

LGBTQ+ Terms & Definitions

AFAB

Assigned female at birth.

AIS

Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome is a genetic condition in which a person is born male (XY chromosomal make up) but is unable to respond to male hormones (androgen) and thereby presents as a female. An AIS girl has normal female genital appearance, cannot menstruate and is infertile.

Ambiguous Genitalia

A rare condition in which an infant's external genitals don't appear to be clearly either male or female.

AMAB

Assigned male at birth.

Asexual

Term used to describe someone who does not possess desire for sexual activity with anyone else or by themselves.

Binding

The act of flattening one's chest with constricting materials such as a compression top.

Bisexual

Person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of their own gender and people of other genders.

Cisgender

An individual that identifies with the gender that correlates with the sex assigned to them at birth.

DSD

Disorder of sexual development (sometimes used in place of intersex).

FTM

A transgender man, short for female-to-male.

Gay

Person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of their own gender. Most commonly used for men, but can be used regardless of gender identity.

Gender Expression

How one outwardly expresses their gender identity through appearance and behavior (mannerisms, hairstyle, clothing, voice inflection, etc.).

Gender Identity

Internal sense of where one fits on the man-woman spectrum.

Gender Roles

Internal sense of where one fits on the man-woman spectrum.

Heterosexism

Discrimination or prejudice against homosexuals on the assumption that heterosexuality is the "normal" sexual orientation.

Intersex

According to the National Institute of Health: "Intersex is a group of conditions where there is a discrepancy between the external genitals and the internal genitals (the testes and ovaries). The older term for this condition is hermaphroditism. Increasingly, this group of conditions is being called disorders of sex development (DSDs)." Intersex can also be used to describe someone who has both male and female sex characteristics.

Intersex Chromosome Combos

Any variation from the traditional chromosomal make up for females (XX) and males (XY). Examples include XXY, XXXY, XYY, etc.

Lesbian

Woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.

LGBTQ

An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning people. The term is often used to describe all sexual and gender minorities and there is much diversity in each group including race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic location and age. Other variations of the acronym include other identities. It's important to note that while some letters (and even numbers) in the acronym may change from time to time, the behaviors behind those identities have always existed - we're just now finding appropriate ways of identifying them.

MSM

Medical indication for men who have sex with other men, purposefully omitting sexual orientation.

MTF

A transgender woman, short for male-to-female.

Padding

Sometimes transgender women will utilize padded undergarments to enhance their figure with a more feminine shape (larger hips, posterior, etc.). Transgender men may pad their groin with a faux phallus.

XY

XX

Pansexual

Merriam-Webster describes pansexual as “exhibiting or implying many forms of sexual expression.” The term can be used to describe someone that participates in sexual activity with a variety of partners that span multiple sexual orientations and/or genders.

Queer

Umbrella term for people whose sexual orientation or gender identity falls outside of societal norms.

Questioning

Someone who is not sure where they fit on the gender or sexuality spectrum.

Sex

Genetics including chromosomes and internal or external sex organs that fall on the male-female spectrum.

Sexual Orientation

One's sexual, physical, romantic, spiritual, or emotional attraction to others.

Transgender

An individual who does not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. Other variations that fall under the transgender umbrella, and that may be used interchangeably, include genderqueer, gender-variant and non-binary.

Transition

The process a person undergoes when changing their appearance either to be more congruent with the gender they feel themselves to be and/or to be in harmony with their preferred gender expression.

Transphobia

Intense dislike of or prejudice against transgender people.

Tucking

When a person tucks their penis and testes in between their legs to create the illusion of having female anatomy.

Two-Spirit

According to the Northeast Two-Spirit Society: “In many American Indian traditions, there were individuals, who entered into same-sex relationships who were considered holy and were treated with the highest respect and acceptance. They were the historians, the healers and people of empowerment. They possessed a delicate balance of male and female ‘spirits’ and were often honored for being unique and having a different spiritual calling. One of the important functions they provided was as mediators for the spirit world and physical world.”⁴ Today, Two-Spirit is a modern term used to describe sexual orientation minorities and gender-variant individuals in Native American communities.

XXX