



The Flame and Further

An eBook Guide to

WAX PLAY

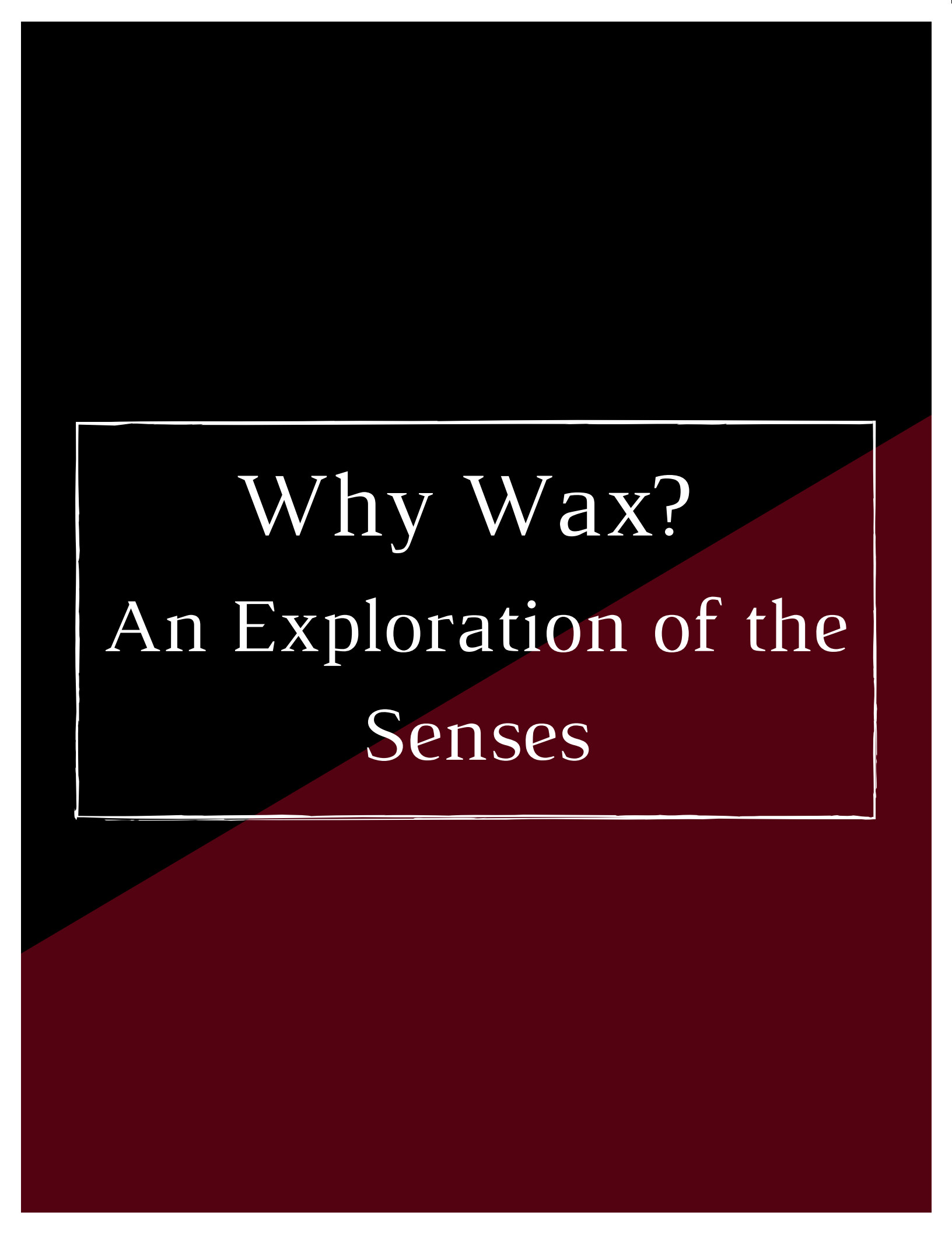
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Before You Embark

This guide is meant to arouse the senses and lend itself as a foundational resource as you begin to explore the multifaceted and exciting experience of wax play. This guide will walk you through the different categories of wax play, the science behind the wax, safety precautions, wax types, and candle types. Additionally, a guided solo experience is included at the end, with steps along the way to help familiarize you with the material. I invite you to give into your curiosity, rid yourself of your inhibitions, and allow your mind to expand as you move through the workbook.

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Why Wax?

An Exploration of the Senses

Wax Play Is...

Overview

Engaging in wax play offers us the opportunity to experience foreign sensations that might otherwise not be accessible to us without the exploration of kink. In this chapter, we will talk about the categories that wax play typically falls under as well as what happens in our brains when engaging in wax play, and different power dynamics that can be incorporated into wax play scenes.

What is wax play?

Wax play is a kink category that can be further be classified into a variety of subcategories, dependent upon the people involved and intentions of play. First and foremost, wax play is a type of **sensation play**¹ that works to enhance the senses through:

- 1.) The deprivation of other senses,
- 2.) Anticipation,
- 3.) Controlled applications of pain.

Wax Play Is...

Additionally, wax play is a type of temperature play. This means that it uses objects and/or substances to stimulate the body's reaction to extreme heat or extreme cold. Lastly, it is a type of edge play, causing participants to feel as if they are “on the edge,” by pushing the limits of what is considered “safe.”¹

The Amygdala

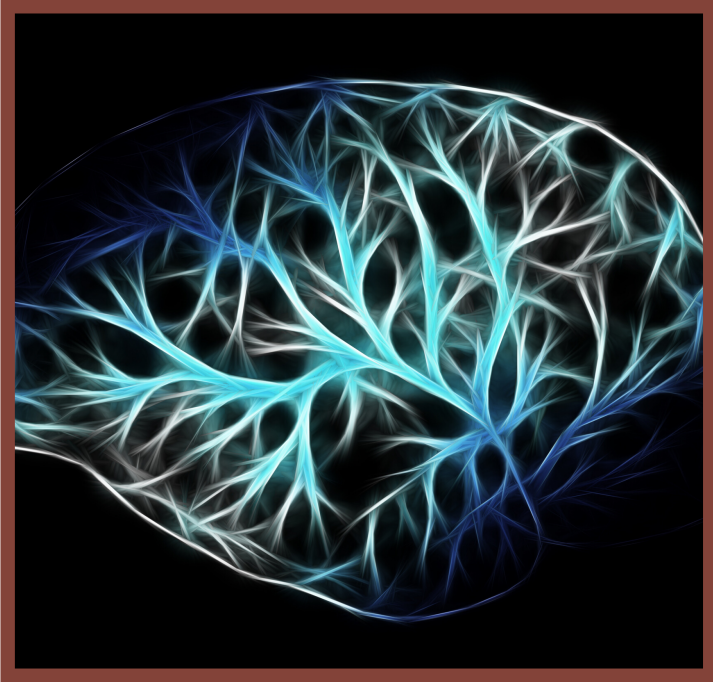
Wax play activates the amygdala, which is the part of the brain that is responsible for reactions to stress and stress-inducing situations, through the creation of suspenseful moments, followed by short bursts of stimulation. When we participate in wax play, the body is exposed to two extreme ends of the sensation scale:

- 1.) The feelings brought on by extreme temperature (in this case heat)
- 2.) Sensory deprivation

When we experience these extremes, the amygdala reacts as if the body is being exposed to real harm, without actually being in real danger or an actual uncontrollable, stressful situation.

Wax Play Is...

In turn, this releases adrenaline, which contributes to the euphoric feeling, or "high," that is experienced with sensation play.



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Sensual to Sadistic

Power Dynamics

Power dynamics can play a role in wax play. Depending on the people involved, there are quite a few ways to turn up or turn down pain levels in wax play. In this chapter we touch on the difference between sadomasochistic and sensual wax play.

Sadomasochistic Play

Sadomasochism is a sexual practice that is characterized by masochism, the enjoyment of receiving pain, and sadism, the experience of receiving pleasure by inflicting pain on others. While sadomasochism is a complicated form of play and can be acted on in a variety of different ways, for the purposes of this e-book we will only be examining this form of play in relation to wax. Specifically, wax can be used as a tool to inflict pain onto others or oneself. This can be done by using different types of wax with higher melting points, dropping the wax at different heights, or pouring the wax at different frequency intervals. For example, pouring the wax in a larger quantity to increase the sensory reception area or using a candle that has a higher

Sensual to Sadistic

burning point, increasing anticipation and the temperature of the wax when it comes in contact with the skin, would both be ways to incorporate pain in a controlled way.

Sensual Play

In contrast, sensual wax play focuses more on the exploration of the senses for the purpose of evoking pleasure through tapping into the feelings excited through the nature of physical touch. Think of it this way, sensual wax play is like of taking a nice, warm bath and sadomasochistic play is like the rush of adrenaline from skydiving or doing something that feel as if you are in danger, in this case it pertains to pain.

Reminder

It is important to note that one might explore wax play for a variety of reasons. This can range from the desire for a tantric or sensual experience, to the want of a sadomasochistic experience or anything in between. Remember, play exists on a spectrum and within one's own comfort zone – there is no right or wrong way to explore.



The Science Behind the Wax

Four Components of Wax

Overview

Kink dynamics and the sensations of kink are not the only aspect of wax play. In fact, there is a lot happening in just one drop of wax that affects play and the receiver. Not all wax is created equal or made from the same material. Different waxes will have varying effects on the skin. Additionally, all of this is also dependent upon the four components of wax which are heat, temperature, volume, and chemical composition.

Heat

Scientifically speaking, heat is the calculated amount of energy something holds. Therefore, the heat of a single drop of wax would be contingent upon the amount of energy in said drop.¹ It is important to know the amount of heat in a drop of wax and to communicate with your bottom if they are comfortable receiving that level of energy.

Temperature

Temperature is a material's response to heat.¹ In wax play, temperature is how the material, wax, responds to the energy, or heat of a flame. Further, this is also indicative of how our bodies will react when a drop with any given

Four Components of Wax

energy, touches the skin. Similar to our own personal thresholds, waxes have different thresholds and different waxes will respond differently to heat. For example, water boils at 212°F, but wax at that same temperature will continue to burn in its liquid form, demonstrating how the two substances react to the same energy in different ways, this same idea can be applied to different types of waxes.

Volume

Volume is the amount of wax dropped onto the skin at any one time.¹ Different candles will allow different amounts of wax to be poured. Varying volumes of wax directly affect how much heat the skin is receiving at once, and therefore how much pain (if any) is being inflicted on the receiver. As you explore wax play consider and reflect on your methods, intentions and actions. For examples, are you allowing one drop of wax at a time? Three? Are you continuously pouring wax? Or do you pour intermittently? What are you trying to achieve with the volume? How is it effecting the experience the receiver is having? These are all importance questions as you explore wax play and maximize your and your

partner's pleasure.

Chemical composition

It is important to know the chemical composition of wax, as it can alter its reaction to heat. ¹Additionally, it should be considered that this can also cause the wax to react differently to temperature. Composition can change based on things such as dyes used, added oils for scent, or any other additives that could potentially dilute the wax.



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Types & Temperature

Wax Types

Typically, there are three main types of wax involved in wax play:

- **Soy Wax** is great for sensual play, as well as beginner exploration as it has a low melting point, between 113°F-145°F.
- **Paraffin Wax** is better for the more experienced players or those looking for slightly more painful wax play, with a higher melting point between 120°F-160°F.
- **Beeswax**, burning between 140°F-180°F, is the most dangerous of the wax types and it is recommended that only highly skilled wax players should use it. Additionally, medical supplies should be readily available to treat minor burns that might occur.



Stay Safe

- 1st degree burns can occur on the skin at 100°F for a prolonged period of time (6 hours)
- 1st degree burns can occur on the skin at 175°F for a short period of time (seconds)

Stages of Wax Cooling

Overview

One of the great things about wax is that it allows for options of applying a precise amount of energy to a localized area of skin.¹ This is comparable to the way that kinetic energy is applied to the body at different levels through flogging or spanking. However, the difference is that all of the energy is in one drop of wax. Those using wax must be careful to ensure that they are using the intended amount of energy, as a drop of wax typically gets heated above its melting point, increasing its temperature, before it is dropped onto this skin.

As the wax is poured, or as it drips down the side of the candle, it will cool off slightly, but will still typically touch the skin at a degree slightly hotter than its melting point.¹ One way to ensure the right temperature is being dropped onto the skin is to allow the wax to run down the side of the candle, giving it more time to cool before it comes into contact with the skin. Once the drop of wax reaches the skin it begins the cooling process.

Stages of Wax Cooling

The sensations brought to the receiver by the cooling process will be within the first few seconds of the wax touching their skin.

Melting

The first stage of wax cooling is the transition from the melting point to solidification, in which the hot wax, in liquid form, is dropped from the candle and reaches the skin, cools down, and begins to harden. This is the most intense phase for the bottom because this is when the wax is at its hottest and holds the highest amount of kinetic energy.¹ During this stage, both the energy and heat are being transferred to the skin resulting in the increased temperature of the location of skin that the wax was dropped on.

Cooling

Following solidification, is cooling (Heat Deposition). This is where the heat is pulled out of the wax into the skin and surrounding air.¹

Stages of Wax Cooling

Similar to when you put a tray of ice cubes in the freeze, before the ice can freeze all the heat must be pulled out of the water, just as it must be pulled out of the wax to begin cooling.

Adjusting

Finally, is the transition from the cooling to adjusting (to the skin's temperature), wherein the heat has all been pulled out of the wax and it can start lowering to the temperature of the skin.

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Candles 101

Types of Candles

Overview

In addition to the different types of wax, discussed in the previous chapter, there are also different types of candles that affect how wax is received. While there are special candles specifically made for wax play, there are candles that many of us likely already have in our living space that can be used for wax play. However, it is important to be able to differentiate between them and to know the effect that they will have on the receiver, as well as any necessary safety precautions necessary.

Massage Candles

These are very safe for bodily use. These types of candles are usually labeled as such and are made with soy wax, intended to become massage oil as the wax softens and melts. Massage candles allow for a more sensual wax play experience moving from excitable pouring to a relaxed oil massage with quite ease. Typically, these can be purchased at department stores or large candle retail stores. If you have a candle in your living space, it is most likely this type.

Types of Candles

Scented or Jar Candles

These candles are typically made with a mix of soy and paraffin wax. Unlike massage candles, this wax and will require some scraping/peeling off. However, they are great for beginner use as they won't get hot enough to leave marks on the skin. As long as you are not allergic to any of the additives in the candle that create the scent or color, these are safe for use on skin and for those looking to explore wax play from home.

Wax Play/BDSM

These special candles are often made with paraffin wax which burns at a hotter temperature than soy wax. If you've used soy wax and are moving to paraffin wax, you will feel the difference between these two on the skin. additionally, paraffin wax will harden when it reaches the skin and will require a peeling or scraping off. It is important to note that if you are thinking of ordering candles specifically made for wax play, they are not usually beginner candles and are geared toward the sadomasochistic type of wax play.

Types of Candles

Large Religious Candles

Another candle type commonly found in the home for decoration or other purposes (perhaps leftover from a big event) are religious candles. These will likely be made out of paraffin wax, which is safe for body use and again will harden on the skin and require peeling/scraping/scrub bin off. This type of wax can get hot enough to leave slight but temporary, red marks on the skin. These are great candles for beginner sadomasochism play.

Emergency Candles

It is important that those looking to explore wax play be cautious of using emergency candles, such as tea lights. It is unlikely that these candles will be soy based and most will be made from paraffin or even beeswax, as they are meant to burn for a longer period of time (i.e., in case of emergency) These candles are NOT suitable for play if:

- You are not sure what they are made of.
- It is your first time attempting wax play.

Candle Shapes

Overview

Mainly, there are two candle shapes that can be used for wax play. First, there are **votive candles**¹, which are larger in circumference and useful for pooling wax. Due to the shape of votive candles, they are excellent for pooling larger amounts of wax on their top, so more wax can be poured at a time onto the receiver. Typically, this type of candle allows for five or more drops of wax. Alternatively, there are **taper candles**¹. These candles are taller and thinner in nature compared to votive candles and can allow for between one to five drops of wax at a time.



Votive Candle



Taper Candle



Safety

Safety Procedures

Overview

As mentioned earlier, wax play is a type of edge play, meaning that it pushes the limits of what would we consider “safe,” to release adrenaline and deliver pleasure. When exploring any kink, it is important not only to be well versed in the understanding of the kink itself, but also the safety precautions necessary to create an enjoyable and safe experience.

R.A.C.K

Risk Awareness Consensual Kink, or R.A.C.K., keeps in mind the potential risks involved with any type of play that one chooses to partake in. Additionally, it acknowledges that some play may not be “risk free,” and that is completely okay as long as all parties involved are informed and consenting.

M.I.T.S.

Marks Injuries Triggers, Safewords or M.I.T.S., is another important acronym that emphasizes the complexity of kink and exploration, reminding participants to keep these items

Safety Procedures

in mind as they play. Below is a breakdown of this acronym and some important questions to consider before engaging in kink play.²

- **Marks**
 - Will this leave a mark?
 - Do you want marks?
- **Injuries**
 - Do you have any injuries that the people involved in the scene should be made aware of before moving forward?
- **Triggers**
 - What are your limits?
 - Are there any triggering words or situations that we should stay away from?
- **Safe-words**
 - Do you have a safe word?
 - Do we want to make a safe word?
 - Are we both aware of what it is and it's implications on the scene?

Safety Procedures

Test the wax

This first step is crucial. It is important not to pour wax onto a person unless you have tested it on yourself first. To do so, a small drop on the inner part of your wrist or arm, or any other sensitive area, will allow you to properly gauge if the wax is a safe temperature for the receiver. Alternately, you could have the bottom test the wax to make sure it is an appropriate temperature for them before the scene begins. However, if you would like to keep the element of surprise involved then the top, or the giver, should be in charge of testing the wax on themselves.

Medical Supplies

With any type of wax or fire play, it is important to have medical supplies, specific for burns, on site. This is especially important if you are entering the world of sadomasochistic wax play as the risk of burns is likely to increase with this type play.

Safety Procedures

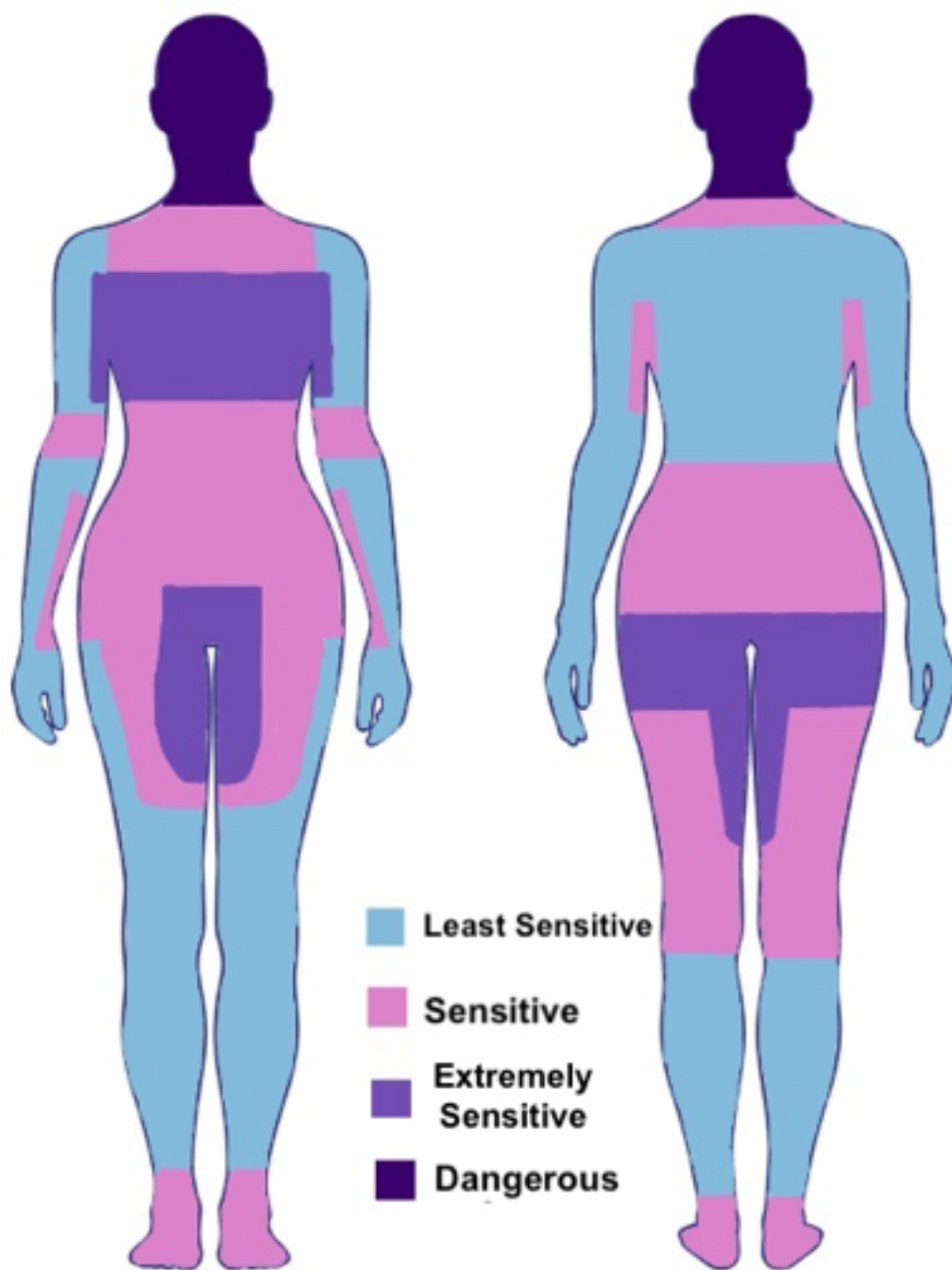
Fire Extinguisher

This kink consists of going against what every fire fighter in school told us not to do: play with fire. When choosing to play with fire, it is important to be in a space where you have access to running water, as well as a fire extinguisher should anything go wrong.

Zones

It is important to thoroughly review the R.A.C.K model and understand that every receiver's body will react differently to wax play. It is important to understand that there are many factors that contribute to how the body reacts to the stimulation of wax play. On the next page is a chart outlining the erogenous zones of the body and areas of possible sensitivity to receiving wax.

Zones



This is not a "one size fits all" chart. This is a guide, generalizing typically sensitive areas of the body to heat. This cannot accurately represent everyone's body because every body reacts differently to stimuli. This guide offers you a



Set-Up

Before You Begin...

Overview

It is important to be prepared for anything. Wax play, amongst other things, can be messy. Taking precautionary measures beforehand to ensure the safety of the people and space involved, as well as allowing for a more efficient clean-up process will enable participants to enjoy a more pleasurable experience. To ensure that this happens, following are a few recommendations of what you should have on-site¹when you engage in wax play.

What You'll Need

- Damp cloth or cup of water
- Fire extinguisher on site
- Knife or shower scrubby
- Disposable¹ bed sheet/drop cloth
- Place for bottom to lay
- Hair tie (if the bottom has hair)
- Room temperature space
- Lighter/matches (Keep in mind matches add an auditory effect)
- Blindfold (optional)
- Oil (to warm up the body before, or to aid in removing wax afterwards)





Practice & Play

Warming Up

The Importance of Warming Up

Ahead of play, you always want to warm up the skin of the receiver. This remains true regardless of if you are simply just testing candles out or you are entering a scene and are entrenched in strict power dynamic roles. This can be done in a multitude of ways such as beginning with a massage, scratching, light spanking or touching, mood music, an oil massage, or any other way that you feel will prepare your body for the eager anticipation of wax play.



**A note for
hairy folks**

Folks with excessive amounts of hair in places that wax will be applied will need to be oiled up extra. This allows the wax to be removed easier with minimal hair removal.¹

Practice

Where to Start

Maybe it is your first time, but you're not sure what is going to work so you decide to test out the wax on the "bottom," in the scene, before officially beginning. Or perhaps you'd like to officially begin the scene and go into it completely unaware of what the sensation is going to feel like. While either one of the above options, or those not mentioned here are fine, included below are a few tips to keep in mind if and when you decide to practice.

- **Test different heights**

On average dropping wax from 4"-20" (10cm-50cm) will allow it to cool at approximately 9°-14° of the way down. A good rule to keep in mind is that the closer the candle is to the skin, the hotter the wax will be when it makes contact.

- **Keep angles in mind**

Wax will not drip straight down. When it departs from the pool at the top of the candle, it will try and stay as close to the candle as possible

Practice

Tilting the candle at an angle less than 90° will cause the wax to run down the candle and fall from the bottom of the candle, where the top is likely holding the candle. It is important not to do this if you are near any of the danger zones.

Turning the wax to a 90° angle will give you a more precise expectation of where the drops will land.

Perfecting the Drip

I will say it again: everybody practices wax play differently. There is no right way to go about the exploration. That being said, if after reading this you are still feeling unsure about where you would like to start, just remember as with any type of kink exploration, wax play is a "grow as you go" type of play. As you experiment with different candle shapes, wax types, partners, and environments, you will understand your body and how it responds to this type of play. Be patient with your self, and enjoy the process.

References

1. Spectrum, The Toybag Guide to Hot Wax and Temperature Play (Greenery Press, 2012)
2. Taillor, Charlotte. "BDSM, Kink, and Feminism in Brooklyn, NYC". <https://www.taillors.com>