

LGBTQ+ Terms & Definitions

Terms Related to Sexuality and Gender	
Cishet	A combination of 'cis' (as in cisgender) and 'het' (as in heterosexual), cishet can be used as both an adjective or noun to describe a person that is both cisgender and heterosexual.
Closeted	A term used to describe an LGBTQ+ person who has not disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity.
Coming Out	<p>A western notion in which a person first acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to disclose that identity to others.</p> <p>The concept is most often used in reference to sexual orientation (SO) but can be applied to gender identity (GI), though the process differs significantly between SO and GI.</p>
LGBTQ+	An acronym for l esbian, g ay, b isexual, t ransgender, q ueer/ q uestioning, and additional (+) SOGIE identities that are not already represented in the rest of the acronym.
Outing	<p>Exposing someone's LGBTQ+ identity to others without their permission.</p> <p>Outing someone can have serious repercussions to their employment and economic stability, their interpersonal relationships (especially within religious community and family), as well as their physical safety and mental/emotional wellbeing.</p>
Queer	<p>An identity term often used to express a rejection of other gender and sexual orientation labels, or to describe sexual attraction to people of more than one gender. It is sometimes used as an umbrella term for LGBTQ+.</p> <p>Historically, queer has been used as a slur against LGBTQ people. Some people still find the term offensive while others have embraced the term. It should be used carefully.</p>

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Questioning	A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
SOGIE	Abbreviation for S exual O rientation, G ender I ntity, and (Gender) E xpression.
Two-Spirit (2S)	A modern umbrella term used by some Native North American communities to describe individuals that embody a traditional indigenous gender role and/or sexual identity in their culture that does not fit into the Western/Colonial Gender Binary.

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Terms Related to Gender	
AFAB	A reference to one's sex assigned at birth, AFAB is an abbreviation used for someone that was assigned female at birth , which may or may not align with their gender identity. <i>(Pronounced 'a fab'.)</i>
AMAB	A reference to one's sex assigned at birth, AMAB is an abbreviation used for someone that was assigned male at birth , which may or may not align with their gender identity. <i>(Pronounced 'a mab'.)</i>
Agender	A term used to describe a person who does not identify themselves as having a particular gender or who experiences a lack of gender.
Androgynous	A term used to describe someone who identifies or presents as neither distinguishably masculine nor feminine.
Butch	A term used to describe someone who exhibits traits typically associated with masculinity, most often--but not always--referring to a lesbian, bisexual, or queer woman.
Cisgender	A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with that typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.
Cisnormativity	The assumption that all--or nearly all--people are cisgender. This often has the effect of ignoring or erasing the experiences of transgender and nonbinary people. For example: a form that asks for gender with male and female as the only options.
Demigender	A term that describes someone who feels a partial connection with a particular gender; it falls under the nonbinary umbrella. Common related identities include "demiboy/demiman" and "demigirl/demiwoman."

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Femme	A term used to describe someone who exhibits traits typically associated with femininity, most often--but not always--referring to a lesbian, bisexual, or queer woman and, more recently, among the LGBTQ+ community more broadly.
Gender	Can refer to one of many broad social categories defined by cultural roles, societal expectations, and an individual's identity/expression OR to how an individual relates their identity to these categories, social roles/norms, their body, and their personal expression. The concept of gender varies greatly between different cultures, individuals, and time periods.
Gender Binary	A cultural system in which gender is bifurcated into two strict categories of male and female. Gender identity and expression is expected to align with the sex assigned at birth.
Gender Dysphoria	Describes the distress that a person may experience when perceived as a gender that does not match their gender identity, or from physical characteristics that don't match their gender identity. In the most recent version of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), Gender Dysphoria is also the formal diagnosis applied to transgender people seeking mental health support for their transition.
Gender Expression	External performance or communication of one's gender (e.g. behavior, clothing, haircut, voice), which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.
Gender Identity (GI)	One's internal sense of gender: how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

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Gender Role	<p>This is the set of expectations and behaviors assigned to females and males by society. Every culture and community has its own expectations about how women/girls, men/boys, and other genders should behave, and these expectations often shift over time.</p>
Gender Transition	<p>The process by which some people strive to more closely align their gender identity with their outward appearance.</p> <p>Some people <i>socially transition</i>, whereby they might begin dressing or using names and pronouns to be socially recognized as another gender.</p> <p>Some undergo <i>medical transitions</i> in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.</p> <p>There are also <i>legal aspects to transitioning</i> (e.g. changing gender marker on birth certificate).</p> <p>Not all transgender people undergo all or any of these types of transitions, and the type and rate of transition someone pursues does not make their gender any less valid than another person's.</p>
Gender-Expansive	<p>A term that conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender identity or expression than typically associated within the Gender Binary. It is sometimes used to describe young people who are comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth and do not conform to the associated societal constructs.</p>
Genderfluid	<p>Refers to being unconfined by one single, fixed gender identity and able to identify with multiple genders or no gender at different points in time.</p>

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<p>Genderqueer</p>	<p>An identity term used to describe people whose gender identity and expression are non-normative (or 'queer'). Genderqueer and nonbinary are often used interchangeably as umbrella terms for folks whose gender identity or expression is outside of the Gender Binary.</p>
<p>Internalized Transphobia</p>	<p>Negative attitudes that a transgender or nonbinary person may adopt about their own gender identity after receiving stigmatizing messages from their culture.</p>
<p>Intersex</p>	<p>An umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations. In some cases, these traits are visible at birth; in others, traits may not become apparent until puberty. Some chromosomal variations of this type may not be physically apparent at all. Being intersex is not the same thing as being transgender; the term intersex refers to anatomical variations and does not describe gender at all.</p>
<p>Misgendering</p>	<p>Referring to someone with the wrong gendered language (e.g. name, pronouns, other language). Misgendering can be extremely harmful to a person whether it happens directly to them or without them present.</p>
<p>Nonbinary (Enby)</p>	<p>An identity and umbrella term used to describe people whose gender is outside of the Gender Binary. People who identify as nonbinary may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female, or as falling completely outside these categories.</p> <p>Enby is derived from and pronounced as the letters 'NB' from nonbinary and is sometimes used in place of the full term "nonbinary."</p>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>A category, usually either male or female, assigned based on physiological characteristics including chromosomes, sex hormone levels, and genitalia. A child's sex assigned at birth is typically only based on their external genitalia.</p>

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Transfeminine (Transfemme)	An umbrella term used to describe transgender folks whose gender identity or expression is feminine. This term is most often--but not always--used for folks assigned male at birth (AMAB).
Transgender	A term used to describe people whose gender identity does not match expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. A transgender experience does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, trans people may be straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, etc.
Transmasculine (Transmasc)	An umbrella term used to describe transgender folks whose gender identity or expression is masculine. This term is most often--but not always--used for folks assigned female at birth (AFAB).
Transphobia	The fear, disgust, or hatred of transgender people.
Transsexual	A term used to describe people whose gender identity does not conform to their sex assigned at birth and who often seek medical treatment to align their body and gender identity. <i>The term should be used carefully; it is considered offensive to some individuals, but others strongly identify with it. In most cases, the term transgender is more appropriate.</i>

Terms Related to Sexuality	
Aromantic (Aro)	A term used to describe a person who does not experience romantic attraction.
Asexual (Ace)	A term used to describe a person who does not experience sexual attraction.
Biphobia	Prejudice, fear, or hatred directed toward bisexual people.
Bisexual (Bi)	A term used to describe a person emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to more than one gender--though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree.
Demisexual	A term used to describe an individual who experiences sexual attraction only after forming an emotional connection with a person.
Gay	A term used to describe a person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to people of the same gender, most often--but not always--men who have sex with men (MSM).
Heteronormativity	The assumption that all--or nearly all--people are heterosexual. This often has the effect of ignoring or erasing the experiences of LGBTQ+ people. For example: a form that requires parent information to be listed under "mother" and "father".
Heterosexual	A term used to describe people whose emotional, romantic, or sexual attractions are to people of another gender. Colloquially referred to as "straight".
Homophobia	The fear, disgust, or hatred of people who are attracted to people of the same gender.

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Homosexual	Outdated clinical term <i>considered derogatory and offensive</i> by many gay people. 'Lesbian' and 'gay' are more commonly accepted terms to describe people who are attracted to members of the same gender.
Internalized Homophobia	Negative attitudes that a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer person may adopt about their own sexual orientation after receiving stigmatizing messages from their culture.
Lesbian	A term used to describe a woman who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted primarily to other women.
MSM	An abbreviation for M en who have S ex with M en, MSM is used to describe an individual's sexual behavior regardless of their sexual identity.
Pansexual (Pan)	Describes someone who has the potential for sexual attraction to people of any gender.
Same-Gender Loving	A term some prefer to use instead of LGBTQ+ to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender. This term is especially common among older Black Americans.
Sexual Identity	This is how we perceive and what we call ourselves. Such labels include lesbian, gay, bi, pan, queer, questioning, heterosexual, straight, and others. Sexual identity (how we define ourselves) and sexual behavior can be chosen, unlike sexual orientation which cannot. Sexual identity may not always align with sexual behavior.
Sexual Orientation (SO)	A person's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people.
Sexuality	How one experiences and expresses oneself as a sexual being.