

BDSM Basics: 5 Things to Know About BDSM Dungeons and Play Parties

BY [KAYLA LORDS](#) · OCTOBER 23, 2019

Not every kinky person will venture out of their bedroom to play in a BDSM dungeon or attend a private play party. But those who do often have a lot of questions, concerns, and fears about the process. It's not unusual to wonder what the rules are, how you're supposed to behave, and what you're supposed to do while you're there.

So, let's break it down into five things to keep in mind when you're ready to visit a dungeon or go to a play party. *(If you prefer to watch rather than read, scroll to the end for the video version of this post.)*

Follow the rules

If you're not immediately told what the rules are when you arrive at the dungeon or play party, ask what they are. And if there are no rules, be very, very careful. Whatever is laid out by the host or dungeon owner, follow them to the letter. They're meant to keep everyone safe. Not following them can get you kicked out for the night or banned for life.

Every dungeon or party will have its own rules but a few seem to be most common:

- Always get consent.
- No penetration (alternatively, they may say "no body fluids" but the penetration is okay)
- Clean up the equipment when you're done
- Time limits for using equipment
- House safe words
- Who to go to if there's a problem?

Never interrupt a scene

At a dungeon or party, you're likely to see kinksters playing in ways you've never even considered before. Some will seem extreme. Others will be fascinating. You may have questions or even concerns. No matter what you see or how you feel about it, NEVER interrupt a scene. Doing so not only kills the moment for the people playing, but it can cause injury if the top misses their mark or loses focus.

If you want to know more, approach them when their scene and [aftercare](#) are over. If you're concerned, look for the dungeon monitor or party host to share your concerns.

When in doubt, find a dungeon monitor

Can't remember a rule? Ask a dungeon monitor (DM). Is someone coming on too strong and crossing boundaries with you? Find a DM. Freaked out by that really rough scene you just saw? Talk to a dungeon

monitor to make sure it's safe. *(Pro tip: if you're playing in a really rough or risky way, warn the host or DM before you start so they're aware of what's going on).*

Sometimes there's no official DM to talk to. You might be at a small club or a private party. Find the person in charge or, at the very least, the person you talked to when you arrived. And if you don't know who to talk to, ask. If there's no one acting as a DM (even in a small way) be very concerned about the space you're in.

Playing isn't required

Believe it or not, you're not required to get kinky at a BDSM dungeon or play party. Others might encourage or cajole you, but only you get to decide if you're comfortable scening in this space. Plenty of people attend events to watch — whether to learn or because they're voyeurs. Others go to socialize instead.

Don't let anyone try to convince you that it's required or "good manners" to play. It's completely your choice whether you will or won't. And if you're new and uncertain, it's a good idea to spend your time at the dungeon or party getting comfortable, asking questions, and meeting people instead.

Yes, people are watching, but focus on your partner

Some people never play in public because they can't ignore all the eyes on them. That's probably the best way to handle it if you know you feel that way. Because when you get kinky in semi-public, you need to be able to focus on your partner. There are people who can play to the crowd and take care of their partner, but it's a skill that has to be honed over the years — and few manage it.

For you, the relative newbie to scening at a BDSM dungeon, the only person who matters is the one you're playing with at that moment. Do not turn around in mid-scene to answer a question. Ignore (as best you can) the conversations going on around you. Don't worry about how many people are watching. Give your partner all of your time, attention, and energy. It'll be a better scene when you do — and a safer one.

<https://lovingbdsm.kaylalords.com/2019/10/23/bdsm-basics-dungeons/?fbclid=IwAR2RIWDRYzDktS-VInt0NirGUBS7Qall-rlubpG-Y7X6y9fLxokvD3JGWhM>

How to Play in Public and Private BDSM Dungeons

BY RARA · PUBLISHED OCTOBER 22, 2018 · UPDATED OCTOBER 29, 2018

BDSM Dungeon. Those words cause many a kinkster to shiver, some out of excitement and some out of fear. If you have never been to a dungeon, it can seem intimidating. You are probably picturing a place full of sin, wantonness, wickedness and more. You could have a [flogging scene](#) happening in one corner and someone screaming in pleasure in another corner. Someone could be walking around, leading their partner who is on a leash and collar. While all of those things may be happening, you will also see people just standing around catching up with friends.

How should you act? The answers may very well depend on if you are at a public dungeon or a private dungeon. There are definite etiquette rules that you should follow at any type of dungeon, but there are also subtle differences between public and private play spaces that you should be prepared to navigate.

Consent

[Consent is the cornerstone of BDSM](#). It's given before you touch, whether it's a person or their toys. In a public play space, people are very careful about getting consent for everything. Imagine you are surrounded by strangers; you do not want them touching you or your things without your permission.

In a private dungeon, consent is still an important part of the BDSM lifestyle but it's a lot more subtle. The parties I throw in my dungeon average 45 people, most of whom know each other well. They are friends and many have scened together. So, you will see a lot of touching, even hitting, where no consent seems to have been given. You will see tops picking up toys belonging to other tops without asking permission. What you won't see is anyone getting upset or angry, because these friends have blanket permission to touch.

Keep in mind that if you are new to the group, that the permission does not extend to you.

Talking During Scenes

In a public dungeon, etiquette demands that you watch scenes from a distance and do not talk to those involved in the scene. If you want to socialize there are areas in every club meant just for that. If you're watching a scene but want to say something to your friend next to you – get in their ear and whisper. Keep the conversation to a minimum. In a private dungeon, you may still have couples participating in scenes who prefer to not chat, but you are just as likely to find a lot of discussion between scene participants and onlookers.

In a private dungeon, you are more likely to see interactions during scenes. The guests are all usually good friends and may banter with each other as scenes are going. The important thing to remember is that the bantering is happening because of the relationships that are already established. If you are new to the group or the private dungeon, this is not an invitation for you to automatically participate. Watch the interactions, see if the people in the scene are speaking to only a select few or are inviting other audience members to speak, then use your best judgment.

Dungeon Monitors

A Dungeon Monitor (sometimes referred to as a DM) is a person charged with supervising a play space (or “dungeon”). The primary responsibility of a Dungeon Monitor is to ensure the physical safety of all participants engaging in BDSM play. These people may be of any sex and can identify as any role (dominant, submissive, or switch), but while on duty their authority is absolute. If a Dungeon Monitor orders a **play scene to stop**, it must be stopped immediately. They often wear a special uniform, hat or armband, so they are more easily identifiable.

In a private dungeon, more often than not, the host is the dungeon monitor though they may also assign a close friend to serve in that capacity. The responsibility of a dungeon monitor is the same whether in a public or private dungeon. However, because participants in a private dungeon know each other well, the DM’s may appear more lenient. The familiarity allows the DM’s to better understand participants skill levels and boundaries.

Entrance Fees

At a public dungeon, there is usually a fee for entry into an event. In addition, many dungeons require you to be a member before attending any events. Private dungeons may or may not charge an entrance fee. They may also ask that you bring food or beverages to share with other party guests.

And while membership of some type is typically not required at private play spaces, guests may need to go through a vetting process before they are allowed to attend an event.

Equipment

Public dungeons usually have a wide variety of equipment and multiple items of the same piece while private dungeons to be more limited in options. Therefore, being considerate of your fellow guests is essential. Be aware of the amount of time you are spending on a particular piece of equipment because there are likely others who are waiting for their turn.

Also, because private dungeons are typically smaller than public spaces, you may want to limit the amount of toys you bring to play with. Don’t plan on bringing your entire arsenal. Instead, plan out your scene in advance so that you bring only the implements you believe you will use that night.

Ultimately whether you are at a public or private dungeon, you need to be respectful of house and playspace rules, especially in a private dungeon which is often someone’s home. If you have questions as to what those rules are, don’t hesitate to ask the host. This way everyone will have a fun and enjoyable time.

<https://lovingbdsm.kaylalords.com/2018/10/22/how-to-play-public-and-private-bdsm-dungeons/>

What to Expect at the BDSM Dungeon When You're New?

by [Kayla Lords](#)

The first time I went to a BDSM dungeon, my biggest fear was making myself look silly. Here I was, eyes wide, mouth agape, staring at things I'd only ever read about.

Is that a St. Andrew's Cross in the corner? It's bigger than I thought it would be.

That looks like a swing set with no swings. Ohhhh, it's a rope suspension bar.

*And does that woman have her **boobs** out on display? People really do get naked here!*

Those are just the initial impressions I remember from that first time. But much more went on.

When John Brownstone asked for a cup of water, I had to navigate a red cup versus blue cup situation (one was for Dominants, the other for submissives). And then chant, "Please don't spill" in my head over and over again until I delivered it safely to him.

When he was ready to collar me (play collar, y'all), I knelt on a cold, cement floor in front of strangers. They weren't watching (nothing new to see here, people) but I felt like all eyes were on me.

I couldn't approach anyone and had to let them approach John Brownstone first. There was no eye contact with strangers, especially if there was a chance, they were Dominant. And I'm a nosy girl who stares at people when they think they aren't watching. What if I offended someone? What if I wasn't a good girl?! Ahhh!

So yes, when someone tells me they're "nervous" or "afraid" of the club, I get it. It's hard to be new somewhere. Add kink, nudity, and your perceived "skill" or "level" in this thing we do and the whole thing can make you break out into a sweat.

While every BDSM club or dungeon is a bit different, with their own individual and community quirks and styles, I think there are enough commonalities between them that I can (maybe) put you at ease by giving you an idea of what to expect if you're new.

Sign In

No matter where you go, there will be a sign-in procedure from very formal with forms to fill out and ID to show to a wave of the hand by someone who recognizes you. Everyone does it a little differently. I haven't heard of a club or dungeon yet that doesn't ask for payment at the door, though. They aren't running a charity and electricity costs money, so ask what the entry fee is before you go so you're not surprised.

Cash or card? Don't feel bad about asking, but if you forget, have cash just to be safe.

<https://kaylalords.com/2016/11/what-to-expect-at-the-bdsm-dungeon-when-youre-new/>

A Tour and the Rules

When you're brand new or if it's been a really long time since you were last there (like years, y'all), you should get a tour and a rundown of the rules. Most places post their rules somewhere so you can check them out or refer to them later. If the dungeon doesn't offer a tour, ask for one. This should be a chance to meet the Dungeon Monitor (or DM) for the evening, too. They're the ones who step in if people don't play safe or someone harasses another kinkster. Look to them for help if you need it.

You may attend a dungeon that did all this in an "orientation" before the event. Either way, make sure you get this information early on. Part of safe play is understanding what equipment you have available to you and what the rules are for the club.

Social Area

Kinksters love to socialize. It's not a kink thing, y'all, it's a people thing. The social area might be a separate area of the dungeon or adjacent to where people are getting kinky. You never know until you get there. This is a great place to start (and end) the night. No pressure here, just conversation and the chance to get to know people.

Oh, and don't be surprised if you see food being brought in. Getting your kink on burns a lot of energy. Plus, it's not really a social gathering without food, even if you aren't playing.

The Play Area

Unless it's cordoned off or marked as private, most play areas are open for public viewing. Just because you watch doesn't mean you have to play. And just because you go to the dungeon doesn't mean you have to watch. You can hang out in the social area all night if that's where you want to be. But it is there, and it can be a great way to learn or to get yourself turned on (if you're a little voyeuristic).

Make sure to keep your voice down and never interrupt a scene if you decide to watch.

Get Naked or Don't

Play or don't play, but if you do, don't think you have to get naked. I've got an exhibitionist side, and I feel really comfortable in our dungeon, so I tend to strip down to not a damn thing. But you don't *have* to. Some women keep their bra on. Some men only take off their shirt (women, too). It's all about personal preference. No one should make you feel bad about how you dress (or don't) when you play. If anyone makes you feel uncomfortable, talk to the dungeon monitor.

I can't give you a specific list of exactly what to expect when you get to your local BDSM dungeon. We're all too different for that. But if you've wondered what it's like or are considering going in the future, hopefully this gives you a basic idea of what to expect.

We really do grow in BDSM and in our kinky relationships when we get out into the local community and get to know people. Going to the dungeon doesn't mean you're required to play or take off all your clothes. Go as a learning experience or a social outing and decide *later* if you want it to be more.

Dungeons and Play Parties, Oh My!

<https://lovingbdsm.kaylalords.com/2016/11/18/dungeons-and-play-parties-oh-my-lb063/>

Podcast: (Duration: 1:31:59 — 274.7MB)

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In episode 63, Kayla Lords and John Brownstone discuss the things that happen, what you can expect, and some of the fun you can have at BDSM dungeons and play parties.

In this episode:

- Save five percent on John Brownstone's new favorite lube: The Butters with code "kayla"
- How to find a dungeon or play party
- How to get into one
- All dungeons and parties are a little different but they have a few things in common.
- Dungeons and parties have their own rules.
- Dungeon monitors enforce the rules.
- There are a few common protocols to be aware of when you go.
- You'll see people from every walk of life and every state of dress.
- You don't have to play in public.
- You can always just watch or go to socialize.

Links from the Show:

[The Butters](#) (use code kayla and save!)

<https://getthebutters.com/thebutters/>

[Read my review for The Butters](#)

<https://kaylalords.com/2016/10/a-sunday-morning-fuck-sextoyreview/>

[What to Expect at the BDSM Dungeon When You're New](#)

<https://kaylalords.com/2016/11/what-to-expect-at-the-bdsm-dungeon-when-youre-new/>

[What You Can Expect and Who You'll Meet at a Party](#) (Submissive Guide)

<https://www.submissiveguide.com/fundamentals/articles/entering-the-community-who-youll-meet-and-what-you-can-expect-at-a-play-partybdsm-dungeon>

[7 Ways You Can Play at the Dungeon](#) (Fetish)

<https://www.fetish.com/magazine/bdsm/bdsm-torture-ways-can-play-dungeon/>

[An Insider's Look at the Mysterious World of BDSM Dungeons](#) (Kinkly)

<https://www.kinkly.com/2/10078/sex-tips/bdsm/an-insiders-look-at-the-mysterious-world-of-bdsm-dungeons>