This Is the Average Age Teens Are Losing Their Virginity

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First things first: there is no right or wrong age to [lose your virginity](https://www.seventeen.com/love/a30103/things-no-one-tells-you-about-losing-your-virginity/). The only factors that matter when it comes to having sex for the first time is that both YOU and your partner are ready, and you're using protection. And while what you see on [TV and in the movies](https://www.seventeen.com/love/a32755/tv-movie-virginity-lies/) might tell you otherwise, [everyone's first time](https://www.seventeen.com/love/a38521/girls-get-real-about-their-first-time-having-sex/) is SO different. You might see \*fireworks\*, feel totally uncomfortable and anxious, or be in absolute pain. Don't let anybody — your friends or characters on the big screen — dictate what's normal or not normal. It's ALL normal.

Though the decision to have sex is completely up to you, it's also OK to wonder when and how others did it for the first time. While it’s hard to know exactly the average age that people have their first sexual encounter (there isn’t a lot of research on this stat), there are some interesting surveys that suggest a rough average. Earlier this year, [Zava](https://go.redirectingat.com/?id=74968X1525086&xs=1&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.zavamed.com%2Fuk%2Fsexual-journeys.html&sref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.seventeen.com%2Fhealth%2Fsex-health%2Fa24400095%2Faverage-age-losing-virginity-teens%2F%3Fpre%3Dhealth%252Fsex-health%252F%26prefix%3Da%26id%3D24400095%26del%3D%26variantId%3D%26post%3D%252Faverage-age-losing-virginity-teens), an online health consulting service previously known as DrEd, surveyed 500 Europeans and 500 Americans to find out what their "sexual journeys" were like. The study found that the **average age of virginity loss is 17.4**, whereas the **average age of sexual awakening** ("a sudden realization of sexual feelings and urges") **is 15.2**. [Planned Parenthood](https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/teens/sex/virginity) also says that the average age for teens' first time is 17.

While the average age might be 17, according to a recent report by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2018/p0614-yrbs.html), the number of sexually active teens is consistently declining. More teens are putting off sex than ever before. The CDC's 2017 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) shows that**almost 40 percent of U.S. high school students have had sex**, and that number has declined from nearly 48 percent in 20o7. Additionally, about **10 percent of students have had four or more sexual partners in 2017**, compared to almost 15 percent 10 years prior. This is the lowest percentage reported since the CDC began conducting the YBRS in 1991.

But while the percentage of sexually active high schoolers has been on a steady decline, only **54 percent of students had used a condom**during the last time they had sex. This means that almost HALF of the teens having sex are at risk for HIV and STDs. While that number has gone down about eight percent since 2007, the stat is still pretty alarming.

Whether it's your first or twentieth time engaging in sexual activity, it's always important to practice [safe sex](https://www.seventeen.com/health/sex-health/a17771314/how-to-have-safe-sex/). And despite what the "average" age may be, there is NO pressure for you to be restricted to that stat. It only matters when you're 100 percent ready!