

Glossary of Basic LGBTQ+ Related Terms

Agender: Describes someone who does not have an internal sense of gender.

Ally: A person who does not identify as LGBTQIA+ and supports the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals

Asexual: Describes someone who does not experience sexual attraction to others.

Bisexual: Describes someone who experiences sexual and/or romantic attraction to the same gender as himself and different gender(s) from himself. Known traditionally as attraction to men and women, but many bisexuals are distancing themselves from the gender binary.

Cisgender: Describes an individual who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expectations ascribed to them at birth.

Gay: Describes men who identify as experiencing romantic or sexual attraction to other men; may also be used as an umbrella term to describe all individuals who identify as experiencing same-gender attraction.

Gender Binary: The notion that there are only two genders and an individual must identify as either/or.

Gender-expansive: An umbrella term used for individuals that broaden their own culture's commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender-expansive individuals include those with transgender and non-binary identities as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society's notions of gender.

Gender Expression: The ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through social cues.

Heterosexism: Prejudice against individuals and groups who display non-heterosexual behaviors or identities, combined with the majority power to impose such prejudice.

Homophobia: The irrational fear or hatred of persons perceived to be gay, homosexuality, or any behavior or belief that does not conform to rigid sex role stereotypes; reinforces both sexism and heterosexism.

Intersex: The condition of being born with biological aspects of both female and male sexes to varying degrees (May be determined through biological structure, hormones, DNA, or other physical factors).

Lesbian: Describes individuals who identify as women and experience romantic and/or sexual attraction to other women.

Pansexual: Describes individuals who identify as having a romantic and/or sexual attraction to all or many gender expressions; also considered romantic/sexual attraction to others regardless of gender.

Queer: A widely used umbrella term used to describe those individuals whose sexual or gender identities have been marginalized; also can describe a non-hetero/gender normative identity, and is often used by those with more fluid identities; may also be used to indicate a particular subversive gender/sexual politic; a reclaimed term that had been used as a slur and can still be considered offensive to some people; should be used carefully by allies, though it is considered acceptable for gender and sexual minority-identified individuals to use it, as well as in academic settings.

Sexuality: An individual's exploration of sexual acts, sexual identity, sexual pleasure, and desire.

Trans*: A new umbrella term for all transgender-identified people that was created out of internet culture to be more inclusive of non-binary individuals, as many felt that "trans" or "transgender" was being used only for binary-identifying transgender people; asterisk comes from a search engine command to search for all related information.

Transgender: A broad term used to describe all gender variant people, or any person who identifies as a gender not assigned at birth according to anatomical sex.

Transphobia: The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.