

A photograph of a bedside table. On the left, a lamp with a white, teardrop-shaped base and a gold-colored shade is partially visible. In the center, a bright pink vibrator is lying on the table. To the right, a small gold-colored ring is also on the table. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# What Your Bedside Table Is Missing

The latest wave of vibrators look as good as they feel...and thanks to genius designers, they feel absolutely amazing.

BY ANNA DAVIES

The Form 2 by JimmyJane (shown actual size!) gets the job done in style.

▶ They are chic, sleek, and used by nearly half the population and can totally help you start the day in a good mood. No, we're not describing a French press. We're talking about vibrators, and if your only related experience involves a penis-shaped slab of plastic, you're missing out. Not only are the most recent vibes to hit the market way more aesthetically pleasing, but they were created by designers to make contact with your bod in the most nerve-tingling ways.

## Erotic...and Elegant

What sparked the change? It started back with *Sex and the City*, says Rachel Venning, cofounder of Babeland, a sex-toy boutique in New York City and Seattle. "Seeing a character like Charlotte get acquainted with a vibrator helped break a stigma on sex toys," she says. "The trouble was, there wasn't a large selection of sophisticated products available at the time."

Enter designers who realized that they could apply their eye for luxe design to the untapped sex-toy market. In 2002, a few years after Charlotte got her buzz on, Ethan Imboden, an industrial designer, began fielding client requests for custom-designed vibrators. "Women wanted sex toys that looked sexy, not scary," he says, a realization that caused him to start up JimmyJane, an upscale vibrator company based in San Francisco.

Imboden and other designers—including Suki Dunham of OhMiBod and Nomi Tang, creator of vibrators like Better Than Chocolate—began doing research with sex experts for insight into the ideal vibe. They quickly discovered that penetration isn't necessarily the most effective pathway to pleasure. "Many women tell me the best sensations from their vibrators come when they're using it around the clitoris and vulva," confirms Laura

Berman, PhD, author of *The Passion Prescription*, who has consulted on her own vibrator line.

These revelations led to a new generation of toys that hit all your hot spots and are worthy of displaying on your bedside table. For example, the JimmyJane Form 2 vibrator (pictured on previous page) looks like a postmodern sculpture of a rabbit—with each "ear" designed to stimulate either side of your clitoris.

## Welcome to Orgasm Central

Even if you're one of the lucky chicks who can climax quickly, you owe it to yourself to experience a vibrator-induced orgasm. That's because there are actually nerve endings surrounding the clitoris that respond best to the speed and strength of vibration, explains Berman, so you're experiencing pleasure you wouldn't feel through sex or manual masturbation.

And if reaching an O can be elusive, spending time experimenting with a vibe can give you insight into where you need to be touched to trigger the big release. Once you've ID'd those precise areas, it makes it that much easier to direct your guy subtly in bed. Not peaking due to a mental block? Using a vibe in front of your guy is a great way to let go like never before.

"A lot of women have trouble reaching orgasm in front of their partner, because they're either self-conscious or overwhelmed by so many sensations," says Berman. Focusing on your own needs (without being distracted by his experience) can sometimes be

## SHAPE-SHIFTERS

If you didn't know better, you probably couldn't guess what these were made for.



The bike seat–like Better Than Chocolate vibe delivers sensation to your entire hoo-ha.



Lelo's Alia vibe works your clitoris but would look at home in *Wired*.



Designed to hit your G-spot and clitoris, the We-Vibe could be mistaken for fitness gear.

just what you need to lose your inhibitions. Try it out by giving him a sexy show, which will double as a hot-for-teacher tutorial. Let him watch, and next round, hand it to him so he can demonstrate what he gleaned from viewing your technique.

## Toys for Two

While vibes can help women get through a dry spell or over the, ahem, *hump* of performance anxiety, they can be just as essential in an LTR, says Debby Herbenick, PhD, research scientist at Indiana University, whose studies have found that almost 40 percent of women have used a

vibrator with a partner, during either foreplay or intercourse.

Some tricks to try (wash it off according to instructions first): Alternate oral sex with vibrator strokes to his penis, or hold it in the palm of your hand as you stroke his shaft with your fingers, so your skin will convey the sensation to his penis, suggests Carol Queen, PhD, in-store sex educator at Good Vibrations, a sex-toy boutique in San Francisco.

Or consider a couples vibe, like the innovative We-Vibe (shown above), which you use while your partner is inside you. One end of the toy touches your clitoris, and the other buzzes against your G-spot.

Whether you end up inviting your vibrator into the action, would rather it be a supporting player, or want to keep it your little secret, adding this toy to your arsenal guarantees plenty of hot hookups. Which is much more than we can say for sexting. ■