

LGBTQ+ Quick Reference Guide

Gay

The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex (e.g., *gay man*, *gay people*).

Lesbian

A woman whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women.

Bisexual, Bi

A person who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or to those of another gender. People may experience this attraction in differing ways and degrees over their lifetime.

Queer

An adjective used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual (e.g. *queer person*, *queer woman*). Typically, for those who identify as queer, the terms *lesbian*, *gay*, and *bisexual* are perceived to be too limiting and/or fraught with cultural connotations they feel don't apply to them.

LGBTQ

Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. Sometimes, when the Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it can also mean questioning.

Intersex

An umbrella term describing people born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or a chromosome pattern that can't be classified as typically male or female.

Asexual

An adjective used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction (e.g., *asexual person*). A person can also be aromantic, meaning they do not experience romantic attraction.

On the Spectrum/Fluid

A phrase used by someone who does not consider sexuality as black and white. They may relate more to a scale or rating of sexuality that may change over time.

Transgender

An umbrella term used as an adjective for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisgender

A term used by some to describe people who are not transgender.

Non-binary and/or genderqueer

Terms used by some people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman.

Pansexual

A person who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity

Terms to Avoid:

Offensive	Preferred
"homosexual" (n. or adj.)	"gay" (adj.); "gay man" or "lesbian" (n.); "gay person/people"
"homosexual relations/relationship," "homosexual couple," "homosexual sex," etc.	"relationship," "couple" (or, if necessary, "gay/lesbian/same-sex couple"), "sex," etc.
"sexual preference"	"sexual orientation" or "identity"
"gay lifestyle," "homosexual lifestyle," or "transgender lifestyle"	"LGBTQ people and their lives"
"admitted homosexual" or "avowed homosexual"	"out gay man," "out lesbian," or "out queer person"
"special rights"	"equal rights" or "equal protection"
"transgenders" or "a transgender"	"transgender people" or "a transgender person"
"sex change," "pre-operative," "post-operative"	"transition"

Derogatory Language

fag—faggot—dyke—homo—sodomite—deviant—disordered—dysfunctional—diseased—perverted—
destructive—Deceptive—fooling—pretending—posing—trap—masquerading—tranny—she-male—he/she—
it—shim— Associating LGBTQ people with pedophilia, child abuse, sexual abuse, bestiality, bigamy, polygamy,
adultery and/or incest

For additional resources:

<https://www.glaad.org/reference/lgbtq>

<https://www.glaad.org/publications/talkingabout/terminology>

Video Resources:

Gender: "The space between"

LGBTQ+ legal issues: "The Freedom to Marry"

Religious argument: "For the Bible Tells Me So"



*This is not an exhaustive list, for more information or details please seek other resources.