



## LESBIAN

A woman whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women. Some lesbians may prefer to identify as gay or as gay women.

## GAY

The adjective describes people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex. Sometimes lesbian is the preferred term for women.

## BISEXUAL

A person who can form enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or more than one gender. People may experience this attraction in differing ways and degrees over their lifetime. Bisexual people need not have had specific sexual experiences to be bisexual; they need not have had any sexual experience at all to identify as bisexual.

## TRANSGENDER

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms— including transgender or nonbinary. Some transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to bring their bodies into alignment with their gender identity. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures.

## QUEER

An adjective used by some people whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual or straight. This umbrella term includes people who have nonbinary, gender-fluid, or gender nonconforming identities. Once considered a pejorative term, queer has been reclaimed by

some LGBTQIA+ people to describe themselves; however, it is not a universally accepted term even within the LGBTQIA+ community.

## QUESTIONING

Sometimes, when the Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it can also mean questioning. This term describes someone who is questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

## INTERSEX

An adjective used to describe a person with one or more innate sex characteristics, including genitals, internal reproductive organs, and chromosomes, that fall outside of traditional conceptions of male or female bodies. Do not confuse having an intersex trait with being transgender. Intersex people are assigned a sex at birth — either male or female — and that decision by medical providers and parents may not match the gender identity of the child. Not all intersex folks identify as being part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

## ASEXUAL

The adjective describes a person who does not experience sexual attraction. Sometimes shortened to “ace,” it is an umbrella term that can also include people who are demisexual, meaning they do experience some sexual attraction; graysexual, meaning those who may not fit the strictest definition of the word asexual; and aromantic, meaning they experience little to no romantic attraction and/or has little to no desire to form romantic relationships.

## + PLUS

The ‘plus’ is used to signify all of the gender identities and sexual orientations that letters and words cannot yet fully describe.

## What do we mean by non-binary?

Some people feel that their gender identity cannot be simply defined using the terms ‘man’ or ‘woman’. Instead, they experience their gender in another way. Typically, we refer to this group of people as being ‘non-binary’. The term nonbinary refers to a person: identifying as either having a gender which is in-between or beyond the two categories ‘man’ and ‘woman’, as fluctuating between ‘man’ and ‘woman’, or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time.

common terms include; genderqueer, genderfluid and agender. If you haven't heard a term someone is using to describe their gender, just ask what it means to them!

Being non-binary is not about your physical body. Physical bodies are often seen as also fitting into a binary – of all 'male' or all 'female' sex characteristics. In fact there can be many variations of people's sex characteristics, and people who wouldn't typically be perceived as male or female due to theirs are known as intersex people. Being non-binary is not the same as being intersex – it is about having a gender identity that is not described simply by using the words 'man' or 'woman', rather than having sex characteristics that do not fit society's perception of 'male' or 'female' bodies. A person can be nonbinary no matter what physical body they have.

Although non-binary identities may be new to you, it's really important to respect everyone's sense of themselves. Taking the time to learn more about non-binary people and their experiences may make it easier to understand genders outside of the 'man' and 'woman' binary we've come to expect.

1. Many non-binary people use gender neutral pronouns. Pronouns are the way someone refers to you. The most commonly used pronouns are 'she/her/ hers', normally used for women, and 'he/ him/his', normally used for men. Nonbinary people may use the singular 'they/ them/theirs', or other gender neutral pronouns such as 'ze/hir/hirs'. If you don't know someone's pronouns, ask!
2. It's important not to make assumptions about people when you meet them. We're used to assuming that everyone we meet will identify as a man or a woman – but this isn't the case. You can't always tell someone's gender identity simply by looking at them!
3. Many non-binary people use gender neutral titles – the most common one is 'Mx'. See if you can add 'Mx' to the title options on your forms and websites.



Today you are  
**You,**  
that is truer  
than true.  
there is no one alive  
who is **Youer**  
than **You.**  
-Dr. Seuss

## USEFUL CONTACTS

LGBT Foundation - [0345 3 30 30 30](tel:03453303030)

[lgbt.foundation](http://lgbt.foundation)

Advice, support and information for people identifying as LGBTQ+.

London Friend - [londonfriend.org.uk](http://londonfriend.org.uk)

Offers a range of services around London to support LGBT health and wellbeing including support groups and counselling.

Mermaids - [0808 801 0400](tel:08088010400)

[mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://mermaidsuk.org.uk) Supports gender-diverse young people aged 19 and under, and their families and carers. Offers a helpline and and webchat.

