

LGBTQ2S Terms and Definitions

LGBTQ2S, LGBT, LGBTQ, LGBTQA, TBLG

are some of the acronyms refer to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirit and Ally. Although all of the different identities within “LGBT” are often lumped together (and share sexism as a common root of oppression), there are specific needs and concerns related to each individual identity.

A/B/C

Advocate

is a person who actively works to end intolerance, educate others, and support social equity for a group.

Ally

is a straight person who supports queer and trans* people.

Androgyny

(1) a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity; (2) occasionally used in place of “intersex” to describe a person with both female and male anatomy.

Asexual

is a person who generally does not experience sexual attraction (or very little) to any group of people.

Bigender

is a person who fluctuates between traditionally “woman” and “man” gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both genders (and sometimes a third gender).

Binary Gender

is a traditional and outdated view of gender, limiting possibilities to “man” and “woman”.

Binary Sex

is a traditional and outdated view of sex, limiting possibilities to “female” or “male”.

Biological sex

is the physical anatomy and gendered hormones one is born with, generally described as male, female, or intersex, and often confused with gender.

Biphobia

is an aversion toward bisexuality and bisexual people as a social group or as individuals. People of any sexual orientation can experience such feelings of aversion. Biphobia is a source of discrimination against bisexuals, and may be based on negative bisexual stereotypes or irrational fear.

Bisexual

a person who has emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction for a person of more than one gender.

Cisgender/Cissexual

is a person whose gender identity matches society’s expectations of someone with their physical sex characteristics.

Cis-man

is a person who identifies as a man, presents himself masculinely, and has male biological sex, often referred to as simply “man”.

Cis-woman

is a person who identifies as a woman, presents herself femininely, and has female biological sex, often referred to as simply “woman”.

Cissexism

is a harmful beliefs that being non-trans is the only acceptable and “natural” form of gender expression.

Closeted

is a term to describe someone who is keeping their sexuality or gender identity a secret from many (or any) people, and has yet to “come out of the closet”.

Coming Out

is the process of revealing your sexuality or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process; not to be confused with “outing”.

Crossdresser

is someone who occasionally dresses in the clothing of the “opposite” gender as part of their gender expression.

Cross-dressing

is wearing clothing that conflicts with the traditional gender expression of your sex and gender identity (e.g., a man wearing a dress) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification; often conflated with transsexuality.

F/G/H

Female

is a person with a specific set of sexual anatomy (e.g., XX phenotype, vagina, ovaries, uterus, breasts, higher levels of estrogen, fine body hair) pursuant to this label.

Fluid(ity)

is generally with another term attached, like gender-fluid or fluid-sexuality, fluid(ity) describes an identity that is a fluctuating mix of the options available (e.g., man and woman, gay and straight); not to be confused with “transitioning”.

Gay or Lesbian

is a person who has emotional, romantic or sexual attraction for people of the same sex.

Gender/Gender Identity

is how we perceive our identity as male, female, both, neither, regardless of our physical bodies.

Gender Expression

is the external display of gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on a scale of masculinity and femininity.

Genderqueer/Gender non-conforming

is an umbrella term used proudly by some people to defy gender restrictions and/or to deconstruct gender norms. Gender neutral pronouns include: Ze, Hir, Hirs, They, and Them.

Gender Identity Dysphoria

is a formal psychiatric diagnosis used by the medical profession to describe trans people.

Heterosexism

is a behaviour that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than queerness, or ignores/doesn’t address queerness as existing.

Heterosexual

is a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the other gender (or, literally, biological sex) than they have; often referred to as “straight”.

Homophobia

is fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, or discomfort with queer people, often focused inwardly as one begins to question their own sexuality.

I/M/O

Intersex

is an umbrella term used to describe a person whose physical sex characteristics or chromosomes don't fit traditional medical definitions of male or female

Male

is a person with a specific set of sexual anatomy (e.g. XY phenotype, penis, testis, higher levels of testosterone, coarse body hair, facial hair) pursuant to this label.

Outing

[someone] is when someone reveals another person’s sexuality or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person’s consent or approval; not to be confused with “coming out”.

P/Q/R

Pansexual

is a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

Queer

is an umbrella term used proudly by some people to defy gender or sexual restrictions. Not used by all. Can be considered offensive.

Questioning

is the process of exploring one’s own sexual orientation, investigating influences that may come from their family, religious upbringing, and internal motivations.

Real life experience

(Real Life Test) is the period in which a trans person is currently obligated to prove they can adapt to societal gender roles before being approved by publicly funded medical institutions for hormones or surgeries.

S/T

Sex (biological sex)

is a label we are given to describe our physical bodies and reproductive abilities. Characteristics of the body used to determine sex may include genitals, gonads, hormones, chromosomes, and secondary sex characteristics.

Sexual orientation

is a person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person(s).

Same Gender Loving

(SGL) is a phrase coined by the African American/Black queer communities used as an alternative for “gay” and “lesbian” by people who may see those as terms of the White queer community.

Stealth

is means to live as their self-identified gender without other people knowing that they are trans.

Third Gender

(1) a person who does not identify with the traditional genders of “man” or “woman,” but identifies with another gender; (2) the gender category available in societies that recognize three or more genders.

Trans

is an umbrella term for a person whose gender identity does not match society's expectations of someone with their physical sex characteristics.

Trans Man

is a female-to-male trans person.

Trans Woman

is a male-to-female trans person.

Transition

is the process trans people go through to overcome physical, legal and social barriers so they can express their self-identified gender.

Transphobia

is an irrational fear and/or hatred and/or intolerance of people who are trans, perceived to be trans, or who cross societal gender norms.

Transvestite

is often used to refer to trans women in an insulting manner, despite having a true definition: a person who dresses as the binary opposite gender expression (“cross-dresses”) for sexual gratification; often confused with “transsexual”.

Two-Spirit

is a cultural identity used by some indigenous people who have both masculine and feminine spirits.