

# LGBTQ Terminology

Whether you know the basics, or consider yourself an expert on the LGBTQ community, there are always new terms and concepts that we can educate ourselves on. Being educated makes for a better ally, and will make the GSA and its members safe spaces for people to come to with questions. Here are some important terms and identities to get you started!

**Advocate:** A person who publicly supports a cause. They work to end homophobia and transphobia by educating to community and publicly supporting social equity.

**Agender:** A person who does not identify as having a particular gender. People who identify as agender don't align with the concept of being a man or woman, and see themselves as living without a gender.

**Ally:** A person who supports The LGBTQ community, equal civil rights, gender equality, and challenges homophobia and transphobia.

**Androgynous:** A gender expression that has both masculine and feminine characteristics.

**Aromantic:** A person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others. Aromanticism has a spectrum like any other identity, and can vary from person to person.

**Asexual:** A person who experience little or no sexual attraction to others. Asexuality has a spectrum like any other identity, and can vary from person to person. It is different than celibacy because it is an orientation, and not the act of abstaining from an activity or practice.

**Bigender:** A gender identity in which a person identifies with both male and female genders, or with other non-binary identities.

**Biological Sex:** Refers to chromosomes, hormone profiles, internal and external sex organs and other anatomical characteristics that define a person as being biologically male or female.



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**Bisexual:** A person who experiences attraction to both men and women.

**Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity corresponds with their biological sex.

**"Coming Out":** A metaphor used to explain the process of a LGBTQ person self-disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Demiromantic:** A person who only experiences romantic attraction after developing an emotional connection with an individual beforehand.

**Demisexual:** A person who only experiences sexual attraction after developing an emotional connection with an individual beforehand.

**FtM/F2M; MtF/M2F:** Abbreviations for a female-to-male transgender individual;  
Abbreviations for male-to-female transgender individual

**Gay:** A person who is attracted emotionally, physically, and/or sexually to people of the same sex or gender. Gay is primarily used when referring to male-identified people, however the term can also be used by women or non-binary people.

**Gender Binary:** A classification system and idea that there are only two distinct genders: male and female.

**Gender Expression:** The way in which a person shows their gender in an external way. Examples of gender expression may include dress, social behaviors, hairstyle, demeanor, etc.

**Gender Fluid:** A gender identity best described as a combination or mix between male and female. A person who identifies as gender fluid may always feel like a mix of male and female, or may have days where they feel more masculine or feminine.

**Gender Identity:** A person's internal perception of their gender. Gender identity may or may not correspond with birth sex.



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**Gender Non-Conforming:** A gender expression that indicates a person whose behavior or appearance does not conform to cultural and social expectation about what is appropriate to their birth sex. Can be abbreviated as "GNC".

**Genderqueer:** A gender identity often used by a person who does not subscribe to the conventional gender binary.

**Heterosexism:** Behavior, discrimination, or prejudice against the LGBTQ community on the assumption that being heterosexual is the "normal" or "correct" sexual orientation.

**Homophobia:** A term used to describe a wide range of negative attitudes or prejudices that a person may have towards the LGBTQ community. This could include fear, anger, resentment, discomfort, etc.

**Lesbian:** A woman who experiences attraction romantically, emotionally, and/or sexually to other women.

**Pansexual:** A person who experiences attraction romantically, emotionally, and/or sexually to members of all gender identities.

**Queer:** An umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities who are not straight or cisgender. Historically, this term has been used to put down the LGBTQ community, so some members of the community are not comfortable using this term to identify themselves.

**Questioning:** An individual who is exploring their gender identity or sexual orientation, and may be concerned about applying a social label to themselves for various reasons.

**QPOC/QTPOC:** An abbreviation for queer people of color/queer transgender people of color.



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**Romantic Attraction:** An emotional response that many people feel when they want to have a romantically intimate relationship with someone. This could include dating, marriage, long-term partnership, etc. Different from sexual attraction, and felt in varying degrees by different people.

**Sex Assigned at Birth:** A term used to describe an individual's biologically assigned sex, and not their gender identity.

**Sexual Attraction:** A physical response that many people feel when they want to have a physically intimate relationship with someone. This could include kissing, touching, etc. Different from romantic attraction, and felt in varying degrees by different people.

**Sexual Orientation:** Refers to person's sexual/romantic attraction toward other people.

**Straight:** A person whose primary attraction is towards people who are not the same gender or sex as they are.

**Third Gender:** This term is used for a person who does not identify as male or female, but as another gender.

**Trans\*:** An umbrella term used to include all identities other than cisgender or gender binary. This may include transgender, genderqueer, non-binary, queer, etc.

**Transgender:** A person whose gender identity is different than their sex assigned at birth.

**Transphobia:** A term used to describe a wide range of negative attitudes or prejudices that a person may have towards trans-identified people. This could include fear, anger, resentment, confusion, etc.



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**Two-Spirit:** An umbrella term traditionally used by indigenous North Americans to describe certain people in their communities who fulfill a third gender role in their culture.

**Ze/Zem/Zer & Zi/Hir/Hirs:** Gender neutral singular pronouns sometimes used by individuals who are not comfortable or do not identify with gendered pronouns.



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