

Domestic Violence



What is it?

Domestic violence (also called domestic abuse) includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse in couple relationships or between family members. It is a pattern of behaviour on the part of the abuser designed to control his partner. It can happen at any point in a relationship, including after you have split up.



Anyone forced to change their behaviour because they are frightened of their partner or ex-partner's reaction is experiencing abuse.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of age, background, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity. However, statistics show most domestic abuse is carried out by men and experienced by women.

Domestic abuse is never the fault of the person who is experiencing it.

Domestic abuse is a crime.

Source: <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

Forms of Domestic Violence



Psychological abuse

Includes name-calling, threats and manipulation, blaming you for the abuse or 'gas-lighting' you.

Economic abuse

Controlling your access to money or resources. He might take your wages, stop you working, or put you in debt.

Sexual abuse

Doesn't have to be physical. He might manipulate or coerce you into doing things you don't want to do.

Coercive control

When an abuser uses a pattern of behaviour over time to exert power and control. It is a criminal offence.

Physical abuse

Not only hitting. He might restrain you or throw objects. He might pinch or shove you and claim it's a 'joke'.

Tech abuse

He might send abusive texts, demand access to your devices, track you with spyware, or share images of you online.

Getting help and support

You do not have to wait for an emergency situation to find help. If domestic abuse is happening to you, it's important to tell someone and remember you're not alone.



- Women can call [The Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge](#) on [0808 2000 247](#) for free at any time, day or night. The staff will offer confidential, non-judgemental information and support
- Talk to a doctor, health visitor or midwife
- Men can call [Men's Advice Line](#) on [0808 8010 327](#) (Monday and Wednesday, 9am to 8pm, and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9am to 5pm) for non-judgemental information and support
- Men can also call [ManKind](#) on [0182 3334 244](#) (Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm)
- If you identify as LGBT+ you can call [Galop](#) on [0800 999 5428](#) for emotional and practical support
- Anyone can call [Karma Nirvana](#) on [0800 5999 247](#) (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) for forced marriage and honour crimes. You can also call [020 7008 0151](#) to speak to the GOV.UK [Forced Marriage Unit](#)
- In an emergency, call 999

Helping a friend:

If you're worried a friend is being abused, let them know you've noticed something is wrong. They might not be ready to talk, but try to find quiet times when they can talk if they choose to.

If someone confides in you that they're suffering domestic abuse:

- Listen, and take care not to blame them
- acknowledge it takes strength to talk to someone about experiencing abuse
- give them time to talk, but do not push them to talk if they do not want to
- acknowledge they're in a frightening and difficult situation
- tell them nobody deserves to be threatened or beaten, despite what the abuser has said
- support them as a friend, encourage them to express their feelings, and allow them to make their own decisions
- do not tell them to leave the relationship if they're not ready – that's their decision
- ask if they have suffered physical harm and if they have, offer to go with them to a hospital or GP
- help them report the assault to the police if they choose to
- be ready to provide information about organisations that offer help for people experiencing domestic abuse



Other resources:



NHS: Domestic Violence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOdPLr4zyNU>