

THE LGBT ABC



LGBT means lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. There are many different terms people use for sexuality and gender and it can get a little confusing.

No matter how you think people identify, do check with them which terms they like to use. Also, language changes all the time but here we try to cover a few of the basics. Are there other ones you know?

D

Dyke: Historically a slur directed at lesbians. Some choose to identify this way or reclaim it.

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Demisexual: Someone who only feels sexual attraction to someone after a strong emotional bond has been formed.

Heterosexual: Someone who is sexually attracted to someone of the opposite gender to themselves.

Homosexual: Someone who is sexually attracted to the same gender as themselves.

Homophobia: The discrimination and hatred of gay and lesbian people.

H

A

Agender: Someone who doesn't have a gender.

Allies: Someone who supports the LGBT community.

Asexual or ace: Someone who does not experience sexual attraction.

B

Binary: The idea you're one of two things, e.g. male or female, gay or straight.

Bigender: Someone who identifies with two genders e.g. male and female.

Binding: A method used to press down the breasts for the appearance of a flat chest.

Biphobia: The discrimination and hatred of bisexual individuals.

Bisexual: People who are bisexual are attracted towards more than one gender.

C

Cisgender or cis: When your gender matches the sex you were assigned at birth.

Closet: When someone hasn't revealed their gender or sexual orientation, i.e. 'being in the closet'.

Coming out: The act of an individual revealing to others their gender or sexual orientation.

Gay: A widely accepted term for all same-sex attractions.

Gender: The gender you feel you belong to which may differ from the one you were assigned at birth, based on your genitals.

Gender dysphoria: A medical term for feeling distressed about the fact your gender and assigned sex are different.

Gender neutral: Someone who doesn't identify with any gender.

Genderqueer: When none of the categories on the gender spectrum fit you and you feel you're something else.

Gender fluid: When your identity moves around the gender spectrum.

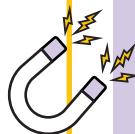
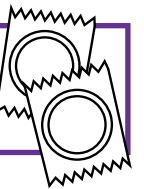
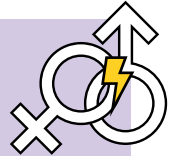
Intersex: People whose biology doesn't easily fit into male or female. This can include genitals, chromosomes or hormones.

Lesbian: A female who is sexually attracted to the same gender.

MSM: Stands for 'men who have sex with men'.

M

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THE LGBT ABC



N

Non-binary:

Someone who doesn't fit into the binary gender (male/female).

Romantic attraction:

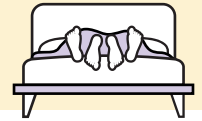
An emotional connection or attachment, separate to sexual attraction.

S

Sex: Sex is often used to talk about the difference between male and female and is commonly defined by reproductive organs.

Sexuality: This refers to your sexual feelings and is often used to mean who you're attracted to.

Straight: See heterosexual.



R



Pansexual: A sexual or emotional attraction, desire or romantic love towards people regardless of gender identity.

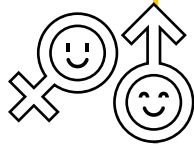
Passing: Being perceived as the gender identity you identify with in public.

Pre-op: A self-defining term used by trans individuals who have not had surgery but intend to.

Polygender: 'Poly' means 'more than one' and this describes people who have multiple genders at once.

Polysexual: Someone who is sexually attracted to many genders.

Pronoun: Pronouns are used instead of names, like 'he', 'her' or 'them'. This can be problematic for trans and non-binary people.



T

Third gender: Neither female or male. Countries like India, Pakistan and Albania have long had three gender categories.

Transgender or trans:

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not line up with their assigned sex.

Transition: The process a trans person goes through medically, socially or legally in order to live as the gender they belong in.

Transphobia:

The discrimination and hatred of trans and transsexual individuals.



Transsexual: An old fashioned term for someone who goes through, or wants to go through, gender realignment.

Transvestite: Someone who likes to dress as the opposite sex because it feels good, not because they're unhappy with their gender.

Tucking: A method used to tuck the penis back to create the impression of female genitalia.



U

Unsure: Someone who feels unsure of their sexuality and or gender identity.

Variable identities: A person can find themselves assuming various roles to suit the social situation.

V

P

Queer: An umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities. Can have negative connotations for some, while others have reclaimed it.

Questioning:

Someone who may be questioning their gender or sexuality.



Q

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Visit us online at: brook.org.uk

With thanks to Brook's Work It Out group in Blackburn who helped update this resource.