

Types of D/s relationships

Like other relationships, Dom-sub relationships come in many configurations. These relationships can be long-term, exclusive, and romantic; long term but poly or kinky friends-with-benefits-style; or one-time things.

Doms are often referred to as tops, while subs are referred to as bottoms. However, it's a common myth that people are all either Tops/Doms or bottoms/subs; many people like to play both roles, and those people may be called switches.

Here are a few ways people may engage in Dom-sub relationships.

➤ Under Consideration

This type of relationship is usually between a Dominant and submissive, in the early stages of the relationship/dynamic. This typically represents a “trial” phase, where the Dominant will closely watch the behaviors, how well the submissive follows tasks and how well they communicate and play together. This period is different for every partnership and can be anywhere from a few weeks to a few months or more. This also closely resembles a training dynamic/relationship.

➤ Professional relationships

This is typically when a submissive or bottom seeks out paid services from a professional Dominant or Top. Whether they practice BDSM in their normal lifestyle or not. These are typically one and done relationships, but not always. Some submissives and bottoms consistently see the same professional for months to years, but do not have a dynamic beyond the sessions or services. Some Dominants and submissives will engage in a dynamic beyond the paid sessions.

➤ Training relationships

In these, the Dom treats the sub as a kind of private student—or even as a role-play animal. Puppies and ponies, where the Dom sets the training regimen and the sub learns to perform tasks, sexual or otherwise.

➤ Keyholders

This is a term associated with chastity play where the key in question is a key to a cock cage or chastity belt. This kind of D/s play involves a sub allowing their dom to tell them when they can touch themselves, have any pleasure or orgasm, etc.

➤ **Caregiver/little**

In these relationships, the Dom acts in an older caregiver role, such as mother, father, aunt/uncle, or nanny type over a sub who plays a younger role, Age play for the submissive may begin as a baby in diapers with a pacifier, a young child or adolescent. Activities can range from nurturing (bath time, hair brushing) to spanking and punishment. Submissives express an appreciation for being able to get out of their heads and relaxing into somebody else taking care of them.

➤ **Service Dynamics**

This type of relationship is typically when a submissive serves a Dominant with more service oriented tasks like household/dungeon chores, errands, shopping and more. Some dynamics also have sexual services as part of the routine. Usually the submissive servicing the Dominant. While not all service dynamics are based solely on service, that is the main component to the dynamic.

➤ **Bondage, D/s style**

It's not unusual to see D/s partners who specialize in creating beautiful bondage harnesses or amazing suspension bondage scenarios together, This kind of play could be done with a stranger—but since a substantial amount of trust needs to be involved, not to mention skill, it can be wise and pleasurable to establish a regular partner for this kind of play.

➤ **D/s lovers**

There are no whips and chains in their toy box, but there might be lots of vibrators. These people have sex the way most people do, but one partner "runs the f--k," as the charming saying goes. The sub in this scenario finds it exciting to be told to perform sexually and gets off on sexually servicing their Dom.

➤ **TPE (total power exchange) Dynamics**

This type of dynamic can take many forms. Not just within FLR (female led relationships) or Master Servant dynamics.. A very large portion of TPE relationships take form in Financial Domination between a FinDomme or CashMaster and their subs, also known as finsubs, paypigs or humanATMs. These types of relationships are not necessarily built on typical BDSM play, meaning, in person meetings and sessions rarely take place. There is usually no other exchange other than money or gifts. In some relationships the Dominant takes complete control over finances and sometimes other aspects of their subs life.

➤ **Master/servant**

This pairing doesn't just focus on sexual service—many other types of service might be points of focus. This could look like laying out someone's evening clothes and helping them get ready to go out, doing various chores around the house or dungeon space, running errands and more.

➤ **Female-led relationships**

The term female-led relationship or FLR traditionally describes an ongoing BDSM relationship between individuals identifying as a dominant female and a submissive male. FLR can be any relationship that is not 'male-led. In its more extreme and perhaps traditional [form], FLR is a relationship where the female, or femme, is the decision-maker for the other partner. This could be anything from their finances to their attire to more menial tasks like chores.

➤ **24/7**

Some people engage in D/s play as a permanent (unless they renegotiate) part of their relationship. Unlike most of the rest of the styles above, in these relationships the roles are generally fixed and don't involve switching, as the above styles might