

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Do You Know the Hanky Code?

by Gay Desert Guide



(Editor's Note: With the new "mask when going out" regulations for Greater Palm Springs, we thought it was time to revisit the Hanky Code and consider applying it to wearing one on your face!)

When two men are negotiating a sexual encounter or even compatibility to date, the phrase "What are you into?" will inevitably come from one or both.. Quite often in "Grindr" chat, this is shortened to be simply "into?" – just like ships used cyphers (flags) to communicate, we gay men have our own way to communicate sexual preferences and proclivities. It's called the Hanky Code.

**IT'S LIKE PORN.
BUT BETTER.**



Originating in the early 1970's in either New York or San Francisco (let's not even try to settle that debate), the hanky code is a system of signaling sexual preferences, fetishes, and roles by choosing to wear a specifically colored bandana on a particular side of the body. With just a glance at your rear end, (the bandana being tucked in your back pocket) anyone who is in-the-know will know what you're "into!"

So how do you know which color to wear, and where to wear it? The first critical variable is the side of the body on which you choose to wear your colors, because this signals your preferred role:

- Left side of the body = Top/Dominant Role
- Right side of the body = Bottom/Submissive Role

As a way to remember which is which, consider that we read left to right, so left comes first. Similarly, the top/dominant role is primary, with the bottom/submissive being secondary. Therefore, when "reading" the backside of a hanky-wearing man, if he's wearing it on the side that "comes first," he identifies as top/dominant, and if it's on the side that "comes second," he's bottom/submissive.

The second signal is the color you wear, which specifies the scene or sex act you are seeking. This is where it can get complicated, depending on your source of information, but we will keep it simple with some agreed-upon basics:

- Black = S&M
- Dark Blue = Anal sex
- Light Blue = Oral sex
- Brown = Scat

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- Green = Hustler/prostitution
- Grey = Bondage
- Purple = Piercing
- Red = Fisting
- Yellow = Watersports
- Orange = Anything goes

For those who like to keep their options open and/or reject all of this with a flat "I don't like labels," take note of the flexibility inherent in this system: You can change your colors as quickly as your mood shifts, wear several colors at once, switch sides if you change your mind, and for the truly versatile, why not wear the same color hanky in both pockets to indicate your openness to different roles!

Obviously some thought and logic went into the system of choosing which colors represent which scenes, and if you check out this expanded reference, you'll see the system specialized even further.

Some interesting examples:

- Dark Green = Daddy/Boy Scene (a relative of the hustler green?)
- Light Pink = Dildos (they're often that color)
- Dark Pink = Nipple Torture (might make them that color)
- Fuschia = Spanking (rosy cheeks)
- Rust = A Cowboy (ruddy complexion)
- Khaki = Military Sex (naturally)
- Gold Lamé = Muscleboys (think Rocky Horror)
- Mosquito Netting = Outdoor Sex (that's just being pragmatic)

COLOR	WORN ON LEFT	WORN ON RIGHT
BLACK	heavy SM top	heavy SM bottom
GREY	bondage top	fit to be tied!
BLACK w/WHITE Check	safe sex top	safe sex bottom
GREY w/BLACK	light SM top	light SM bottom
GREY FLANNEL	wants a girl	likes men in suits
BLACK w/WHITE Stripe	likes black bottoms	likes black tops
CHARCOAL	latex fetish top	latex fetish bottom
BLACK VELVET	has/takes videos	will perform for the camera
BLUE, Light	wants head	cock sucker
BLUE, Robin's Egg	69er	anything but 69ing
BLUE, Medium	top	assmaster
BLUE, Navy	fucker (top)	fucked (bottom)
BLUE, Airforce	pilot/flight attendant	likes flyboys
BLUE, Light w/WHITE Stripe	sailor	lookin' for salty seamen
BLUE, Teal	cock & ball torturer	cock & ball torturee
RED	flat fucker	flat fuckee
RED w/WHITE Stripe	shove	shovee
RED w/BLACK Stripe	furry bear	like bears
HARDON	cute	brando
RED, Dark	2 handed fater	2 handed fatee
PINK, Light	dildo fucker	dildo fuckee
PINK, Dark	hit torturer	hit torturee
ROSE	like anal worshippers	has a anal fetish
FUSCHIA	spanker	spankee
MAGENTA	suck my tits	anal freak
BURBLE	prince	princee
LAVENDER	likes drag queens	drag queen
YELLOW	pisser/WaterSports	piss freak
YELLOW, Pale	epits	drool crazy
MUSTARD	hung B's	wants B's
GOLD	two looking for one	one looking for two
YELLOW w/WHITE Stripe	likes Asian bottoms	likes Asian tops
GOLD LAME	likes muscleboy bottoms	likes muscleboy tops
ORANGE	anything anytime	nothing now (just cruising)
APRICOT	two tons o' fun	chubby chaser
CORAL	suck my toes	shrimper (sucks toes)
BUST	a cowboy	a cowboy's horse
GREEN, Kelly	hustler (for rent)	john (looking to buy)
GREEN, Hunter	daddy	orphan boy looking for daddy
OLIVE DRAB	military top	military bottom
GREEN, Lime	dines off tricks (food)	dinner plate (will buy dinner)
BEIGE	rimmer	rimmee
BROWN	scat top	scat bottom
BROWN LACE	uncut	likes uncut
BROWN SATIN	cut	likes cut
BROWN w/WHITE Stripe	likes latino bottoms	likes latino tops
WHITE	beat my meat (J/D)	I'll do us both (J/D)
HOLSTEIN	milk	milkie
CREAM	sums in condoms	sucks cum out of condoms
WHITE LACE	likes white bottoms	likes white tops
WHITE VELVET	voyeur (likes to watch)	will put on a show
BLUE, Light w/WHITE Dots	likes white suckers	likes to suck whites
BLUE, Light w/BLACK Dots	likes black suckers	likes to suck blacks
BLUE, Light w/BROWN Dots	likes latino suckers	likes to suck latinos
BLUE, Light w/YELLOW Dots	likes asian suckers	likes to suck asians
RED/WHITE GINGHAM	park sex top	park sex bottom
BROWN CORDUROY	headmaster	student
FUR	bestialist top	bestialist bottom
SILVER LAME	starfucker	celebrity
LEOPARD	has tattoos	likes tattoos
TAN	smokes cigars	likes cigars
TEDDY BEAR	squidder	squiddee
FAISLEY	wears boxer shorts	likes boxer shorts
BROWN JACK	skinhead top	skinhead bottom
MOSQUITO NETTING	outdoor sex top	outdoor sex bottom

The Hanky Code For Gay Men, Gay Sex, Palm Springs

Herein lies the potential for confusion: with at least six different blues and six different pinks, can you really know you're seeing the same color intended by the wearer? Just ask! Maybe this is the best thing about the hanky code: it's an icebreaker and a conversation starter. In a world where we often seek compatible playmates through online profile photos, negotiating that spark of attraction in person, with the help of a low-tech system, could be a refreshing return of old-school ingenuity.

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