

Stonewall Glossary of Terms

A

Abro (sexual and romantic)

A word used to describe people who have a fluid sexual and/or romantic orientation which changes over time, or the course of their life. They may use different terms to describe themselves over time.

Ace

An umbrella term used specifically to describe a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of sexual attraction. This encompasses asexual people as well as those who identify as demisexual and grey-sexual. Ace people who experience romantic attraction or occasional sexual attraction might also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with asexual to describe the direction of their romantic or sexual attraction.

Ace and aro/ace and aro spectrum

Umbrella terms used to describe the wide group of people who experience a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of romantic and/or sexual attraction, including a lack of attraction. People who identify under these umbrella terms may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, asexual, ace, aromantic, aro, demi, grey, and abro. People may also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with ace and aro to explain the direction of romantic or sexual attraction if and when they experience it.

Aro

An umbrella term used specifically to describe a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of romantic attraction. This encompasses aromantic people as well as those who identify as demiromantic and grey-romantic. Aro people who experience sexual attraction or occasional romantic attraction might also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with asexual to describe the direction of their attraction.

Aromantic

A person who does not experience romantic attraction. Some aromantic people experience sexual attraction, while others do not. Aromantic people who experience sexual attraction or occasional romantic attraction might also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with asexual to describe the direction of their attraction.

Asexual

A person who does not experience sexual attraction. Some asexual people experience romantic attraction, while others do not. Asexual people who experience romantic attraction might also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with asexual to describe the direction of their romantic attraction.

Ally

A (typically) straight and/or cis person who supports members of the LGBT community.

B

Bi

Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and some other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities.

Biphobia

The fear or dislike of someone who identifies as bi based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about bi people. Biphobic bullying may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, bi.

C

Cisgender or Cis

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

D

Deadnaming

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition.

Demi (sexual and romantic)

An umbrella term used to describe people who may only feel sexually or romantically attracted to people with whom they have formed an emotional bond. People may also

use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with demi to explain the direction of romantic or sexual attraction as they experience it.

F

Femme

Femme is a term used in LGBT culture to describe someone who expresses themselves in a typically feminine way.

There are other identities within the scope of femme, such as 'low femme', 'high femme', and 'hard femme'. You shouldn't use these terms about someone unless you know they identify with them.

G

Gay

Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Gender dysphoria

Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity.

This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender expression

How a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

Gender identity

A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

Grey (sexual and romantic)

Also known as grey-A, this is an umbrella term which describes people who experience attraction occasionally, rarely, or only under certain conditions. People may

also use terms such as gay, bi, lesbian, straight and queer in conjunction with grey to explain the direction of romantic or sexual attraction as they experience it.

H

Heterosexual/straight

Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women or to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men.

Homosexual

This might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

I

Intersex

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female.

Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary.

L

Lesbian

Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

N

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

O

Orientation

Orientation is an umbrella term describing a person's attraction to other people. This attraction may be sexual (sexual orientation) and/or romantic (romantic orientation).

These terms refers to a person's sense of identity based on their attractions, or lack thereof.

Orientations include, but are not limited to, lesbian, gay, bi, ace and straight.

P

Person with a trans history

Someone who identifies as male or female or a man or woman, but was assigned the opposite sex at birth. This is increasingly used by people to acknowledge a trans past.

Pan

Refers to a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender.

Passing

If someone is regarded, at a glance, to be a cisgender man or cisgender woman.

Cisgender refers to someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were 'assigned' at birth. This might include physical gender cues (hair or clothing) and/or behaviour which is historically or culturally associated with a particular gender.

Pronoun

Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their and ze/zir.

Q

Queer

Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism etc). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it.

Questioning

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

R

Romantic orientation

A person's romantic attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with sexual orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity.

Stonewall uses the term 'orientation' as an umbrella term covering sexual and romantic orientations.

T

Transgender man

A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male.

Transgender woman

A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female.

Transitioning

The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this.

Transitioning also might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.

Transphobia

The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans.

Transsexual

This was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.