It is sometimes used as decoration or to signify ownership, as when a 'master' will brand his 'slave' to denote that she is his property.

Brat – describes a submissive or bottom who loves to resist and test the patience of the 'tops' or 'dominants'. Being a brat generally involves role-play, with the 'brat' acting like a spoiled and wilful child.

Breast Bondage - is erotic play, which involves binding the breasts tightly. Generally it involves restraints (rope, rubber etc) which encircle each breast tightly where it joins the chest. The breasts and nipples become engorged with blood and exquisitely sensitive to the slightest touch. Stroking, clamping, or whipping can cause intense pain and pleasure.

Breast Press – A type of device, often consisting of two horizontal wooden planks with an adjustable screw or clamp mechanism between them, which can be clamped over the breasts.

Breath control - usually involves the dominant partner controlling the breathing of the submissive. This can be done most easily when the submissive is bound or restrained, and it can involve pinching the nostrils or using other apparatus or materials to cover the mouth or nose for short periods.

Buck Hammer – A medical instrument used to test reflexes and neurological function. Consists of a metal handle with two cylindrical, rubber tipped metal hammerheads. Typically, one or both hammerheads can be removed and replaced with a sharp metal spike-like attachment, or with a soft brush, both of which can be used to test sensation on the skin.

Bullwhips - are arguably amongst the most dramatic implements available for BDSM play and can create intense psychological theatre. A typical bullwhip has a relatively short, rigid handle and a long flexible leather thong of varying lengths ranging from about 4-6 feet. The longer the whip, the harder it is to control.

Bukkake – A sexual practice, originating in Japan (meaning “to splash water”), in which a very large group of men masturbate and ejaculate onto a person.

Butt-Plugs - are used for anal training or play. The anus (ass-hole) is rich in nerve endings and many women as well as men find anal play as arousing as genital stimulation. Butt plugs are inserted into the anus and stretch the tight ring of anal muscle (the sphincter). By doing so they can, if used over time and with gradually increasing widths, prepare the anus for more adventurous or easier anal play. Alternatively, the sensation of being 'filled' may simply be enjoyed as an end in itself.

Butterfly Chair – A chair that contains two horizontal planks, to which the legs can be secured, affixed to a pivot such that the legs of the secured person can be spread apart.

C

Cable Tie – A type of cuff consisting of a thin plastic strip with a row of teeth in its surface, and a small ratchet on one end. The end of the cable tie can be placed through the ratchet to form a loop, which can be pulled tight but not loosened again.

Candles - are used in play that involves dripping hot candlewax onto the skin of the submissive. Plain white paraffin candles are best, while coloured or beeswax candles are more likely to burn. Generally soft candles have a lower melting point and are safer.

Canes - come in a variety of lengths and thickness and are traditionally made of rattan, although more recently man-made materials like fibreglass have become available. Depending upon how the cane is applied it can simply sting or it can raise severe welts. Usually applied to the ass but occasionally (in schoolroom role-play) to the palms of the hands.

Carabinder – Any device used to connect two chains or ropes together, often in the shape of a 'D' metal ring, with a spring loaded lever which can open the ring.

CAT – A generic term for any flogger whose lashes are braided or knotted, regardless of the number of lashes.

Cat 'o' nine tails - was originally used by the British Navy to flog uppity sailors, and was a leather whip with nine thongs which were sometimes weighted with lead to produce a devastating punishment that could strip the skin off right down to the bone. Nowadays the cat 'o' nine tails is often a term used to refer to any multi-thonged whip.

Catharsis - is the purging of emotions or tension. People may bring to BDSM sessions issues of self-esteem and past psychological trauma. The intense emotional charge generated by some BDSM encounters can be the catalyst, which brings these issues to the surface. This can be either good or bad, depending on how it's dealt with. It is potentially dangerous to stray into deep BDSM play unless you know what you're doing.

Catherine's Wheel – A large, upright wheel, usually made of wood, to which a person may be bound and then rotated, to any position.

Catheter – Any thin, flexible tube designed to be inserted in the urethra.

Catheterisation – The act or process of inserting a catheter, often as part of medical role-play.

Chastity – The practice of disallowing any form of sexual release or sexual activity, sometimes imposed on a submissive by a dominant. Some forms of imposed chastity include the use of locking devices such as chastity belts to prevent direct sexual stimulation of the genitals. Also sometimes called chastity play or enforced chastity.

Chastity Belt – Any device intended to prohibit contact with or stimulation of the genitals.

Chemical Play – Any form of sensation play involving the use of mild irritants such as menthol, Tabasco sauce and the like to create a sensation.

Clover Clamp – A specific type of nipple clamp consisting of a clamp with a lever mechanism to which a chain or cord is affixed in such a way that pulling the chain or chord increases pressure on the clamp.

Cock and Ball Torture (CBT) - is the 'torture' or involvement in painful erotic play of the male genitalia (cock and balls). Methods may include clamps, clips, tight bindings of various sorts, whips, crops, electrodes, and hard-core addicts have even hammered nails through their unfortunate appendages.

Cock Bondage – Tying or restraining the penis.

Cockrings - are, as the name suggests, rings that go around your cock. Usually they go around the base of it, behind the balls. The penis becomes erect when the blood vessels at its base constrict (because of arousal), trapping blood in the cock and causing it to swell and prolonging erection. They're often used as an aid to impotence, or simply to prolong and increase the pleasure of an erection. Made of leather, with adjustable snaps, so you can tighten or loosen them to fit, rubber or metal.

Co-Dom – A person who acts in conjunction with or as an assistant to a dominant during a specific scene.

Collar - a collar used in BDSM is in physical appearance often like a dog collar, made of leather or a chain, and worn around the neck (although some favour a symbolic thin gold chain for everyday wear). The conventional collar may simply be used as a prop in BDSM 'play' to denote a negotiated submission for a limited play session, but it can also be used as more permanent symbol of ownership in some ongoing Dominant/submissive or Master/slave relationships.

Collaring - usually means the formalising of a relationship between a dominant and submissive. There is no set procedure. It may be a simple understanding between two people or a ceremony attended by friends where vows are exchanged and the submissive is physically 'collared' (given a collar to wear). The collar itself may be symbolic or real. Collaring is often likened to a marriage, although of course it is not a legal contract.

Collaring Ceremony – A formal ceremony celebrating or symbolising a commitment between a dominant and a submissive (not unlike a wedding ceremony), typically during which a collar is placed around the submissive's neck.

Consent – Affirmative permission, assent or approval to engage in a particular activity, freely given without coercion or distress.

Consensual Non-Consent – Any situation in which one person knowingly and voluntarily gives up the ability to prevent another person from doing whatever he or she wants. For example, some forms of rape play are consensual non-consent.

Contract (Slave Contract) - is an agreement, which formally sets out the roles, responsibilities and limits of a Domination/submission relationship, sometimes called a slave or ownership contract.

Contrapolar Stimulation – Relates to any form of stimulation which produces both pain and pleasure sensations simultaneously.

Corporal Punishment – Any activity involving disciplining a person through physical means, as by spanking, caning etc.

Corset – An article of clothing, often made of leather and sometimes includes strips of rigid "boning", which is tightly laced and designed to narrow the waist and lift the breasts, creating an hourglass figure.

Corset Piercing – A form of body modification in which rings are placed through a person's skin, then laced together with a silk cord. Corset piercings are often done on a person's back, or even on the labia, tying it closed. The piercings themselves can be either temporary or permanent.

Corsetry – The practice of wearing a corset, often laced extremely tightly, and sometimes constraining motion, as a form

of body modification or for the purpose of control.

Counting Strokes - is a ritualised counting of the strokes of a caning, with the recipient sometimes being required to thank the dominant after each stroke. If the submissive miscounts a stroke or remains silent, then the stroke may be repeated.

Co-Top – A person who acts together with another dominant in a particular scene.

Cracker – A short piece of cord on the end of a whip, which makes a loud cracking sound as the whip is snapped.

Crash – An abrupt feeling of depression or unhappiness immediately following the end of a BDSM activity.

Crop – A thin flexible instrument used for striking, e.g. riding crop used in the horse industry.

Cross-Dressing - is dressing in the clothes of the opposite gender, and is a reasonably common fetish.

Crucifixion - as practised in BDSM usually refers to a kind of bondage where the submissive is tied to a cross. Care needs to be taken to make sure that the weight is supported evenly and that the submissive can breathe properly. More rarely, hard-core devotees go further and actually have themselves nailed to a cross.

Cuckoldry – The practice by which a dominant takes one or more sexual partners other than his or her submissive, for the purpose of humiliating the submissive.

Cuffs – can be made out of leather, cloth or metal and are designed to restrain the wrists or ankles.

Cupping – A type of sensation play involving the use of small glass or plastic cups which are placed over the skin and then evacuated to create a vacuum, and hence suction.

Cutting - generally means slicing the skin with a sharp implement (knife or scalpel) so that blood is shed

Cybersex (online sex, virtual sex, virtual sceneing) - most commonly involves two or more people, who are communicating in real-time via their computers, constructing a shared sexual fantasy and describing to each other how they feel and what they are 'doing'. A bit like an inter-active erotic story.

D

Dental Dams - are most commonly just a latex barrier used for cunnilingus (pussy licking) or anilingus (ass licking) to prevent the transmission of disease.

Deviant - is the name for someone who diverges from the accepted standards, usually of sexual morality, is called a 'deviant'.

Discipline - in the BDSM context means training your submissive to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience.

Dominance - is the exercise of power or influence over others. It can simply be role-play, where one partner is consensually empowered to 'dominate' while the other adopts the part of the submissive for the limited purpose of sexual games, or it can reflect deep-seated personality traits which influence life-style choices. Although the words 'Dominant' and its contraction, 'Dom' can refer to either gender they are most commonly reserved for men while a female dominant would be called a 'Domme', 'Domina', or 'Dominatrix'. A person who enjoys playing both roles is called a 'switch'

Domina – A female dominant.

Dominant - (or Dom) can, strictly speaking, be used in a BDSM context for either gender to describe a person who enjoys exercising power and control over others, however these words are usually reserved for males while their female equivalent is usually called 'domme', 'domina' or 'dominatrix'.

Dominate – To assume or exert control over another person.

Dominatrix - (or Domme or Domina) are the terms most often used in a BDSM context to describe a female who enjoys exercising power and control over others

Dragon's Tail – An unusual type of whip consisting of a handle, often made of wood and wrapped with leather, to which a wide piece of thin leather or suede is attached. This leather or suede forms a lash, which is a hollow tube tapering to a point at the striking end.

Dread Koosh Flogger – A flogger made from a rope handle tied to several Koosh Balls (children's toys) consisting of small, hard rubber ball with a very large number of long rubber "whiskers" attached.

D/s - is the abbreviation for domination and submission and is often spelled like this, with a capital (dominant) 'D' and a lower case (submissive) 's'. You will commonly find the same convention used in BDSM internet chat-rooms, where the Dom's nicknames will start with an upper case letter and the submissives will use the lower case. In those circumstances it does no particular harm and it's just a handy way of knowing peoples preferences.

D/s' Relationship - describes an ongoing relationship where each partner has a recognised role, one being dominant while the other is submissive. This structured way of relating to each other can apply either just in their sex-life or more pervasively to some or all other aspects of their daily life-style.

Dungeon – Any place specifically set up for BDSM activities, often equipped specifically for BDSM play.

Dungeon Monitor – In a play party, a person is charged with ensuring that the participants adhere to safety rules.

E

Edge Play - is a term used for activities that carry a degree of risk which is perceived to be high, or play which pushes the submissives limits 'to the edge'. It can include activities that are physically risky (e.g. the use of guns or knives in a scene) or ones that are emotionally risky (e.g. play that involves 'taboo' subjects like rape, slavery, or indeed anything the submissive is genuinely uneasy or phobic about).

Electrical Torture (Electro Play) - involves the use of electrical current, often applied to breasts or genitalia, in BDSM play sessions

Emotional Triggers - are events, words, situations (e.g. rape) that produce strong emotional reaction in particular individuals and for that reason may be either deliberately avoided or used in play.

Endorphins - are natural substances created by the body which reduce pain and can create a feeling of well-being and euphoria which is often called an 'endorphin high'. Exercise can produce endorphins, and some athletes become addicted to the opiate-like feelings that a good workout can produce. Some submissives during BDSM activities report the same feelings of euphoria and well being. This sensation is often called 'bottom-space', 'sub-space', 'flying' or an 'endorphin-high'.

Enema - is a device used to inject fluid into the anus to flush the lower intestines. Generally used for medical reasons (e.g. before surgery or internal examination) but sometimes used as part of D/s or sexual play for humiliation, to cleanse before other anal play, etc. They can also be used for sexual stimulation and a rapidly growing fetish subculture is dedicated to the sexual use of enemas. When coffee is used in an enema, it allows high concentrations of caffeine to be absorbed by the body, producing a unique sensation.

English – is a code word for corporal punishment, stemming from the supposed devotion of the English to anything that smacks of a good spanking.

Exhibitionists - are people who love drawing attention to themselves. The term has a specific use in psychiatry, where it describes a compulsion to exhibit ones genitals in public.

F

Fall – The striking end of a singletail whip.

Femdom – A power exchange relationship in which the dominant is female and the submissive is male.

Feminisation – The practice of enforcing activities or behaviour in a male submissive which are typically associated with

women, such as cross-dressing. Often used as a form of humiliation. Often called sissification.

Fetish - is the word used to describe any sexual fixation upon an activity or object which often (but certainly not always) has its roots in some powerful experience or image from childhood. Common fetishes include feet, corsets, shoes, rubber, latex, and leather, used panties, small furry animals, and other things too weird to even contemplate.

Fiddle – A type of restraint consisting of a short metal rod with a locking collar, usually made of metal, affixed to one end and a pair of locking cuffs on the other. Used to bind the wrists together and prevent freedom of motion of the hands and arms.

Figging – The practice of placing a piece of carved gingerroot into the anus or vagina. The result is a burning sensation, which may claim to intensify orgasm.

Fire and Ice - is a practice which involves in BDSM play the use of heat and cold, often candle wax for heat (the fire) and ice cubes (the ice) applied to the bare skin, especially the nipples or genital area.

Fisticuffs – To strike with a closed hand.

Fisting – describes the insertion of the whole hand into the anus (anal fisting) or the vagina (vaginal fisting).

Fisting Sling – A sling designed in such a way that the person within the sling is reclined with the legs spread apart, in a posture convenient for fisting.

Flagellation – A generic term for any sort of activity involving flogging or whipping.

Flagging – The act of wearing specific clothing, insignia, jewellery or other sign as a means of expressing interest in a specific form of BDSM activity.

Flog – To strike with a flogger.

Flogger - is a multi-thonged whip, often made out of deerskin, elk, suede, or other pliable leathers.

Florentine – A flashing flogging technique involving the use of a flogger in each hand. The floggers are swung in a figure-8 pattern. Sometimes called a double-weave.

Flying - a transcendental endorphin-induced state of bliss reported by some submissives during BDSM

Foot Fetish - A fairly common fetish, in which the foot (or shoes) is the trigger for sexual desire.

Forced Orgasm – An orgasm induced in a person against a person's will or as part of resistance play, often by means of bondage combined with sexual stimulation.

Forced Sex - In this context, a consensual fantasy role-play where the dom pretends to force a sexual activity upon the submissive. It might involve forced oral sex or the acting out of a 'rape' scene.

Fountain of Venus – Water sports involving urination by a woman.

Freeplay – BDSM activities in which there is no domination or submission.

French (French Kissing) - any kissing that involves open mouths, tongues, and swapping spit. Also, occasionally used as a 'code-word' for cunnilingus (licking pussies) and fellatio (sucking cocks).

Frog Tie – A specific form of bondage in which the person kneels and ankles are bound to the thighs, preventing the person from rising. The wrists are then bound to the ankles.

Fucking Machine – Any device or machine, which is designed to simulate the act of, sex e.g. silicon vagina used for men etc.

Funnel Gag – A gag, usually consisting of an oblong or penis shaped rubber or plastic bit, which has a tube running through it, connected to a funnel. When the gag is placed in the mouth, any liquids introduced into the tube will pass into the mouth, and the person wearing the gag, has no choice but to swallow them.

G

Gags - are devices inserted into or covering the mouth to muffle sound or create feelings of helplessness.

Gasper – One who participates or engages in breath control or auto-erotic asphyxiation.

Gates of Hell - A linked series of rings, usually metal, of diminishing size which are fitted around the cock and held in place by a leather strap around the balls. Initially fitted to a flaccid cock, the device grips ever more tightly as the unfortunate victim becomes aroused and his cock becomes erect.

Genitorture – Pain play inflicted on the genitals.

Gender Orientation – identification with a particular gender. So for example, a male transsexual might have a female gender orientation (i.e. see himself as a woman) but still prefer to have sex with either men or women. Confused?

Gender Play - is dressing up or taking the role of the other sex during play.

German - yet another 'code-word', this time for sado-masochism.

Gimp Mask – A specific form of hood, often made of heavy leather or rubber, which entirely encloses the face and head, and often lacks openings for eyes, mouth or ears.

Golden Shower – peeing on your partner or having them piss on you. The 'golden shower' is the urine.

Gor – A mythical planet created by science fiction writer John Norman and used as a setting for an entire series of science fiction novels.

Gorean - the term comes from a series of over 20 science fiction novels about a planet called Gor written by John Norman (real name John Frederick Lange). The slave culture described obviously struck a chord with many D/s devotees, because Gorean websites, newsgroups, and chat-rooms have sprung up all over the internet where people engage in a fantasy life based on the world described in these novels.

Gorean D/s – Male domination and female submission according to a set of rules adapted from the fictitious society described in the Gor novels. Characterised by strong hierarchy, male supremacy and an elaborate set system of protocols. Includes such elements as ritualised postures and positions which women are expected to assume in the presence of men.

Greek - a 'code-word' for anal sex. Sometimes also used specifically for homosexual anal sex.

Grope Box – A long, narrow, enclosed box, often made of wood, with many openings along its front and sides, into which a person may be placed and then groped or fondled by people outside the box. A person inside the box is helpless to prevent the fondling and often cannot see who is doing the fondling.

H

Hair Tie – A bondage technique, in which rope, twine or cord is woven or braided through a person's hair, then tied in such a way as to limit mobility of the bound person's head.

Handcuffs - metal restraints that lock around the wrists, just like the police use.

Handballing – the same as fisting.

Hanky Code – A covert technique developed largely by the old leather community for advertising one's BDSM preferences and to indicate the activities in which one is interested. The code worked by using a system of coloured handkerchiefs, usually worn in the back pocket, on the left for dominants and the right side for submissives. Each class of activity had its own particular colour, i.e. a person who is interested in pain play, might wear a black handkerchief, whereas a grey handkerchief may indicate an interest in bondage.

Hard Limit – A limit, which is generally considered absolute, inflexible and non-negotiable.

Head Games - describes psychological manipulation by the dominant intended to intensify the erotic or emotional response of the submissive through heightened anticipation and fear.

Hedgehog – A device used for sensation play consisting of a short metal cylinder with numerous spikes attached to the handle in such a way that it can be rolled over the skin, producing a sensation similar to that of a wartenberg wheel.

Hobble Skirt – An item of clothing consisting of a very tight skirt that ends below the knee, which prevents freedom of motion of the legs, forcing the wearer to walk in a hobbling motion.

Hog Tie – A bondage technique in which the bound person's ankles are tied to the wrists, usually behind the back, while the bound person lies on his or her stomach.

Hoods - cover the head and may be made from a variety of materials such as leather, cotton, latex, or rubber depending on your tastes. They are used to de-personalise and disorient or more benignly in BDSM as scary props for the dom or to provide an anonymity for dominant or submissive which can be quite liberating

Horse – A piece of bondage furniture consisting of a plank supported by two legs on each end, similar to a sawhorse. A person can be bent or tied over the horse to receive discipline.

House Boy – A male house slave.

House Girl – A female house slave.

House Slave – A submissive, who may often live with a dominant, who acts as a maid, cleaning the dominant's house and performing other household errands. A house slave is punished for failure to perform satisfactorily.

Humbler – An implement consisting of a locking metal ring, which fits around the testicles, connected to two wings, which go between the legs and behind the buttocks. A person wearing a humbler cannot stand upright without placing painful pressure on his testicles; the humbler forces the wearer to walk bent over on all fours.

Humiliation - involves making someone feel ashamed or foolish by injuring their dignity and self-respect, especially publicly. Some enjoy it in certain kinds of role-play or relationships. Mental domination exercised through humiliation or praise can be positive or destructive, depending on who is involved, their background, the intention behind the humiliation, and how it is carried out.

I

Impact Play – Any activity involving striking or hitting, for example flogging and spanking.

Impalement – A practice in which a person is bound, usually while standing, and penetrated anally or vaginally with a dildo attached to the end of a fixed pole or rod in such a way that the person cannot escape or remove himself or herself from the dildo.

Infantilism - is role-play involving infant-like behaviour such as wearing nappies (diapers), nursing, etc. An Infantilist is a person who sometimes likes to pretend that he or she is a baby/toddler. This can include the urge to be pampered, snuggling close by a maternal lover's side, being helpless once again in mommy's arms or sometimes even dressing as a baby.

Inflation – A practice involving injecting saline solution into the scrotum to "inflate" the scrotal sac, sometimes to a very large extent.

Informed Consent – Consent is not valid if it is not informed. In order to be valid, a person who gives permission to engage in an activity must know and understand what the activity is and the repercussions of engaging in such an activity.

Inversion Table – A piece of furniture consisting of a flat table to which a person can be bound, suspended between upright supports on a pivot, in such a way that the table can be rotated upright, inclined or upside down.

Irons – Bondage restraints made from iron.

J

Japanese bondage (oriental bondage) - is an elaborate, and to some beautiful, rope bondage developed in the Orient where it was originally used as a torture technique. It combines the usual bondage-effect of helplessness with aesthetic beauty and in some cases an intense erotic massage (caused by the pressure of the ropes and knots) that's similar to acupuncture techniques and traditional Japanese shiatsu massage.

K

Kajira - a Kajira is a gorean female slavegirl, not to be confused with a Kajirus who is her male counterpart or a Kajuralia, which is a festival in which gorean slaves trade places with their masters and have the freedom to play tricks on free persons. All of these terms come from the fantasy world of Gor (the counter-earth) created in the novels of John Norman.

Karada - A rope harness, originating in Japan, that is tied around the torso in a series of diamond-shaped patterns. Often used as a foundation in shibari. The karada does not restrain the person and can be worn under clothing.

Kennel Play - A specific form of puppy play in which the submissive is confined to a kennel or doghouse as part of the play.

Kinbaku - Originating in Japan, and denotes artistic bondage.

Knifeplay - doesn't necessarily involve cutting although it might. Knives are pretty scary things

Knout - A specific type of whip with multiple lashes made of wire and usually knotted.

Kotori - A rope harness intended to support a person's weight from the torso and upper legs. Used for suspension in shibari.

L

Ladder - A structure consisting of either a triangular wooden frame with wooden slats running across it or two vertical wooden planks with several horizontal cross members, to which a person can be bound.

Lacing - The practice of extreme corsetry as a form of body modification. It can also mean the specific and unusual type of bondage done by suturing a part of the body to or around a fixed object.

Lash - Any long, flexible implement, often made of leather or cord, used to strike a person.

Latex - is a clinging, shiny fabric and is the subject of a significant fetish with many devotees.

Leather - is one of the most basic and widely known fetishes in the BDSM scene. Leather skirts, leather chaps, leather harnesses, leather cuffs, leather paddles, the list is endless.

Leather Bar - A drinking establishment catering to the BDSM community, and usually have strict dress codes for entrance.

Leather Butt - A condition where prolonged, repeated stimulation of a particular part of a person's body, most often pain play involving paddling, caning or striking, so as to leave that part of the body less sensitive.

Leg Irons - A set of locking cuffs, made of iron, fastened together with rivets, with a length of chain about a foot long between them. Designed to be locked around the ankles in such a way that the bound person can still walk, in a slow, shuffling gait, but cannot run.

Lifestyler - is a term used to describe a person who lives a lifestyle, which supports their BDSM inclinations. Sometimes a person who hangs out a lot at BDSM clubs or parties will call himself a 'lifestyler' but others only consider themselves 'lifestylers' if they 'stay in role' as dominant or submissive, master or slave, not just for a night out at a club but full-time, 24-hours a day, seven days a week (or 24/7 as its often called).

Limits - are the boundaries of BDSM activities that we are unwilling to cross, things we don't want to do and places we don't want to go.

Little - One who takes the role of a submissive younger person in age play.

Live-In Slave - is a 'lifestyle' submissive who lives with, and serves, a master or mistress on a full-time basis.

Lunge Whip – A specific type of whip consisting of a handle attached to a long, flexible shaft, often made of fibreglass and typically 65 inches long, with a single long, narrow lash.

M

Manacles – Any metal cuffs with a length of chain attached, with either connects the cuffs together (as in a pair of handcuffs) or which may be used to affix the cuffs to a wall or other restraint point.

Marking – marks left on a submissive's body as a result or punishment, for example whipping or caning. Sometimes viewed by submissives as a badge of pride but can also be a major embarrassment if unwanted.

Martinet – A specific type of whip consisting of a short, rigid handle with many short leather lashes, each of which is square in cross-section.

Martymachlia – Sexual arousal from being watched during sex.

Masochist – someone who derives pleasure, especially sexual pleasure, from pain or humiliation. The word comes from the name of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1839-95) the Austrian writer (and masochist) who described what he enjoyed so well in his novel, "Venus in Furs".

Master - the Oxford English Dictionary describes a 'master' as 'a person who has dominance over others' or 'a skilled practitioner of a particular art'. Those two concepts, dominance and skill, are brought together in the use of the word 'Master' in a BDSM context. The title may sometimes be used within a D/s relationship as a loving tribute by a submissive to the skill of her partner or it may define a relationship in which the submissive sees herself as a 'slave' who is owned by her 'master'. Essentially though the word describes how someone else regards you, not how you regard yourself.

Mastigothyma – Sexual arousal from being flogged.

Medical Fetish - refers to a collection of sexual fetishes for objects, practices, environments, and situations of a medical or clinical nature. This may include the sexual attraction to medical practitioners, medical uniforms, surgery, anaesthesia or intimate examinations such as rectal examinations, gynaecological examinations, rectal temperature taking, catheterisation, enemas, injections, the insertion of suppositories, menstrual cups and prostatic massage; or medical devices such as orthopaedic casts and braces. Also, the field of dentistry and objects such as dental braces, retainers or headgear and medical gags. Within BDSM culture, a *medical scene* is a term used to describe the form of role-play in which specific or general medical fetishes are pandered to in an individual or acted out between partners.

Menthol Play - is a form of erotic play in which menthol products are used on sensitive areas of the body to produce intense stimulation. Cough drops or toothpaste containing menthol can be used to spice up fellatio (cock sucking) or cunnilingus (pussy licking). Arthritis creams and sprays (e.g. Ben Gay) which contain menthol can also be used to make male masturbation more intense, but are generally much too strong to be tolerated on the sensitive internal mucous membrane of the anus or vagina. This kind of play needs to be treated with care because it can also cause intense discomfort.

Military Play – A specific form of role-play involving military style settings, uniforms, hierarchy and protocols.

Milking – The practice of stimulating the male prostate and or perineum, often with a finger, in such a way as to produce ejaculation without orgasm.

Mind Bondage - is a kind of bondage in which the submissive is restrained simply by the dominant describing to her how she is tied up or by telling her to stay in position. No 'real' bondage is involved.

Mind Play - is psychological manipulation by the dominant intended to intensify the erotic or emotional response of the submissive through heightened anticipation and fear. It may be good or bad, depending on the circumstances and motive. Also known as head games, head trips, or mind fucking.

Mistress - a female dominant

Mommy - a dominant, usually but not always female, who adopts a maternal role when relating to a submissive.

Mouth Bit – Any style of gag, with a long, cylindrical shaped bit, usually made of soft rubber or latex, in place of a ball.

Mouth bits may include an integrated harness; such bits are often used in pony play.

Mouth Gag – A dental instrument designed to hold the mouth open for long periods of time, sometimes used as a gag in BDSM play.

Mummification - is a very tight and constricting kind of bondage in which the person is completely (or nearly so) wrapped in restrictive material such as bandages, cling-film, rubber or a special bag designed for this purpose.

Munch - a term used to describe informal meetings run by BDSM clubs and organisations in safe, social settings such as a group lunch or 'munch' at a public restaurant, where kinky people can make new acquaintances or socialise with old friends in a low-key, pressure-free "vanilla" setting.

N

Necrophilia - is sexual intercourse with, or attraction towards, corpses.

Needle Play – Activity involving placing needles through the top layer of skin, or using needles for temporary piercings.

Negotiation - is the art of reaching a clear agreement with your partner about the sort of play-session or relationship you want and the things you will do together. Arguably one of the most important BDSM skills.

Newbie – A newcomer to the BDSM scene.

New Leather – Anything of or related to a specific part of the BDSM community which began taking the place of the old leather community in the late 1980's to the early 1990's. The new leather community abandoned many of the rigid hierarchies and strict protocols of the old community.

Nipple Clamps - may be purpose made or improvised from everyday things like clothespins or crocodile-clips and are applied, as the name suggests, to the nipples.

Nipple Torture (Play) - because nipples are so sensitive and erogenous they are a prime target for teasing and torment in a variety of ways, including the use of nipple clamps, hot wax, or whipping.

Non-consensual - if the motto of good BDSM is 'safe, sane, and consensual' then it follows that any BDSM activity, which is genuinely non-consensual, is to be avoided. The reality of non-consensual action is that it is abuse and not BDSM.

Nostril Hook/ Strap - most commonly favoured in Japanese BDSM, the nostril strap is made usually of bent wire with a string attached. The wire ends hook into the nostrils producing eye-watering pain if the string is pulled.

Novice - is someone new to BDSM who lacks experience

Nullification – Sexual arousal from the act of amputation.

O

O (The Story of O) - was an influential novel about sado-masochism written by Pauline Reage in the 1950's. It tells the story of 'O', a French woman who is taken by her lover Rene to a chateau called 'Roissy' on the edge of Paris where she is systematically subjugated and moulded into a willing slave through sexual assaults, regular whippings, and long hours in solitude.

Objectification – Sexual arousal from any act in which one person is dehumanised or dehumanises another.

Odalisque – A female sex slave.

Old Leather – Anything of or related to the gay male BDSM community, which was most popular between 1960 and the late 1980's. It was characterised by a very rigid and structured hierarchy, elaborate codes of conduct, ritualised protocol and a strong sense of community, duty and loyalty.

Orgasm Control/ Denial – The practice whereby one person is not permitted to reach sexual orgasm without the permission of another person, or for a set period of time, even though that person may be permitted or required to engage in sexual activity or sex.

Oriental Bondage (Japanese bondage) - is an elaborate, and to some beautiful, rope bondage developed in the Orient where it was originally used as a torture technique. It combines the usual bondage-effect of helplessness with aesthetic beauty and in some cases an intense erotic massage (caused by the pressure of the ropes and knots) that's similar to acupuncture techniques and traditional Japanese shiatsu massage.

Orientation Play – Any activity in which a person is ordered or instructed to engage in sexual activity with another person, whose sex is not appropriate for the first person's sexual orientation or identity, i.e. forcing a bi-sexual experience, when one is not into it.

OTK or Over-the-Knee - is a popular and well-known position for spanking, where the person being spanked lays facedown across the lap of the spanker.

Overseer's Whip – A type of singletail, usually about six feet long and having a braided lash, but without a rigid handle. Very similar to a bullwhip.

P

Paddle (padding) - a spanking implement intended to be used on the buttocks. Paddles are traditionally made of wood but variations include leather paddles, usually with a rigid spine made of steel or fibreglass, and wooden paddles with holes drilled in them to reduce wind resistance when the paddle is swung and produce a harder contact. Any relatively rigid, flat object such as a hairbrush or ping-pong paddle can also be used as a paddle.

Pain Play – Any activity in which one person inflicts pain on a consenting partner, for the pleasure of one or more of the people involved.

Pain Slut - a 'pain slut' is a masochist who enjoys and seeks out pain for its own sake.

Panic Snap – A specific type of carabinder designed in such a way that the mechanism can be opened to release a rope or chain, even if a full weight is bearing down on it.

Pansexual - means not limited or inhibited in sexual choice by gender or activity; a sexuality that has many different forms, objects, and outlets. Often used to describe groups, which embrace all gender and sexual orientations.

Parachute – A small leather cone with a hole in its centre, which is often used in genital torture. The parachute is wrapped around the scrotum, and weights are suspended from it, pulling on the scrotum and compressing the testicles.

Percussion – Any form of impact play involving the striking with a blunt or fairly heavy instrument.

Pervert - is a person whose sexual behaviour is regarded as unacceptable or abnormal. Often used by self-appointed moralists to describe those whose odd sexual tastes differ from their own odd sexual tastes.

Pervertible – Any object which serves an ordinary and prosaic function, but which also has a use in BDSM activities, i.e. clothespegs used for nipple torture, cling wrap used for mummification etc.

Piercing - involves penetrating the flesh, either temporarily or on a more permanent basis. In play piercing, needles are used only for the duration of the play in different areas of the body. Permanent piercings, for decorative or erotic purposes, may be done in the nipple, tongue, nostril, eyebrow, ear, lips, scrotum, penis, the inner and outer labia, or the hood of the clitoris. Metal rings and studs are usually inserted into the piercings, and sometimes thin chains are attached to nipple or genital rings during BDSM play to 'lead' and control a submissive.

Pillory - is a set of stocks mounted on an upright piece of wood, which imprison the head and hands obliging the prisoner to stand bent over in an uncomfortable position.

Play - consensual BDSM activity, which may or may not have an agreed sexual component. The sado-masochistic things two or more people do together in 'play' might range from a light spanking through erotic torture to pretty much anything else you can imagine. A 'playroom' is a safe and secure room specially set up for SM play, which might be equipped with restraints, mirrors, whips, paddles, whipping posts and benches, or whatever else you fancy. BDSM 'play' is also called a 'scene' or 'sceneing'.

Play Party – A social gathering whereby all invited have the opportunity to participate in BDSM activities.

Playroom - is a safe and secure room specially set up for SM play, which might be equipped with restraints, mirrors, whips, paddles, whipping posts and benches, or whatever else you fancy.

Polyamorous - means "loving more than one". The love may be sexual, emotional, spiritual, or any combination thereof, according to the desires and agreements of the people involved. "Polyamorous" is also used as a descriptive term for people who are open to more than one relationship even if they are not currently involved in more than one.

Pony-Play - is a distinct sub-culture within BDSM. A ponygirl (or ponyboy) engages in role-play involving assuming the role of a 'pony' and being 'trained' by a dominant. Typically the human 'pony' is required to wear a harness and reins while performing actions that a real pony would perform, such as running on a lunge line, pulling a cart, carrying a rider or being groomed, inspected and shown.

Popper – A vial of amyl nitrate or similar high-volatility organic nitrate compound, whose vapours produce euphoria and sometimes heightened sexual sensation when inhaled.

Position Training - is training a submissive to adopt a certain position on command or under certain circumstances. Some BDSM sub-cultures, for example the Goreans, are more into this than others and have quite elaborate requirements.

Posture Collar – A specific type of high, rigid collar, often shaped to the wearer's neck, which prevents the wearer from moving his or her neck and forces the wearer to hold his or her head high.

Power Exchange - is a term used to describe a submissive granting a dominant power over her. The degree of power granted may be very limited, absolute, or anywhere in between. This 'power-exchange' forms the basis of most short-term BDSM play sessions and longer term D/s relationships. The dominant, in accepting the power, which is offered, should also accept responsibilities towards the submissive, which will include not abusing that power.

Prodomme – A female dominant who earns money by dominating her clients.

Protocol – Any defined, enforced code of conduct of behaviour which a submissive is expected to abide by. Protocols often impose constraints and limits on the submissive's behaviour.

Pump Gag – A type of gag consisting of a blunt, rounded or penis-shaped rubber bladder, which is placed in the mouth and can then be inflated with air by means of a hand pump.

Punishment Tie – Any form of bondage done in such a way that the bound person's pose of the bondage itself is painful or uncomfortable.

Puppy Play – An activity in which the submissive takes on the role of a puppy, as by barking, walking on all fours, in sleeping in a kennel or doghouse.

Pussy Torture - the female equivalent of 'cock and ball' torture. In this case clamping, whipping, or other ways of inflicting pain are focussed on the female genitalia.

PVC (Poly Vinyl Chloride) - is a thin, shiny plastic material often used for fetish clothes.

Q

Queening – A practice whereby a female dominant sits on the face of a submissive, who is often restrained, forcing the submissive to give her oral sex. Sometimes may also include breath control.

Queening Stool – A low stool, with a large round opening in the bottom, used for queening. The queening stool is placed over the face of the prone submissive, allowing the female dominant seated on the stool to receive oral sex from the submissive.

Quirt - a flexible, leather-riding crop favoured by cowboys.

R

Rack – Any type of bondage furniture consisting of a framework or platform to which a person may be bound. Derived from a Medieval implement consisting of a platform and a wheeled mechanism designed to stretch or pull the person bound to it.

Rape Play – A form of role play in which one person stages a mock “rape” for the purpose of gratification of all the people involved.

Resistance Play – Any mutually consensual activity in which one person struggles against another and is subdued by “force”

Rigger – A person who specialises in tying up others, often using elaborate Japanese bondage, primarily as an art form rather than for sexual gratification.

Rimming - A slang expression for anilingus (anal-oral sex)

Ring Gag – A specific type of gag consisting of a metal ring, often padded with leather, which has a strap attached to it. The ring is placed in the mouth in such a way as to hold the mouth open, and the strap secures it in place.

Risk Aware Consensual Kink (RACK) – A loosely defined code of conduct in the BDSM community which holds that a given activity is ethically acceptable between adults as long as everyone involved is aware of the risks, and gives informed consent to that activity.

Role-Play - adopting a different persona for the purpose of acting out sexual fantasies. Examples could be the stern schoolmaster and the naughty schoolgirl, the mistress and her slave, the torturer and his victim, doctor and nurse, priest and penitent, Batman and Robin, or whatever turns you on.

Roissy - A fictitious chateau featured in the novel 'Histoire d'O' (The story of O) where the heroine, 'O', was first introduced to sadomasochism and enslaved. Sometimes used as a code word to indicate S/M

S

Sadist - a person who derives pleasure, especially sexual gratification, from inflicting pain, suffering or humiliation on others. The word comes from the name of Donatien Alphonse Francois, comte de Sade, known as the Marquis de Sade (1740 - 1814). He was the author of several sexually explicit works which explored the darker side of sexuality and for which he spent much of his life imprisoned.

Sadomasochism – Any activity or practice involving the infliction and receiving of pain.

Safe Call – A practice sometimes used as a safety measure when meeting a new partner for the first time. The safe call is a prearranged telephone call made to a trusted friend at a specific time to let that friend know that everything is okay.

Safewords (safe signals) - are pre-arranged words or signals that can be used by a submissive in BDSM play to slow down or stop the action.

Safe, Sane and Consensual - a phrase commonly used to encapsulate the best principles of BDSM activity. It must be safe; you must not put people at emotional or physical risk. It must be sane; BDSM play is not the place to play out your neuroses because, in doing so, you can hurt people. It must be consensual; anything done to a person without their consent shows at best a lack of respect and more often is abusive. Good guiding principles.

Safe Sex - is sex which does not impair the physical or emotional health of either partner, and involves precautions like wearing condoms, using dental dams, being careful to protect yourself against blood, not taking part in any risky BDSM activities unless you know exactly what you're doing and have your partners informed consent, and avoiding risky BDSM activities if you've been drinking or taking drugs.

Scarfig – Breath control by means of using a scarf or scarf-like object as a ligature around the neck.

Scat - is play involving faeces (shit); eating it, smearing it over things, being shit upon, etc.

Scene (sceneing) - BDSM activity between two or more people. Used as a noun, 'scene' is often used to describe the whole BDSM community or the many aspects of it you might come across, like 'scene parties' or 'scene clubs'. It can also be used to describe an individual BDSM session, as in "I had a great scene with her last night". It can also be used as a verb, as in "do you want to scene with me", meaning do you want to have a BDSM session with me, or "she spends her life sceneing". Used in this way, it is synonymous with the word 'play'.

Scold's Bridle – A lockable metal cage which encloses the head, with an integrated metal protrusion which goes into the wearer's mouth, preventing speech.

Scourge – A specific type of flogger, which usually has two or three long, heavy lashes, attached to a rigid handle.

Self-Bondage – The act or practice of tying one's self up, sometimes as a part of masturbation. Often includes some mechanism by which the person may be freed after a set amount of time.

Sensation Play – Any BDSM activity involving creating unusual sensations on a person, who may be blindfolded, as with ice cubes, soft fur or cloth etc. Sensation play is milder than pain play and may or may not include an element of power exchange.

Service D/s – A specific type of D/s centred around the submissive serving the dominant in practical ways, i.e. bringing the dominant food or drink. Sexual submission may or may not be a part of the relationship.

Session – Most often used to indicate a scene with a prodomme.

Shibari – A type of Japanese bondage, characterised by extremely elaborate and intricate patterns of rope, often used to both restrain the subject and to stimulate the subject by binding and compressing the breasts and/ or genitals.

Shinju – A type of Japanese rope harness, which goes around and over the breasts. A shinju does not restrict motion, and can be worn under clothes. As the subject moves, the ropes shift against the breasts, providing constant stimulation.

Single Whip – A type of singletail, usually three to four feet in length.

Slapper – An implement used for striking a person, consisting of two thick leather paddles bound together at the handle, such that when the person is struck, the two paddles hit one another, creating a loud sound.

Slave - in its traditional meaning is a person who is the legal property of another and is therefore forced to obey them. In BDSM, someone may adopt the role of slave for the duration of a 'scene' or play-session or they may enter into a long-term, structured D/s relationship in which they are owned as a 'slave' by a dominant 'master'. The word 'slave' is also used fairly interchangeably with 'submissive' by some, although the words in fact have different meanings. Every slave is submissive, but every submissive is not a slave.

Slave Contract - is a formal document, which may be agreed between a 'master' and his 'slave', setting out the nature and limits of their relationship.

Sling – An item of furniture, usually made of leather, canvass or nylon webbing, suspended by chains or cables from the ceiling. A person may sit in the sling and be arranged for easy accessibility to such activities as sexual intercourse.

Smotherbox – A lockable box, often padded with leather, designed to be locked over the head of the submissive and used for queening. The smotherbox contains a large opening which exposes the submissive's face, allowing the dominant to straddle or sit on the box.

Soft Limit – A limit which is not necessarily set in stone, but which may be flexible or may change over time.

Sound – A thin, solid metal rod designed to be inserted in the urethra, often as part of a medical role-play.

Spanking - involves striking your partners buttocks with your hand or a sometimes a flat implement like a hairbrush or paddle. The most common position for spanking is 'OTK', or 'Over The Knee'.

Spanking Bench – A low bench, often padded and equipped with restraints or tie-down points, over which a person can be bent or tied and spanked or flogged.

Speculum – A medical instrument commonly consisting of two or occasionally three probes designed to be inserted into the vagina or the anus, together with a mechanism intended to spread the probes apart, opening the vagina or anus. Sometimes used in medical role-play scenes.

Spencer Paddle – A specific type of oblong wooden paddle. It has a rounded end, and has a number of holes drilled in the striking surface.

Spread-eagle – A posture in which a person is bound or restrained with the legs spread apart and the arms spread wide with the hands over the person's head.

Spreader Bar - a bondage device, the spreader is a rigid bar of varying lengths, attached at the ends either to the wrists or ankles, which keeps the arms or legs apart and renders the submissive helpless.

Squick – A feeling of disgust, repulsion or similar negative emotional reaction to the idea of an activity which does not appeal to someone.

St Andrews Cross - is an X-shaped crucifixion device usually made of wood. The submissive is tied or chained to the cross, either facing towards or away from it, depending on what you intend to do with her.

Sting – A sensation of quick, sharp pain.

Stock – A device used for bondage consisting of a vertical wooden post or a wooden frame atop which is set two heavy wood planks, which close around a person's neck and wrists.

Straitjacket – A heavy jacket, often made of canvas, whose sleeves end in long straps, which are wrapped around the jacket and buckled in place. A person confined in a straitjacket has very little freedom of motion.

Strap – An implement used for striking a person, consisting of a long, flat piece of heavy leather.

Strap-in – A dildo designed to penetrate a person either vaginally or anally and then held in place by a strap or a harness. Is sometimes equipped with a lock to prevent it from being removed.

Strap-on – A dildo attached to straps, or harness designed to be worn around the waist.

Sub Frenzy – A very strong, overwhelming desire to find a dominant partner or to become immersed in BDSM related activities. Sometimes seen in people who identify strongly as submissive.

Submissive - is a person of either gender who submits to the will of a dominant, either for limited BDSM play or within a longer-term relationship.

Submit – To give up power or control to another.

Sub Space – is a blissful and euphoric state reported by some submissives during BDSM play. Also called 'bottom-space', 'flying' or an 'endorphin-high'

Suction Cups - are cups, which are placed over the breasts to create a partial vacuum inside, sometimes assisted by pumps. The tissue inside becomes engorged with blood and expands, increasing its sensitivity.

Sukuranbo – A type of Japanese rope harness which wraps around the buttocks and upper thighs and passes between the legs and over the genitals. This type of bondage does not restrict movement, and can be worn under clothes. As the wearer walks and moves, the ropes stimulate the genital area.

Suspension Bondage - is an advanced bondage technique in which the submissive is 'suspended' off the ground by means of ropes or other restraints.

Suspension Bar – A short bar (straight or slightly curved), often made of metal, with a mounting point in the centre and additional mounting points designed for rope, chain or suspension cuffs on each end. A person is bound to the suspension bar, which is hung from an overhead point by means of cables and/ or a pulley system. The bar is then raised or lowered.

Suspension Cuffs – Any restraints designed to encircle the wrists, ankles, hands or feet in such a way as to distribute the wearer's weight so that the wearer may be partially or completely suspended from the cuffs.

Suspension Frame – Any frame, rack, or similar structure designed for the purpose of suspension.

Suturing – The practice of temporarily suturing someone or parts of their body, particularly the genitals, for sexual gratification.

Switch - is the name for a person who enjoys both the submissive and dominant roles at different times.

Sybian – One popular variety of commercially available fucking machine consisting of a dildo affixed to a dome-shaped saddle which the user sits on.

T

Taylor Hammer – A common medical instrument consisting of a triangular rubber hammer attached to a metal handle, used for testing reflexes by tapping a person just below the knee.

Tawse – An instrument used for striking or whipping a person, consisting of a thick, heavy, leather strap which splits into two or three parallel tails at the striking end.

Teledildonics – Relating to any form of sex toy or fucking machine designed to be operated remotely.

Tens Unit – An electrical device that applies electrical signals through pads affixed to the skin, in the anus and vagina and around the male genital area. Used in BDSM as a form of electrical play. It can have an effect ranging from a mild tingle to a very strong sensation, depending on how it is used.

Thud – A sensation of a dull, heavy impact felt during forms of corporal punishment.

Top - a 'top' gives the pain or sensation, which a 'bottom' wishes to receive, so for example in a spanking the 'top' will administer the spanking and the 'bottom' will be spanked. The word can also be used as a verb (as in 'topping' someone, meaning to give them pain or sensation). The words 'top' and 'bottom' are often used interchangeably with 'dominant' and 'submissive' but they are not synonymous. In relations between a dominant and a submissive there is always an exchange of power, where the submissive agrees to submit to the will of the dominant. That same surrender isn't required or implied in a session between a 'top' and a 'bottom'. Others sometimes equate the words to sadist (top) and masochist (bottom).

Top Drop – A sudden, abrupt feeling of depression, unhappiness or other negative emotion in a dominant, which may occur immediately after a period of BDSM activity.

Topping from the Bottom - is a phrase used to describe a 'bottom' or a 'submissive' who tries to control the BDSM play session while seeming to submit.

Total Power Exchange (TPE) – A relationship in which one person surrenders control to another person for an indefinite duration, and in which the relationship is defined by the fact that one person is always dominant and the other is always submissive.

Torture - in BDSM the word is usually used to describe the more severe forms of erotic punishment although what constitutes 'severe' will vary considerably between individuals.

Training (conditioning, slave-training) - is a process whereby the dominant will seek to modify the submissive's behaviour, responses or attitudes by systematic training.

Training Collar – A training collar given to a submissive in the early stages of a BDSM relationship.

Trampling – A practice in which one person lies prone and is stepped or walked on by another.

Transvestite (cross-dresser, TV, tranny) - is someone who likes to dress in the clothes of the opposite sex. Male transvestites differ from transsexuals in that they desire to dress and occasionally act as women, but do not consider themselves as women or even want to be. "Crossdresser" is generally the preferred term of those who participate in this behaviour.

Transsexual - is a person born with the physical characteristics of one sex, who emotionally and psychologically feels they belong to the other sex. Some are able to live their lives in the condition they were born, but others feel so uncomfortable that they seek to change their sex through medical intervention.

Triple Weave - A flashy flogging technique involving the use of a flogger in each hand. The floggers are swung in an alternating overhand/ underhand pattern; each flogger moves in a circle on each side of the wielder's body.

Tweezer Clamps - A type of nipple clamp consisting of long, thin, tweezer-like clamps made of flexible spring steel, with a ring which can be used to adjust their tightness.

U

Ugol's Law - A law which holds that if there's some kink you have or something turns you on, no matter how strange or bizarre it may be, you're not the only one who has that kink.

Utility D/s - A specific type of D/s centred on using the submissive in utilitarian capacities i.e. a submissive kneels and acts as a table for the dominant to eat from.

V

Vampire Gloves - are thin leather gloves, which have sharp metal tacks or points on the fingers and/or palms. The length and sharpness of the points depends on your degree of sadism.

Vanilla - implying 'bland' or 'flavourless', is a term used to describe non-BDSM sex or people. So for example you might hear someone saying they have a 'vanilla partner' (someone not into BDSM) or that they had 'vanilla sex' (sex not involving BDSM).

Verbal Bondage - is an imaginative form of bondage and is sometimes helpful in training submissives. It involves putting your sub into some suitable position (hands-on-head or kneeling for example) and then ordering them not to move on pain of your displeasure or punishment. The only thing binding them is your command and their desire to submit.

Violet Wand - is a device used for administering mild electric shocks. They generally have a glass bulb or globe at one end and use a high-frequency circuit, similar to a Tesla coil, to build up a static charge in the glass part, making it glow violet. Static sparks jump to the skin, with an associated "sizzle" and mild shock. As current doesn't pass through the body these wands are pretty safe.

Virtual D/s - is a term often used to describe the relatively recent phenomenon of D/s relationships that take place on the internet rather than in 'real-life'. Also used in 'Virtual Sex', 'Virtual Scene', or 'Virtual D/s'.

Voyeur - One who is excited or aroused by watching others, particularly in a sexual context.

Voyeurism - The act of engaging in voyeuristic behaviour.

W

Wannabe - A disparaging term for a person, usually a self-identified dominant, who is inexperienced yet, assumes knowledge or experience far exceeding his or her actual degree of expertise.

Wartenberg Wheel - is a device for pricking people, originally used by doctors to test nerve responses. It consists of a metal handle with a free-spinning, metal pinwheel attached to one end. The 'pins' are generally sharp enough to feel 'prickly' but aren't intended to break the skin. Holding the handle in your hand you roll the wheel over a person's skin, creating the sensation of countless tiny pinpricks.

Wax Play (Wax Torture) - involves dripping hot candlewax onto the skin of a submissive. Soft, plain white candles are

safest. Avoid coloured or beeswax candles, which have a higher melting point and can burn.

Water Sports - peeing on your partner or having them piss on you. Also called 'golden showers'

Weights - are sometimes added to clamps attached to nipples or genitals to increase the sensation. They can be custom made or improvised, for example the lead weights used for fishing.

Whips - fall broadly into two main groups. The first includes all single-thonged whips, such as blacksnake whips, buggy whips, and bullwhips. They range in size from around 3 -12 feet. All will produce an intense burning sensation while the larger ones, if used injudiciously, can cut skin like a knife. The second main group is the multi-thonged whips, which includes a wide range of implements like the cat 'o' nine tails, two-tailed quirts, and other softer 'floggers'.

Whipping Post – A fixed upright post, often made of wood and secured at the base so as to be immobile, to which a person may be bound and whipped and flogged.

WIITWD – An acronym meaning "what it is that we do" – a shorthand for the entire spectrum of BDSM related activities.

Wooden Horse – An implement consisting of a wooden plank supported edgewise between two upright fixed posts, or of two sheets of wood coming together at a sharp angle with the edge facing up, to which a female submissive is bound with her legs off the floor. The submissive is bound in such a way that she straddles the plank or the point of the triangle, causing her entire body weight to rest on her clitoris. Some wooden horses included an integrated dildo for penetration.

Wooden Pony – An implement consisting of a wooden plank supported edgewise between two upright fixed posts, which a submissive straddles and is bound in place. The plank is at such a height that the submissive's weight is not borne by the plank so long as she remains on her toes.

X

No entries.

Y

Yoke – A restraint device consisting of a metal bar or wooden plank, with a locking cuff for the wrist on each end and a locking collar in the middle.

Z

Zip Strip – An arrangement of clothespegs tied along a length of cord or twine, which can be placed on the body and then yanked off one by one or all at once.