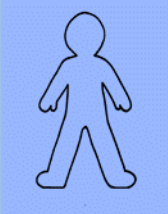


Understanding LGBTQ+ Terminology

Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Gender Expression

These are distinct concepts, but they combine uniquely in each person to make us who we are. Understanding these terms and how they do and do not intersect can help us better appreciate and respect the diverse spectrum of our identities.

SEX is biological: internal and external reproductive organs and sex chromosomes.



Female: An individual whose biological sex characteristics are typical to the sex that has the capacity to bear young or produce eggs.

Intersex: An individual whose biological sex characteristics (i.e., genitals, reproductive organs, chromosomes, and/or hormones) are not typical of those female or male.

Male: An individual whose biological sex characteristics are typical to the sex that has the capacity to produce relatively small, usually motile gametes which fertilize the eggs of a female.

GENDER EXPRESSION is the way individuals show their gender to the world. Gender expression is NOT related to sexual orientation.



Androgynous: A gender expression that is neither feminine nor masculine. It is sometimes defined as a blending of both masculinity and femininity.

Cross-dresser: An individual who, for comfort, enjoyment, and/or self-expression, wears clothing that has been designated by society as inappropriate for their gender.

Feminine: Having qualities or appearance traditionally associated with women.

Gender Expansive: Relating to an individual whose gender expression and/or gender identity does not fit into society's binary expectations. Some people prefer this term to gender nonconforming.



Gender Nonconforming: Relating to an individual whose gender expression and/or gender identity does not fit into society's binary expectations. Some people prefer this term to gender expansive.

Masculine: Having qualities or appearance traditionally associated with men.

Related Terms:

Drag King: An entertainer whose act features wearing men's clothing, facial makeup, and facial hair in order to impersonate a man.

Drag Queen: An entertainer whose act features wearing women's clothing, a wig, and makeup in order to impersonate a woman.

Gender Policing: The societal enforcement of binary gender roles and expectations.

ATTRACTION and ORIENTATION is our physical, emotional, or romantic attraction to others.



Affectional/Romantic Orientation: The part of an individual's identity that describes to whom they are romantically attracted.

Aromantic: Relating to an individual with a low or absent romantic attraction.

Asexual: Relating to an individual with a low or absent sexual attraction. **Ace** is a shortened, more casual term for asexual.

Biromantic: Relating to an individual who is romantically attracted to both men and women, or to more than one gender.

Bisexual: Relating to an individual who is sexually attracted to both men and women, or to more than one gender.

Gay: Relating to an individual who is sexually attracted only to people of the same gender. Traditionally a term used only by men that is now embraced by some women as well.

Heteroromantic: Relating to a man who is romantically attracted only to women, or a woman who is romantically attracted only to men.

Heterosexual: Relating to a man who is sexually attracted only to women, or a woman who is sexually attracted only to men; also known as straight.



Homoromantic: Relating to an individual who is romantically attracted only to people of the same gender.

Lesbian: Relating to a woman who is sexually attracted only to women.

Panromantic: Relating to an individual who is romantically attracted to people regardless of their gender.

Pansexual: Relating to an individual who is sexually attracted to people regardless of their gender.

Polyamorous: Relating to an individual who engages in more than one sexual and/or romantic relationship at a time, with the knowledge and consent of all involved.

Queer: A reclaimed term that is liked by some and disliked by others. It can be used to define any orientation that is not straight or any gender that is not cisgender.

Questioning: Relating to an individual who is currently unsure of or exploring their orientation and/or gender identity.

Same-Gender Loving: An identity term used within some communities of color relating to individuals who are attracted to people of the same gender.

Straight: Relating to a man who is sexually attracted only to women, or a woman who is sexually attracted only to men; also known as heterosexual.

Related Terms:

Biphobia: Fear, intolerance, or hatred of people who are, or who are perceived to be, bisexual or pansexual.

Cisnormativity: The assumption that everyone is cisgender or that being cisgender is the “right” way to be.

Heteronormativity: The assumption that everyone is heterosexual or that being heterosexual is the “right” way to be.

Homophobia: Fear, intolerance, or hatred of people who are, or who are perceived to be, gay or lesbian

Intimate Behaviors: Sexual and/or romantic activities.

Microaggression: A commonplace comment or behavior toward a marginalized group that is hurtful, insulting, or demeaning. The comment may or may not be intentionally insulting.



MSM: An abbreviation for “men who have sex with men.” This term was created to acknowledge and offer appropriate health care to men who do not identify as gay, bisexual, or pansexual, but who are engaging in sexual activities with men.

Transphobia: Fear, intolerance, or hatred of people who are, or who are perceived to be, transgender

GENDER IDENTITY is your “innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither.” *Human Rights Campaign*



Agender: Relating to an individual who has no gender.

Bigender: Refers to someone who identifies as 2 different genders.

Cisgender: Relating to an individual whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth; someone who is not transgender.

Demigender (Demiboy or Demigirl): To identify partially with a particular gender. A demigirl may feel partially like a girl, but not to the point of where they identify as a woman. Similarly, demiboy may feel somewhat like a boy.

Gender Expansive: Relating to an individual whose gender expression and/or gender identity does not fit into society’s binary expectations. Some people prefer this term to gender nonconforming.

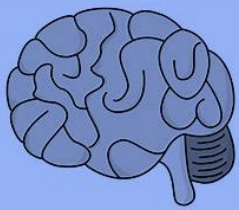
Gender-Fluid: Relating to an individual whose gender identity regularly fluctuates (slightly- libragender; partially- demigender; mostly but not entirely- paragender).

Genderflux: A term for those whose gender fluctuates in intensity.

Gender Nonconforming: Relating to an individual whose gender expression and/or gender identity does not fit into society’s binary expectations. Some people prefer this term to gender expansive.

Genderqueer: Relating to an individual whose gender identity is neither man nor woman.

Nonbinary: Relating to an individual whose gender identity is neither man nor woman. This can also be used as an umbrella term that includes many identities, such as agender, gender-expansive, gender-fluid, genderqueer, and Two-Spirit. **Enby** is a shortened, more casual word for nonbinary.



Queer: A reclaimed term that is liked by some and disliked by others. It can be used to define any orientation that is not straight or any gender that is not cisgender.

Questioning: Relating to an individual who is currently unsure of or exploring their orientation and/or gender identity.

Transgender: Relating to an individual whose sex assigned at birth does not match their gender identity. This word can also be used as an umbrella term that includes many identities, such as genderqueer, nonbinary, trans man, and trans woman.

Trans Man: Relating to an individual who was assigned female at birth, but whose gender identity is man.

Trans Woman: Relating to an individual who was assigned male at birth, but whose gender identity is woman.

Two Spirit: A modern term, created in 1990, that may be used by Indigenous North Americans as an LGBTQ+ identity term or to describe people who have the spirit of both man and woman, and/or are a third gender. It is embraced by some Indigenous North Americans and rejected by others. The term may be defined differently depending on the community or tribe.

Related Terms:

Binary: Relating to two things or two options. Individuals who identify their gender as either man or woman fit into the gender binary.

Gender Euphoria: A feeling of joy that a person can have when they think about their true gender identity.

Gender Dysphoria: A feeling of distress caused by the desire to have the physical characteristics of the gender you identify as but were not born with.

Latinx: A gender neutral term that can be used in place of the traditional, gendered terms for Latin American.

Cisnormativity: The assumption that everyone is cisgender or that being cisgender is the “right” way to be.

Misgender: To use an incorrect gendered term, like a pronoun, when referring to someone.

Mx: a gender neutral or non-binary title that can be used to replace gendered titles such as Mr., Mrs., and Miss.

Neopronoun: A new, not officially recognized gender-neutral or non-binary pronoun. Examples include: *xe, ze, fae, and ey*.

Transition: Changing from one state to another. Often used to refer to the process by which a transgender individual takes steps to align their body and their gender identity.

Intersectionality: The complex and overlapping ways that an individual's many identities (sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, immigration status, language, size, religion, etc.) come together and shape their experiences and interactions. Prejudice and discrimination related to these overlapping identities are unique and are different from prejudice and discrimination faced by people with each individual identity.



BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color

QPOC: Queer People of Color

QTPOC: Queer and Transgender People of Color

Initialism: Abbreviations of initial letters pronounced separately, in this case, relative to the LGBTQ+ community. Whatever initialism is used it is meant to represent inclusivity and the fact that identities can evolve and change over time.



GLBT: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender

LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning

LGBTQ+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and so much more

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Asexual, and so much more

LGBTQIAA2SPP: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Ally, Two-Spirit, Pansexual, and Polyamorous

QPOC: Queer People Of Color

QTPOC: Queer and Transgender People Of Color

Allyship: An active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which, a person of privilege seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group of people.



Ally: A person who is not a part of a particular marginalized group but who stands up for and advocates for the rights of people in that group.

Outdated Terms to Not Use



Hermaphrodite: An outdated and derogatory term for a person born with atypical genitalia. The word intersex, which is broader in its definition, is a more respectful term.

Homosexual: A dated term relating to an individual who is sexually attracted only to people of the same gender. The words gay and lesbian are more respectful terms.

Preferred Pronouns: Preferred is problematic when attached to asking someone's "preferred pronouns or name", suggesting that it is their choice rather than who they are.

Transsexual: A dated term relating to an individual who uses medical and/or surgical treatments to help align their body with their gender identity, by transitioning from the sex they were assigned at birth. The newer words transgender and trans are more commonly used, whether or not a person undergoes a medical or surgical transition.

Transvestite: A dated term for an individual who enjoys wearing clothing that has been designated by society as inappropriate for their gender. The word cross-dresser is a more respectful term.

Sources:

- *26Health*
- *Human Rights Campaign*
- *Learning for Justice*
- *Merriam Webster Dictionary*
- *Planned Parenthood*
- *Savvy Ally Action*
- *WannaLearnMore.com*