



A Glossary Of Terms Associated With The LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And Transgender) Communities

This glossary is provided as a starting point for discussion and better understanding. Language is dynamic, continually growing and changing. This is particularly true with the language we use to identify ourselves. We should strive to be sure that our language does not demean, exclude or offend, by respectfully allowing others to self identify. Keep in mind that all of these terms are being defined fairly generically. While people choose their labels for a reason, you should always ask an individual how the label applies to them rather than assuming they fit the definition.

AFAB: Assigned female at birth.

Agender: A person who does not identify as either male or female.

Ally: A person who does not identify as part of an LGBT* group, but still advocates for that group's rights.

AMAB: Assigned male at birth.

Androgynous: A gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity.

Androsexual/Androphilic: A person who is attracted to men, males or masculinity.

Aromantic: A person who experiences little or not romantic attraction or has no interest in a romantic relationship.

Asexual: A person who experiences no sexual attraction and/or has a lack of interest in sex. May be shortened to “ace”.

Bi-curious: A person who is curious about having attraction to members of the same sex.

Bigender: A person who goes back and forth between two gender identifications and/or expressions.

Biphobia: Negative feelings, attitudes, actions, or behaviors against bisexual people or people perceived to be bisexual. It may also be a fear of one's own bisexual attractions.

Bisexual: A person who is sexually attracted to men and women.

Bottom Surgery: Surgery that alters the individuals sex organs to more closely conform to their gender identity.

Cisgender: The state of not being transgender. Someone who identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Cisgender Privilege: The basic rights, privileges and status automatically given to cisgender people, which are systematically denied to transgender people.

Constellation: The structure of a polyamorous relationship.

Crossdresser: A person who dresses in clothing society reserves for the opposite sex. The purpose is typically emotional comfort or erotic fulfillment.

Demiboy: a person who identifies partly, but not wholly, as a boy. This person may also partly identify as a girl or some other gender.

Demigirl: A person who identifies partly, but not wholly, as a girl. This person may also partly identify as a boy or some other gender.

Demisexual: An individual who experiences no sexual attraction without a strong emotional or romantic connection.

DFAB: Designated female at birth.

DMAB: Designated male at birth.

Drag King & Drag Queen: A person who crossdresses as a means of performance or entertainment.

Gay: While most often associated with men, in its broadest meaning, this is a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex.

Gender: The range of characteristics associated with men and women and the masculine and feminine attributes assigned to them by society.

Gender Binary: The societal concept that gender is separated into two distinct and traditional parts: male and female.

Gender Dysphoria: The formal diagnosis of an individual whose gender identity is in opposition to their sex as defined at birth.

Gender Expression: The part of a person's sexual identity that is about expressing masculinity or femininity as influenced by society, culture and individual expectations. This can include the way a person dresses, styles their hair, makeup and even the way a person walks and stands. Sometimes referred to as gender role.

Gender Fluid: A person whose gender identity fluctuates periodically between male/masculine and female/feminine.

Gender Identity: The part of a person's sexual identity that is about their sense of self as male or female, neither, both or a mixture of them.

Gender Variant: A person who doesn't conform to societal expectations of gender.

Genderqueer: A person who does not identify as a man or a woman. They might identify as both, neither or somewhere between.

Heteronormative: A term that describes the marginalization of non-heterosexual relationships and reinforces heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation.

Heterosexism: The systems of advantages bestowed on people who are heterosexual. It can also be the assumption that all people are, or should be, heterosexual and gender-conforming.

Heterosexual: A man who is only sexually attracted to women or a woman who is only sexually attracted to men.

Heterosexual Privilege: The basic rights, privileges and status automatically given to heterosexual people, which are systematically denied to people with other sexual orientations.

Homophobia: Negative feelings, attitudes, actions, or behaviors against LGBT people or people perceived to be LGBT. It may also be a fear of one's own same-sex attractions.

Homosexual: A man who is attracted only to men or a woman who is only attracted to women.

Intersex: A person whose biological anatomy and/or genes vary from the expected male or female anatomy and/or genetics.

Lesbian: A woman who is sexually attracted to other women.

LGBTQQIA: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Ally/Asexual/Agender

Out of the Closet: Living openly and honestly by not hiding one's sexual orientation or gender identity. The term is sometimes shortened to being "out."

Pansexual: A person who is sexually attracted to people regardless of their gender identity, gender expression or biological sex. The term pansexual goes beyond a gender binary.

Passing: Being recognized or accepted as the gender one identifies as.

Polyamory: Having more than one romantic partner with the consent and knowledge of all individuals.

Polyromantic: A person capable of developing a romantic relationship with people of more than one gender or sex irrespective of the gender binary.

Polysexual: A person who is sexually attracted to people of more than one sex or gender irrespective of the gender binary.

Queer: A simple label to explain sexual orientations, gender identities and/or gender expressions that do not conform to societal expectations. Some LGBT community members view this as a term of empowerment and others strongly dislike this term.

Questioning: A term that describes people who are in the process of solidifying their personal identification of themselves.

Sex: The identification of the biological/physical gender most often categorized as male or female.

Sexual Behavior: Actions that express a person's desire, love, romance and affection.

Sexual Orientation: The part of our sexual identity related to whom we are sexually attracted.

Straight: A common term to refer to heterosexuals.

Top Surgery: A term for chest surgery for trans people – breast removal for a trans man or breast augmentation for a trans woman.

Transgender: In its broadest meaning, this umbrella term encompasses anyone whose self-identity, behavior or anatomy falls outside of societal gender norms and expectations.

Transgender Man: A person who was assigned female at birth, but identifies as a man. May be shortened to “trans man”.

Transgender Woman: A person who was assigned male at birth, but identifies as a woman. May be shortened to “trans woman”.

Transvestite: Another term for crossdresser.

Transition: The term that describes the social, legal and medical process as one shifts their gender expression, official documentation and bodily appearance to more closely reflect their personal identification.

Transphobia: Negative feelings, attitudes, actions, or behaviors against transgender people or people perceived to be transgender. It may also be a fear of one's own gender non-conformity.

Transsexual: A person whose gender identity is not congruent with their biological sex. Transsexuals may or may not pursue hormonal or surgical means to bring congruence to themselves.

Two-Spirit: A culturally specific identification that describes indigenous North Americans who have both a male and female spirit, a different balance of masculine and feminine characteristics or who fulfill roles of both genders.