

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VIBRATOR

ooo-la-la!

A vibrator is a toy that is used commonly for self-pleasure but can also be used as a sex toy with a partner. The vibrator can be used on specific regions of the body to produce pleasurable erotic stimulation.

## THE UNDECIDED ORIGINS OF THE VIBRATOR: ?

The historical origins of the vibrator are fraught with uncertainty and divided opinions. This infographic briefly notes the history of both opinions. There is, however, one certainty surrounding the history of the vibrator, the time of its origins. Vibrators have been dated back to the 19th century during the Victorian era. The below follows the differed opinions and how they came to be...

### THEORY #1 - HYSTERIA AND THE VICTORIAN WOMAN:

The end of the 19th century saw the creation of the electric vibrator from a Parisian man named Romain Vigouroux. The vibrator was originally created as a medical instrument to relieve pain and treat other ailments. Yes, you read that right! Vibrators were used to treat, constipation, inflammation and tumours. But most importantly the vibrator was used to treat **hysteria** in women.

Male doctors at the time had the mindset that the current rise in female hysteria could be cured with vibrated stimulation and massaging to the female sexual organs. The feverish woman would be stimulated until 'hysterical paroxysm'

(In modern terms: 'The Big O', 'The Splurge' or more commonly known... 'Orgasm').

Male doctors found the task of manually stimulating these frenzied women extremely tedious. So the idea of a tool that would do the job for them was an epiphany! With the creation of the vibrator, male doctors no longer had tired wrists and exhausted fingers!



### THEORY #2 - MEN, MESSAGES AND FERTILITY:

This theory claims that the vibrator was created as an object to calm and relieve pain in men.

In the same way that massage is used today to calm pain, men used these vibrating massagers to relieve any muscle pain. At some point it was discovered that the new vibrator could potentially aid women in soothing and calming period pains. But before long it made its way into female sexuality.

Unlike reports that Victorians were prudish and did not endeavour in sexual conquest, the female orgasm was actually very important to them! It was closely linked to a satisfactory marriage with sexual satisfaction being linked to the likelihood of pregnancy, something which was crucially important to the Victorians.

There were many other means of stimulation for women, including objects made from rubber, wood, leather and even ivory, but none of them vibrated! Many were hidden in everyday objects that would not cause suspicion like a cane used for walking, or an inconspicuous rubber suction cup.

It was not until the 20th century that vibrators really **came** into their own.

## THE MILESTONES OF THE VIBRATOR:

1878

First vibrator used at the Salpêtrière hospital in Paris.

1883

Vibrators first mentioned in medical books, described as intended use being pain relief and constipation.

1899-1920

Vibrators now marketed for home-use in magazines, alongside household goods and electricals.

1938

A flashlight shaped device was patented, clearly the use was intended as a vibrator.

1966

Jon H. Tavel applied to patent the "Cordless Electric Vibrator for Use on the Human Body". The modern vibrator was born.

1968

The cordless vibrator was patented on March 28th, this followed multi-speed and one-piece construction improvements, making the vibrators cheaper to make and easier to clean.

1998

Sex and the City openly follows the character Charlotte becoming addicted to a *rabbit vibrator*.

2009

Dr. Laura Berman recommends regularly on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* that mothers teach their 15 or 16-year-old daughters to pleasure themselves using a vibrator.

2013

Rechargeable vibrators began to be manufactured.

## A LOT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE VICTORIAN ERA!

Regardless of which academic debate into the vibrators origins you deem more accurate, at the beginning of the 20th century, vibrators had begun to be publicised within magazines for home use alongside other household goods. They were advertised to housewives and mothers for their supposed benefits for health and beauty.

Advertisements like the 'Vibratile' that appeared in McClure's magazine certainly caught the attention of many lonely housewives.

These advertisements disappeared 20 year's later due to the more frequent appearance of vibrators being used by women in pornography.

(Those lonely housewives weren't THAT naughty!)

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIBRATORS:

### CLITORAL VIBRATOR:

Specifically designed to stimulate the woman's clitoris, these toys are the most common and popular vibrators for women. With the discretion of these vibrators, many find them easy to use and store. They do not penetrate like other vibrators, but vibrate on the head area of the toy. Nowadays however some clitoral vibrators also include penetration options.

### RABBIT VIBRATOR:

Rabbit vibrators are also known to some as 'Jack Rabbit Vibrators' or even 'Jessica Rabbit Vibrators'. The toys vibrate and sometimes even rotate, specifically surrounding the clitoral stimulators, which have the aesthetic of *rabbit ears*! This is where the toy gets its name from. Rabbit vibrators are intended to give further pleasure to the user through its process of dual stimulation to both the vagina and the clitoris.

### G-SPOT VIBRATOR:

The G-Spot vibrator is a sex toy that is not specifically restricted to use by women, as men also have a G-Spot area. This type of vibrator is specifically designed to stimulate the G-Spot area, this reportedly heightens sexual arousal. The male version can be used to massage the male prostate for sexual reasons but also for health-related reasons.

### VIBRATING LOVE EGGS:

Vibrating eggs, also known as 'Bullet Vibrators' or 'Love Eggs' are popular for their discretion. They can be placed very subtly in the vagina and that is what makes them so popular. They are not as powerful as normal vibrators there are also Love Eggs that can be remotely operated by another person, adding an element of dominant-play.

## THE HERE AND THE NOW:

It was the 1960s and onwards that really revolutionised the vibrator!

A man named Jon H. Tavel created a patent for the 'Cordless Electric Vibrator: for Use on the Human Body'. This was paramount in the beginning of publically opening up about the modern vibrator, and its use as a personal sexual pleasure product.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the vibrator truly shine! The personal vibrator became visible in mainstream culture, they were seen on programmes like Sex and the City where a character became addicted to a specific brand of vibrator named the Rabbit Vibrator.

2013 saw Rechargeable vibrators come to market as a counter to the environmental impact that was being caused by the battery-operated vibrators.

**SINCE THEN, VIBRATORS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE HOUSEHOLD!  
AND OUR PLEASURE SPOTS!**

This infographic has been researched, written and designed by the team at SXY.CO.UK. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of each point by cross-referencing it with a variety of online sources.

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