

**ABC of LGBT Language**

‘Sexuality’ is a holistic term for someone’s sexual behaviours, attractions, likes, dislikes, kinks and preferences. Sexual orientation makes up a part of someone’s sexuality, and sexuality is sometimes used interchangeably with sexual orientation. Your sexuality covers what you enjoy and how you enjoy it, whether that is about partners or activities.

It can take time to explore your sexuality and make decisions about what you do and don’t like. You may find your sexuality is fluid, which means it changes from day to day or in different situations. Remember your sexuality is **unique to you**.

The language we use when talking about sexuality is very important, because it can have an effect on people’s wellbeing. It might seem like you will never know it all, or it changes without you realising or you might be worried about ‘getting it wrong’

What is important to remember is language is personal; you’re meaning or use of these words may be different to how other people use them. Not everyone will be known by the terms so the most important thing is to be respectful of someone else’s identity and the labels they choose to use. (Brook.org.uk)

**What does LGBT+ mean?**

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| **L** | Lesbian |
| **G** | Gay |
| **B** | Bisexual |
| **T** | Trans |
|  | **The Extra Letters stand for**  |
| **Q** | Queer or questioning |
| **P** | Pansexual |
| **I** | Intersex |
| **A** | Asexual |
| **A** |  |
| **ACE** | Someone who doesn’t experience romantic or sexual attraction. Informal term and interchangeable with[**asexual**](#Asexual)**.** |
| **ANDROGYNOUS** | Not identifying as being either male or female, but as a mixture of the two. |
| **AGENDER** | Someone who doesn’t identify with any [**gender**](#Gender)**.** |
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| **ALLIES** | A [**straight**](#Straight) person who supports the LGB community or a [**cis**](#CIS) person who supports the trans community. |
| **AROMANTIC** | Someone who experiences little or no romantic attraction. |
| **ASEXUAL** | Someone who doesn’t experience sexual attraction. |
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| **B** |  |
| **BINARY** | Made of two parts. A binary view of gender is that there are only male and female. |
| **BINDING** | A method of flattening a part of your body to match your [**gender identity**](#Identity) or [**gender expression**](#Expression) e.g. binding breasts to create the appearance of a flat chest. |
| **BIGENDER** | Someone who identifies with two genders. These two genders could be male and female, but could also include [**non-binary**](#non) genders identities. |
| **BIPHOBIA** | The discrimination and hatred of[**bisexual**](#Bisexual) individuals. |
| **BISEXUAL** | Sexual attraction to people of two or more genders. |
| **BIROMANTIC** | Romantic attraction to people of two or more genders. |
| **BUTCH** | A term used to describe someone who exhibits stereotypically masculine appearance or behaviour. In particular, a female identified person with a more masculine appearance and presentation. |
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| **C** |  |
| **CAMP** | A term to describe a playful, theatrical gender performance, often but not always, associated with [**gay**](#Gay) men. |
| **CHEMSEX** | Sexual activity accompanied by drugs. It has a high risk relating to sexually transmitted infections. |
| **CIS GENDER** | Someone who identifies with the gender they were assigned with at birth. Often shortened to cis. |
| **CLOSET** | A term used to describe when someone has not revealed their gender identity or sexual orientation status. See [**coming out**](#out). |
| **COMING OUT**  | When someone tells their family and friends their [**gender identity**](#Identity)or [**sexual orientation**](#orientation) for the first time. |
| **CROSSDRESSING** | When someone dresses in clothes typically worn by people of a different gender. |
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| **D** |  |
| **DEMISEXUAL or DEMIROMANTIC**  | Someone who isn't sexually or romantically attracted to someone until they have established an emotional connection. |
| **DRAG** | A form of crossdressing often used in entertainment. |
| **DYKE** | A term used to describe a [**lesbian**](#Lesbian) woman originally meant to be an insult, although some people choose to identify this way or reclaim it. There are "dyke marches" in several cities around the world led by people reclaiming the term. |
| **DYSPHORIA** | See [**gender dysphoria**](#Dysphoria)**.** |
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| **F** |  |
| **FAG OR FAGGOT** | An insulting term directed at [**gay**](#Gay) men, although some may choose to identify this way to reclaim it.  |
| **FEMME** | A term used to describe a [**feminine**](#Feminine) identified [**gender expression**](#Expression)**.** |
| **FTM** | A [**trans**](#Trans) man - someone who has transitioned from "female to male". |
| **FEMININE** | Qualities or an appearance traditionally associated with women, but that can be expressed by anyone. |
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| **G** |  |
| **GAY** | A widely accepted term for all same sex attraction and sexuality. Interchangeable with [**homosexual**](#Homosexual). |
| **GENDER** | Being male, female or other. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught the socially accepted characteristics, norms and behaviours of men and women. |
| **GENDER BINARY or BINARISM** | Looking at sex and gender as two distinct, opposite and disconnected types: [**masculine**](#Masculine) and [**feminine**](#Feminine)**.** |
| **GENDER DYSPHORIA** | A feeling of discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between the sex assigned at birth and [**gender identity**](#Identity)**.** It can impact how someone feels about themselves or their body. |
| **GENDER** **EXPRESSION**  | How you externally express your[**gender identity**](#Identity)**.** Usually through behaviour, clothing, hair, voice or body characteristics. |
| **GENDERFLUX** | A [**gender identity**](#Identity) in which the strength of feelings of gender vary over time. |
| **GENDER FLUID** | A [**gender identity**](#Identity) that changes over time or within certain environments. |
| **GENDER** **IDENTITY** | How you think of yourself, whether as male, female, in between, both or neither. This may or may not be the same genders you were given at birth.  |
| **GENDERLESS** | Someone who doesn't identify with any[**gender identity**](#Identity)**.** |
| **GENDER NEUTRAL**  | Someone who doesn't identify with any [**gender identity**](#Identity)**.** |
| **GENDER QUEER** | Someone who identifies outside the [**gender binary**](#Binary)**.** |
| **GRAY -A** | A term used to describe an [**asexual**](#Asexual) person who experiences some sexual attraction, but still identifies as [**asexual**](#Asexual)**.** |
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| **H** |  |
| **HBT BULLYING** | [**homophobic**](#Homophobia)**,** [**biphobic**](#Biphobia)**,** [**transphobic**](#Transphobia) bullying. |
| **HETEROROMANTIC**  | Someone who is romantically attracted to people of a different gender. |
| **HETEROSEXUAL** | Someone who is sexually attracted to people of a different gender. See [**straight**](#Straight) |
| **HOMOPHOBIA** | The discrimination and hatred of [**Lesbian**](#Lesbian)[**Gay**](#Gay)[**Bisexual**](#Bisexual) people. |
| **HOMOROMANTIC** | Someone who is romantically attracted to the same [**gender identity**](#Identity) as themselves. |
| **HOMOSEXUAL**  | Someone who is sexually attracted to the same [**gender**](#Gender) as themselves. |
| **HRT** | The abbreviation of hormone replacement therapy, a common choice for[**transgender**](#Transgender)individuals in [**transition**](#Transition)**.** |
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| **I** |  |
| **INTERSEX** | Someone who biology doesn't completely match the typical medical definitions of male or female. Intersex people may or may not identify as [**trans**](#Trans). Doctors estimate around 1 in 100 babies are, to some degree, intersex. |
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| **L** |  |
| **LESBIAN** | A female identified person who is sexually attracted to other female identified person. |
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| **M** |  |
| **METROSEXUAL**  | A term used to describe straight men who enjoy things that aren't seen as stereotypically [**masculine**](#Masculine)**.** |
| **MASCULINE** | Qualities or appearance traditionally associated with men, but that can be expressed by anyone. |
| **METAMOUR** | A term to describe a partner's partner in a [**polyamorous**](#Polyamorous) relationship. |
| **MONOGAMOUS** | A relationship when you choose to have single sexual partner or be exclusive. The opposite of [**polyamorous**](#Polyamorous)**.** |
| **MONOSEXUAL** | When someone is romantically or sexually attracted to members of one sex or gender only. A Monosexual person may identify as[**heterosexual**](#Hetrosexual) or [**homosexual**](#Homosexual)**.** |
| **MSM** | Men who have sex with men, regardless of how they identify themselves. |
| **MTF** | A [**trans**](#Trans) woman - someone who has transitioned from "male to female" |
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| **N** |  |
| **NEUTRALS** | A [**non-binary**](#non) [**gender identity**](#Identity), but it means different to different people. |
| **NON-BINARY** | Someone whose [**gender identity**](#Identity) is outside of the [**gender binary**](#Binary) of male and female. |
| **NO LABELS**  | Some people choose not to label themselves. |
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| **O** |  |
| OMNISEXUAL or OMNIROMANTIC  | Sexual or romantic attraction to people of all [**genders**](#Gender)**.** |
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| **P** |  |
| **PADDING** | A method of adding to your clothing to match your [**gender identity**](#Identity) or[**gender expression**](#Expression)**.**  |
| **PACKING**  | A method of creating the appearance and sensation of a penis, often using a device meant for this purpose called a 'Packer'. |
| **PANSEXUAL or PANROMATIC** | Someone who is sexually or romantically attracted to people of all [**gender identities**](#Identity)**.** |
| **PASSING** | The ability to be accepted as your preferred[**gender identity**](#Identity)**……..** (members of the trans community have criticised the pressure on trans individuals to "pass" in order to be accepted). |
| **POLYAMOROUS** | A relationship where you consequently agree to have more than one sexual or romantic relationship at the same time. |
| **POLYSEXUAL or POLYROMANTIC**  | Someone who experiences sexual or romantic attraction to multiple, but not all [**genders**](#Gender)**.** |
| **POST-OP** | a term used to describe [**trans**](#Trans) individuals who have undergone transitional surgery. |
| **PRE-EVERYTHING** | a term used to describe [**trans**](#Trans) individuals who haven't started legal, medical or social[**transition**](#Transition)**.**  |
| **PRE-OPP** | a term used to describe [**trans**](#Trans) individuals who haven't yet had surgery. |
| **PRONOUN** | a pronoun is how someone is referred to 'he' 'she' ‘they’ or 'ze'.  |
|  | Male pronouns he/him/his |
|  | Female pronouns she/her/hers |
|  | Neutral pronouns they/them/theirs, Ze |
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| **QUEER** | An umbrella term to describe people who identify as being outside of the sexual and gender norms of society. Historically it was used as a slur but it was reclaimed as an identity in the 1990s. |
| **QUESTIONING**  | Someone who may be questioning their [**gender**](#Gender)or [**sexuality**](#sexuality). |
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| **R** |  |
| **ROMANTIC ATTRACTION**  | A non sexual emotional connection to someone.  |
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| **S** |  |
| **SKOLIOSEXUAL or SKOLIOROMANTIC** | When someone is sexually or romantically attracted to [**non-binary**](#non) people.  |
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| **SEX** | Sexual activity, including specifically sexual intercourse, and the sexual identity you're assigned with as defined biologically by your reproductive organs, chromosomes and hormone levels. |
| **SEXUALITY**  | Your [**sexual orientation**](#orientation) or preference. |
| **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**  | Your sexual identity - how you are sexually attracted to different genders. |
| **STRAIGHT** | When someone is sexually attracted to people of a different gender. see [**heterosexual**](#Hetrosexual)**.** |
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| **T** |  |
| **THEY/THEM** | These can be used in place of [**pronouns**](#Pronoun) for[**non-binary**](#non) people. |
| **THIRD GENDER** | A term to describe people who don't think of themselves as either female or male, but a third gender. This is most common in non-western societies that have three or more genders in society e.g. Hijra in South Asia. |
| **TRANS** | An umbrella term used to describe all the different ways of not belonging to the gender you were given at birth. Can also be short for [**transgender**](#Transgender)**.**  |
| **TRANNY**  | An insulting term directed at [**trans**](#Trans) people, although some may choose to identify this way or reclaim it. Historically an abbreviation for [**transvestite.**](#Transvestite) |
| **TRANSITION**  | The process of medically, socially and/or legally changing one's [**gender**](#Gender)or[**sex**](#sex)**.** This process is often to provide comfort and affirmation on one's body or identity. |
| **TRANSGENDER** | Also known as [**trans**](#Trans)**.** It is an umbrella term for people whose [**gender identity**](#Identity) doesn't match the [**gender**](#Gender) they were assigned at birth.  |
| **TRANSFEMININE** | Someone who is transitioning to the feminine spectrum, but may not identify with female. This is particularly true for [**gender queer**](#Genderqueer) or[**non-binary**](#non) trans people. |
| **TRANSMASCULINE** | Someone who is transitioning to the masculine spectrum, but may not identify with male. This is particularly true for [**gender queer**](#Genderqueer) or [**non-binary**](#non) [**trans**](#Trans)people.  |
| **TRANS MAN**  | Someone who was assigned female at birth, but whose [**gender identity**](#Identity) is male. |
| **TRANSPHOBIA** | The discrimination, discomfort, fear and or hatred of [**trans**](#Trans)and [**transsexual**](#Transsexual) individuals. |
| **TRANSSEXUAL**  | Someone whose sex assigned at birth contradicts with their [**gender identity**](#Identity). This word is becoming less commonly used.  |
| **TRANSVESTITE**  | Someone who dresses in clothing typically worn by people of a different [**gender**](#Gender). This word is becoming less commonly used.  |
| **TRANS WOMAN**  | Someone who was assigned male at birth, but whose [**gender**](#Gender) is female.  |
| **TUCKING**  | The practice of hiding the genitals so they aren't visible under clothing. This is often used in drag. |
| **TWO SPIRIT**  | A cultural term used by indigenous North Americans, describing someone who has both female and male spirit. You may see this referred to in the acronym **LGBTQIA2SP.** The 2SP stands for 'two spirit'. |
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| **U** |  |
| **UNSURE** | Someone who feels unsure of their [**sexuality**](#sexuality) and/or [**gender identity**](#Identity)**.**  |
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| **W** |  |
| **WSW/WLW** | Women who have sex with women/women loving women. Used to make services more inclusive to women who have sex with other women but may not identify as LGBTQ+. |