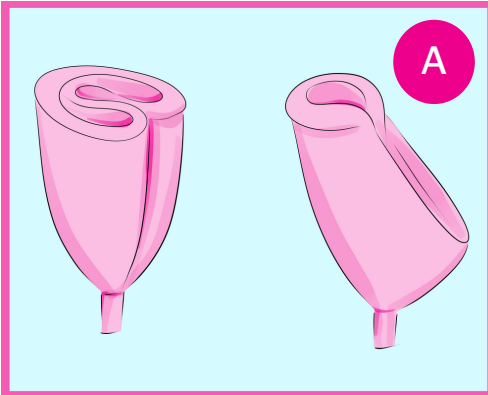


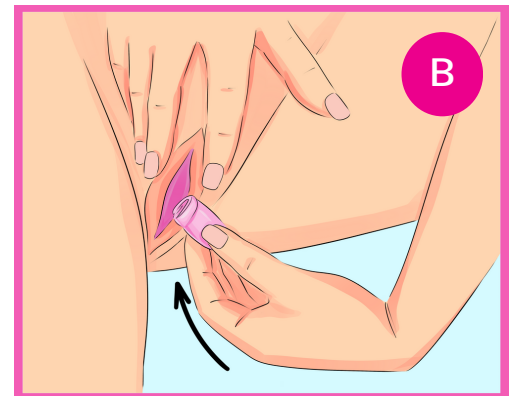


How to Insert a MENSTRUAL CUP



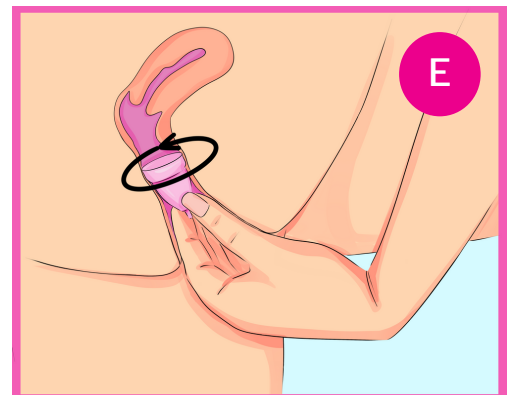
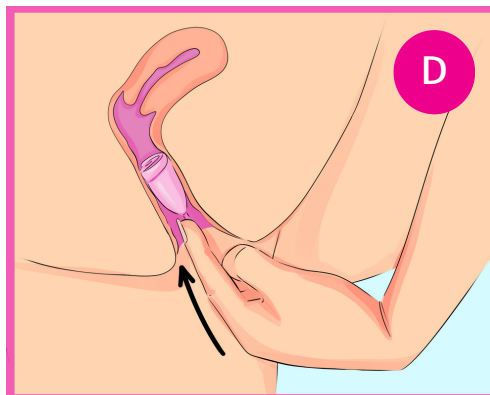
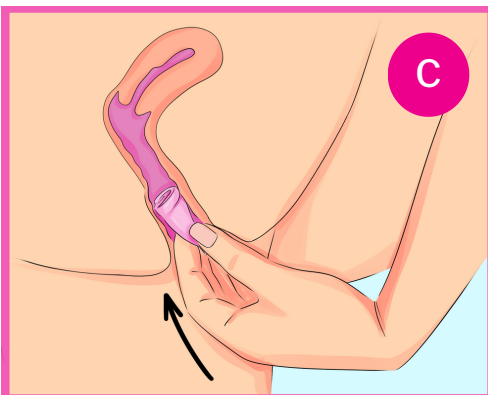
1. Wash your hands. Take a few deep breaths and relax.
2. Find a comfortable position: squatting over the toilet or placing one leg on the toilet may work.
3. Add warm water or a lubricant to the rim of the cup, if you like. Fold the cup. The "C" or "Punchdown" folds are good for beginners. (A)

4. Using your other hand, hold open the folds of skin that cover your vagina. Insert the cup into your vagina, aiming toward your lower back. (B)

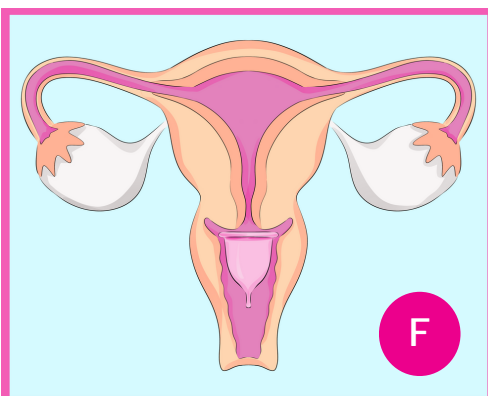


Push the cup all the way in, so that the stem (if there is one) is inside your vaginal opening, and the cup opens. (C)

5. The cup must open completely in order to seal properly against your vaginal walls. Run your finger around the cup to make sure you do not feel a gap. (D) If you do,



pinch the base of the cup a few times to see if it will open. Tense muscles will make this harder, so take a breath and try again if you need to. Twisting the cup in a full circle may also be helpful. (E)



6. You should not feel the cup at all once it is inserted properly. If you do, remove it and try again. Be patient, learning to use a cup takes practice, sometimes for a few menstrual cycles. But once you get it, it will be easy.

Do not worry that you will lose the cup; your cervix sits at the top of the vagina and it can not get past that point. (F)

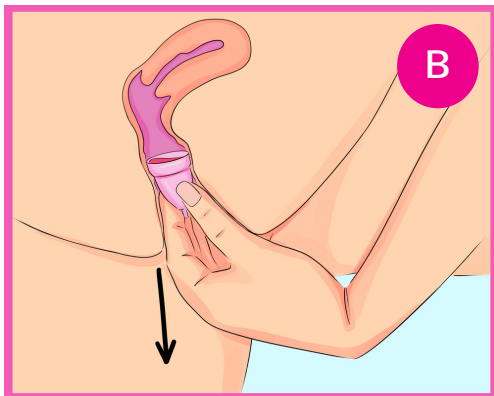
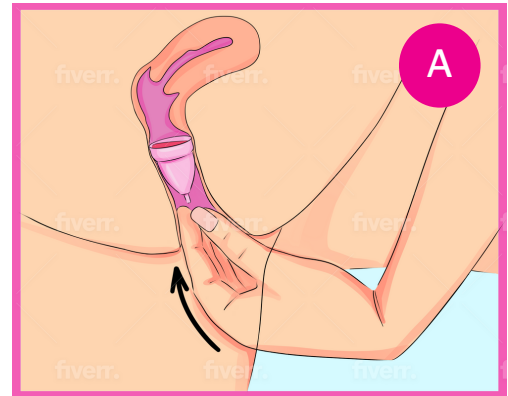


How to Remove a MENSTRUAL CUP

1. Wash your hands. Better yet, jump in the shower which will help you relax, and will save you from worry about any spills. (After a little practice, you will be able to easily remove your cup over the toilet.)

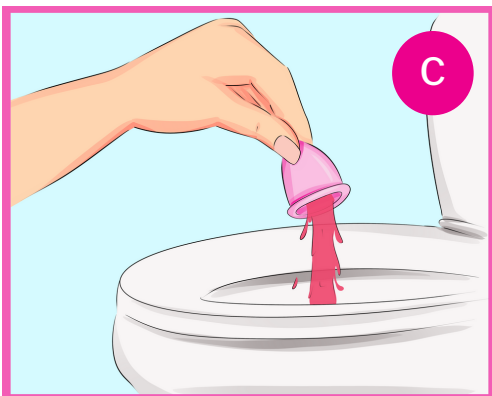
2. With your forefinger and thumb, reach for the base of your menstrual cup. (A)

You may need to bear down a bit (using your muscles in the same way as if you were trying to poop) and use the stem to pull the cup down, closer to where you can reach it.



3. Squeezing the base of the cup will help you break the seal, which is key to having it slide out, with the contents inside.

Slowly slide the cup out, keeping it upright. (B)



4. Empty the blood into the toilet. (C)

5. Wash your cup out and re-insert it or follow instructions for sterilizing your cup until your next cycle.

CLEANING YOUR MENSTRUAL CUP

- ➔ Be sure to read all instructions that come with your cup for manufacturer's recommendations regarding safety and handling of your cup.
- ➔ Never wear your cup for longer than 12 hours, less if you tend to bleed heavily. Using any menstrual product for longer than recommended can increase risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome, a rare condition that can be very serious.

DURING YOUR CYCLE

Every time you empty your menstrual cup you should wash it with mild, fragrance-free soap. You can then safely re-insert it and wear it again.

If you are unable to wash the cup thoroughly, rinse it with water and wipe it with toilet tissue. (Having a bottle of water with you in a restroom is helpful if you do not have privacy and are using a stall.)

AFTER YOUR CYCLE

When you have finished using your cup for your cycle, it is important that you sterilize it before putting it away.

You can easily sterilize your cup by putting it into a small pot of boiling water for about two minutes. (Refer to manufacturer's recommendation on length of time.) Trick: put your cup inside a whisk to keep it from contacting the bottom of the pot.

Menstrual Cup Q&A

Q: How does the cup stay inside?

A: Strong muscles! The muscles in your pelvis keep your cup in place, along with the suction created when you put it in properly.

Q: How often should I remove my cup?

A: Never use your cup longer than 12 hours (or according to the manufacturer's guidance). If you forget to remove your cup, do so as soon as possible.

Q: How will the cup affect odor?

A: Because the blood and tissue collected in the cup are sealed inside, it does not come into contact with air and you should have no odor associated with your period.

Q: Can the cup get "lost" inside me?

A: The cervix can move up and down a bit, so it is possible the cup will move a bit farther up in the vaginal canal, however, it can not get lost. It will not be able to travel past the opening of the cervix. If you are having trouble getting it out... take a breath. Tensed muscles make it harder for it to move. A warm shower can help: squat down and bear down (using the muscles you use to poop) and gently use the stem to pull the cup down so you can reach the base. If you need to take a breath and push again, hold on to the stem to keep the cup from inching back upward.

Q: I tried the cup, but it leaked. What did I do wrong?

A: There are several reasons why a cup can leak: it didn't open fully, it is full, it is not the right size or shape for your body. Try again, or try another cup that takes into account whether you've had a vaginal birth, and how your cervix is positioned.

Q: How do I choose the right menstrual cup?

A: Most manufacturers make sizes and shapes that accommodate variations in vaginal canals (for example, for those who have given birth vaginally). Some cups have stems, others have loops or balls on the end. It is up to you to decide what is the best fit and what is easiest to use. It may take a few tries to find the perfect one, and you may opt for several that you use at different points in your cycle. Only purchase cups from reputable manufacturers and sellers. Carefully inspect your cup and do not attempt to use it if it is not in pristine condition after you sterilize it for the first time.

Q: What about going to the bathroom with my cup?

A: You can pee and poop with your cup in. Remember, you pee through your urethra, and poop through your anus. Your cup will sit in your vagina.

Q: Can my cup accidentally fall out?

A: It is possible that your cup can get dislodged, especially when you poop. Just remove and wash it as usual, and reinsert it. If your cup regularly falls out, you likely need a larger or possibly stiffer, option.

Q: Can I use a menstrual cup if I have an IUD?

A: Research shows there is a *potential* link between menstrual cup use and IUD displacement or expulsion. We recommend checking with your healthcare provider for information before using a menstrual cup with your IUD.

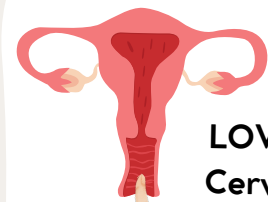
Menstrual Cup TIPS & TRICKS

The stem of your menstrual cup can be cut down, or cut off completely. You should not feel it when you walk, and if you do, trimming it might help. If you practice with your menstrual cup before you have your period, wait to cut the stem until you test it while on your period. Your cervix can move up and down, and you may find that it moves up while you are menstruating, and if you've already cut the stem off, it might be more difficult to remove it while you are learning.

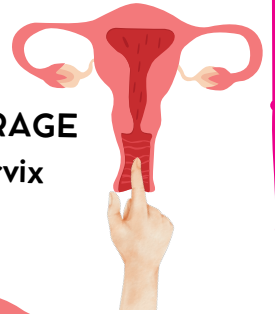
Understand your anatomy. Your vaginal canal runs toward your lower back. Do not insert your cup upwards, but at an angle.



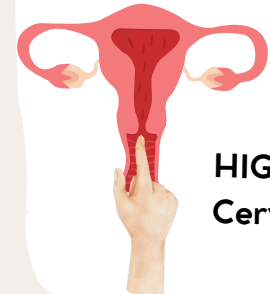
How to Determine Your Size



LOW
Cervix



AVERAGE
Cervix



HIGH
Cervix

Unlike with tampons,* which you should never use when you are not actively bleeding, **you can practice using a menstrual cup when you do not have your period.** This can help alleviate some stress you might feel in trying it.
*Removing a dry tampon can cause small tears in the vaginal canal.

Popular Cup Folds



Punchdown

"C" or "U"

It can take three cycles or more to feel confident using a menstrual cup. Take a deep breath. You can do it!



Workshops by
**GIRLS HELPING
GIRLS PERIOD™**

Location of your cervix, and whether you've delivered a baby, help determine what size you need.

If you have difficulty reaching your cup, you might have a high cervix and a longer cup would suit you better.

If your cup comes out too easily, your cervix may sit low and a shorter cup would be a good choice.

Don't be discouraged if the first cup you try isn't quite right. Even if you need to purchase another, you are potentially saving hundreds or thousands of dollars versus disposable products.

Wet your cup, put it in warm water, or **use a lubricant to help you get your cup in.**

Warm water will help soften the silicone, and a lubricant will help it glide. Be sure to use one made for use in the vagina.

To make sure your cup opens fully:

- Make sure the air hole is at the fold point
- Run your fingers around the edge;
- Gently squeeze and release the base of the cup repeatedly.