

The A-to-T of LGBT+

This useful document is a part of Your D+I's workshop, The A-to-T of LGBT+. It covers all the definitions learned in the course so that you can revise your LGBT+ terminology and better support LGBT+ individuals.



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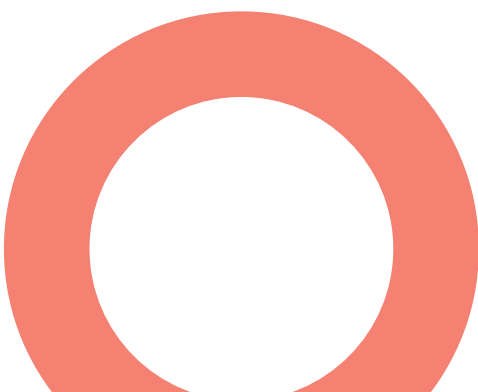




Disclaimers

All language evolves quickly, and this is particularly true when it comes to LGBT+ language. Bear in mind that the definitions and uses of the following terms can always change and that it is important to ensure that the resources you use are up to date.

It is also important to note that the following terms should only be used to describe somebody who has given you permission to do so. Be particularly cautious of the terms that are described as outdated as they may cause offense (even if you're not applying them to a person).



The A-to-D of LGBT+



A

Ally

A member of a privileged group who stands with an oppressed group. For example, a trans ally is a **Cisgender** (non-trans) person who has educated themselves on trans issues and stands for trans rights.

Asexual

Asexual people - also known as aces - fall on the spectrum of asexuality, meaning they experience no (or little) sexual desire for others. They may or may not experience romantic desire and/or have sex.

Another **Orientation** on the ace spectrum is demisexual, which means that you aren't sexually attracted to anyone without an emotional bond.

B

Bisexual

A bisexual person is somebody attracted to two or more genders. This can be any combination of genders, including **Non-binary** genders like agender - not all bisexual people are attracted to men and women.

Biphobia

This is the prejudice against bisexual people, which can take many forms - from overt **Discrimination** to microaggressions. Biphobia often asserts that bisexuality isn't real.





C

Cisgender

A person who isn't **Transgender**. As trans means having a different gender to the one you were assigned at birth, cis means having the *same* gender as the one you were assigned at birth.

Coming Out

Coming out is when an LGBT+ person tells others about their sexuality and/or gender identity. It is often viewed as one, big event, but coming out is usually something LGBT+ people do their whole lives.

D

Discrimination

Discrimination affects many minority groups, including LGBT+ individuals, and can take many forms. This includes individual acts of hatred or injustice (including microaggressions) as well as institutional discrimination, which comes from society and its institutions.

Drag

Drag is the performance of any gender/s in a theatrical way. To perform drag, a person usually imitates the opposite gender, emphasising its femininity or masculinity, but you can also do drag of your own gender.

Those performing female drag are often referred to as drag queens and those performing male drag are often referred to as drag kings. Both of these practices are commonly done by **Gay** and/or **Transgender** individuals, enabling them to explore different genders.



The F-to-H of LGBT+

F

Femme

The term 'femme' is traditionally used to describe a **Lesbian** who express themselves in a typically feminine way and can be viewed as the opposite of terms like 'butch' (masculinely-presenting lesbian) or 'stud' (a similar term originating in the African-American lesbian community).

More recently, femme is also used by **Transgender** and **Non-binary** people who express themselves in a feminine way.

G

Gay

Originally used mostly to describe men, gay is an **Orientation** wherein a person is attracted to people of the same gender. This term replaced the outdated word '**Homosexual**' and can be used by men, women and non-binary people alike.

Also, the term is sometimes used by people attracted to multiple genders (as long as one of them is their own gender). It should be used as an adjective, not a noun. For example, 'he is gay' rather than 'he is a gay'.

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is when a **Transgender** person makes social and/or physical changes to align with their gender identity. This process can involve changing your name, pronouns, the way you dress and/or getting gender reassignment surgery.

The term 'gender reassignment' is often used by institutions and not by trans people themselves, who generally refer to this process as their **Transition**.

Genderqueer

Genderqueer is another word for **Non-binary**, an umbrella term for when somebody's gender does not fit within the terms 'male' or 'female'.

There are many gender identities within the category of genderqueer/non-binary, though some people identify simply as genderqueer.

H

Homosexual

Homosexual is an **Orientation** wherein a person is attracted to those with the same gender as them. It started out as a medical term, and the word 'gay' is, therefore, generally preferred.

Homophobia

This is the word for prejudice and **Discrimination** against lesbians and gay people. It is when someone is afraid of or hateful towards someone who is attracted to people of the same gender. Homophobia can also apply to bisexuals when their attraction to the same gender is targeted. Homophobia takes many forms – from passive aggressive microaggressions to violence.



The I-to-O of LGBT+



Intersex

Intersex is a term for somebody whose reproductive or sexual anatomy does not conform to strict ideas of male or female. The sexual attributes affected include primary and secondary sexual organs, chromosomes and/or hormones.

Intersex people can identify as male, female, non-binary or simply intersex. While some intersex people identify as **LGBT+**, some do not.



Lesbian

A lesbian is traditionally a woman who is attracted only to other women. This is still the case, but the term is sometimes used by non-binary people and people who are attracted to women and non-binary people.

LGBT+

LGBT is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender. Sometimes written as LGBTQ+, LGBTQIAP+ or other variations, the acronym represents the community of those who are not **Cisgender** and/or heterosexual.

The other letters of the longer acronym above are generally defined as **Queer**, **Intersex**, **Asexual** and **Pansexual**, but some letters have multiple meanings, such as Q for **Questioning**. The plus symbol represents the many other identities found within the community.





N

Non-binary

A non-binary person is someone whose gender does not fit 'male' or 'female'. It is an umbrella term that is generally interchangeable with **Genderqueer**. As their gender does not match the one they were assigned at birth, non-binary people may identify as **Transgender**.

Some non-binary people identify with aspects of male or female (or both), while some have a gender identity completely separate from binary gender. Non-binary people sometimes use 'she/her' or 'he/him' **Pronouns**, but many use gender neutral pronouns like 'they/them' or 'ze/zir'.

O

Orientation

Somebody's orientation refers to who they are attracted to. Generally, this refers to both sexual and romantic attraction and is interchangeable with the word 'sexuality'. Examples of orientations include **Lesbian**, straight, and **Asexual**.

Orientation is sometimes split into romantic orientation and sexual orientation. For example, a woman may be aromantic (feels no romantic attraction) and homosexual (feels sexual attraction to women). Most of the time, though, terms like **Gay** or **Bisexual** refer to both romantic and sexual attraction.



The P-to-T of LGBT+

P

Pansexual

A pansexual person is somebody who is attracted to people of all genders. While some **Bisexual** people are attracted to all genders, this is always the case for pansexuals. In addition, pansexuality is often described as being gender-blind as gender is not a determining factor in their attraction to others.

Pronouns

In the LGBT+ community, the word 'pronouns' refers to the personal pronouns we use to describe others. These often carry an implication of gender. For example, describing somebody as 'she' or 'him'.

Pronouns are particularly important for **Transgender** and **Non-binary** people as using the correct or incorrect pronouns can reaffirm somebody's gender or constitute misgendering.

In addition to the common 'she/her' and 'he/him' pronouns, some people use gender neutral pronouns. These include 'they/them' as well as neopronouns like 'ze/zir'.

Q

Queer

The 'term' queer is a slur used against gay people and others who are attracted to those of the same gender. The word has been reclaimed by the community, though not all people use it to describe themselves.

Many people identify with the word queer either alongside their sexuality or gender identity or in place of a specific identity. The latter use of the

word allows people free themselves of specific labels while remaining part of the community.

Questioning

If somebody is questioning, they are unsure of their sexual and/or gender identity and in the process of exploration.

T

Transgender

Transgender, or trans for short, is a word for somebody whose gender is different to the gender they were assigned at birth. For example, a trans woman is somebody who was assigned male at birth but realised they are actually a woman.

The trans umbrella includes trans women and trans men as well as **Non-binary** people (if the individual identifies as trans). Though many trans people will **Transition**, you are still trans before you transition and can also decide against transitioning.

Transgender man

Transgender men, commonly shortened to trans men, are those who were assigned female at birth but identify as male. The term FTM (short for female-to-male) is occasionally used by trans people but is generally considered outdated.

Transgender woman

Transgender women, commonly shortened to trans women, are those who were assigned male at birth but identify as female. The term MTF (short for male-to-female) is occasionally used by trans people but is generally considered outdated.

Transsexual

The word transsexual has the same definition as **Transgender** but is older and is considered outdated by many.

Transition

As we mentioned in the definition of **Gender Reassignment**, most trans people call the time in which they make changes related to their gender their transition. The word 'reassignment' can make some people think only of surgery despite the fact that there are many other elements to a person's transition. Referring to this period as transitioning better acknowledges that it takes time and can have many steps.

Transphobia

This is the prejudice against **Transgender** and **Non-binary** people, which can take many forms - from overt **Discrimination** to microaggressions. Most transphobic actions assert that being trans isn't real, but it can also take the form of insisting that a specific trans person isn't really trans or that they aren't 'trans enough'. It can also take the form of violence against trans people.





Say hey!

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