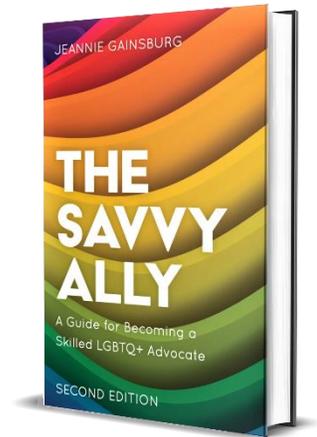


# LGBTQ+ Glossary of Terms

(This glossary is from *The Savvy Ally: A Guide for Becoming a Skilled LGBTQ+ Advocate*)



## Warning: Identities Being Defined!

Cultural terms and identity words vary in meaning with the user. They also change over time. This glossary should be used as a tool for basic reference. It should never be used to label others. Proceed with caution!

**Affectional Orientation:** The part of an individual's identity that describes to whom they are romantically attracted. It is also known as *romantic orientation*.

**Agender:** Relating to an individual who has no gender.

**Ally:** A person who is not a part of a particular marginalized group but who stands up and advocates for the rights of people in that group.

**Androgynous:** A gender expression that is neither feminine nor masculine. It is sometimes defined as a blending of both masculinity and femininity.

**Aromantic:** Relating to an individual with a low or absent romantic attraction. This word is also used as an umbrella term for a spectrum of identities. A few of the many identities under the aromantic umbrella are *demiromantic* and *grayromantic*.

**Asexual:** Relating to an individual with a low or absent sexual attraction. This word is also used as an umbrella term for a spectrum of identities. A few of the many identities under the asexual umbrella are *demisexual* and *graysexual*. *Asexual* is sometimes shortened to *ace*.

**Binary:** Relating to two things or two options. Individuals who are either men or women (whether they're transgender or cisgender) fit into the gender binary.

**Biological Sex:** A categorization of an individual that is based on their reproductive system and secondary sex characteristics: genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, etc.

**Biphobia:** Fear, intolerance, or hatred of people who are, or who are perceived to be, bisexual or pansexual.

**Biromantic:** Relating to an individual who is romantically attracted to both men and women or to people regardless of their gender.

**Bisexual:** Relating to an individual who is sexually attracted to both men and women or to people regardless of their gender.

**Cisgender:** Relating to an individual whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth; someone who is not transgender. *Cisgender* is sometimes shortened to *cis*.

**Cisnormativity:** The assumption that everyone is cisgender or that being cisgender is the “right” way to be.

**Cross-dresser:** An individual who, for comfort, enjoyment, and/or self-expression, wears clothing that has been designated by society as inappropriate for their gender.

**Demiromantic:** Relating to an individual who experiences romantic or affectional attraction to a person only after they’ve developed a close emotional bond with them.

**Demisexual:** Relating to an individual who experiences sexual attraction to a person only after they’ve developed a close emotional bond with them.

**Drag King:** An entertainer whose act features wearing men’s clothing, facial makeup, and facial hair in order to impersonate a man.

**Drag Queen:** An entertainer whose act features wearing women’s clothing, a wig, and makeup in order to impersonate a woman.

**Gay:** Relating to an individual who is sexually attracted only to people of the same gender. Traditionally a term used only by men, the term *gay* is now embraced by some others as well.

**Gender Expansive:** Relating to an individual whose gender expression or gender identity does not fit into society’s binary expectations. Some people prefer this term to *gender nonconforming*.

**Gender Expression:** The way an individual expresses their gender to the outside world, through clothing, hairstyles, interests, mannerisms, and movements. The typical categories of gender expression are *masculine*, *feminine*, and *androgynous*.

**Gender-Fluid:** Relating to an individual whose gender identity regularly fluctuates.

**Gender Identity:** An individual’s sense of their own gender. The typical categories of gender identity are *man*, *woman*, and *nonbinary*.

**Gender Nonconforming:** Relating to an individual whose gender expression or gender identity does not fit into society’s binary expectations. Some people prefer this term to *gender expansive*.

**Gender Policing:** The societal enforcement of binary gender roles and expectations.

**Genderqueer:** Relating to an individual whose gender identity is neither man nor woman.

**Grayromantic:** Relating to an individual who experiences romantic attraction rarely or with low intensity.

**Graysexual:** Relating to an individual who experiences sexual attraction rarely or with low intensity. *Graysexual* is sometimes shortened to *gray-A* or *gray-ace*.

**Heteronormativity:** The assumption that everyone is heterosexual or that being heterosexual is the “right” way to be.

**Heteroromantic:** Relating to a man who is romantically attracted only to women or a woman who is romantically attracted only to men.

**Heterosexual:** Relating to a man who is sexually attracted only to women or a woman who is sexually attracted only to men; also known as *straight*.

**Homophobia:** Fear, intolerance, or hatred of people who are, or who are perceived to be, gay or lesbian.

**Homoromantic:** Relating to an individual who is romantically attracted only to people of the same gender.

**Homosexual:** An outdated term relating to an individual who is sexually attracted only to people of the same gender. The words *gay* and *lesbian* are more respectful terms.

**Intersectionality:** The complex and overlapping ways that an individual’s many identities (sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, immigration status, language, size, religion, etc.) come together and shape their experiences and social interactions. Prejudice and discrimination related to these overlapping identities are unique and are different from prejudice and discrimination faced by people with each individual identity.

**Intersex:** Relating to an individual whose biological sex characteristics (i.e., genitals, reproductive organs, chromosomes, and/or hormones) do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies.

**Intimate Behaviors:** Sexual and romantic activities.

**Lesbian:** Relating to a woman who is sexually attracted only to women.

**LGBTQ+:** One of the many initialisms created to refer to all sexual and gender minorities. It stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, plus so much more!

**Microaggression:** A commonplace comment or behavior toward a person from a historically marginalized community that is hurtful, insulting, or demeaning. The comment may or may not be intentionally insulting.

**Misgender:** To use a gendered term, like *Sir* or *Ma'am*, incorrectly when referring to someone.

**MSM:** An abbreviation for “men who have sex with men.” This term was created to acknowledge and offer appropriate health care to men who don’t use the terms *gay*, *bisexual*, or *pansexual* to refer to themselves, but who are engaging in sexual activities with men.

**Mx:** A gender-neutral title that can be used to replace gendered titles, such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, and *Miss*.

**Neopronoun:** A new, not officially recognized gender-neutral pronoun. Some examples are: *xe*, *ze*, and *ey*.

**Nonbinary:** Relating to an individual whose gender identity is neither man nor woman. This word can be used as an umbrella term that includes many identities, such as *agender*, *gender expansive*, *gender-fluid*, *genderqueer*, and *Two-Spirit*. *Nonbinary* is sometimes shortened to *NB* or *enby*.

**Panromantic:** Relating to an individual who is romantically attracted to people regardless of their gender.

**Pansexual:** Relating to an individual who is sexually attracted to people regardless of their gender.

**Polyamorous:** Relating to an individual who engages in more than one sexual and/or romantic relationship at a time, with the knowledge and consent of all involved.

**QPOC:** An initialism that stands for queer people of color.

**QTPOC:** An initialism that stands for queer and/or transgender people of color.

**Queer:** A reclaimed term that is liked by some and disliked by others. It can be used to define any orientation that is not straight and/or any gender that is not cisgender.

**Questioning:** Relating to an individual who is currently unsure of or exploring their orientation and/or gender identity.

**Romantic Orientation:** The part of an individual’s identity that describes to whom they are romantically attracted. It is also known as *affectional orientation*.

**Sexual Orientation:** The part of an individual’s identity that describes to whom they are sexually attracted.

**SGM:** An initialism that stands for sexual and gender minority. This initialism is used in some healthcare and academic settings as a replacement for the terms *LGBTQ+* and *queer*.

**Straight:** Relating to a man who is sexually attracted only to women or a woman who is sexually attracted only to men; also known as *heterosexual*.

**TGX:** An initialism that stands for transgender and gender expansive.

**Transfeminine:** Relating to an individual, typically one who was assigned male at birth, whose gender identity or expression falls in the woman or feminine area of the gender spectrum.

**Transgender:** Relating to an individual whose sex assigned at birth does not match their gender identity. This word can be used as an individual's identity term or as an umbrella term that includes many identities, such as *genderqueer*, *nonbinary*, *trans man*, and *trans woman*. *Transgender* is sometimes shortened to *trans*.

**Transition:** Changing from one state to another. Often used to refer to the process by which a transgender individual takes steps to align their body with their gender identity.

**Trans Man:** Relating to an individual who was assigned female at birth, but whose gender identity is man.

**Transmasculine:** Relating to an individual, typically one who was assigned female at birth, whose gender identity or expression falls in the man or masculine area of the gender spectrum.

**Transphobia:** Fear, intolerance, or hatred of people who are, or who are perceived to be, transgender.

**Transsexual:** An outdated term relating to an individual who uses medical and/or surgical treatments to help align their body with their gender identity, by transitioning from the sex they were assigned at birth. The newer word, *transgender*, is more commonly used, whether a person undergoes a medical or surgical transition or not.

**Trans Woman:** Relating to an individual who was assigned male at birth, but whose gender identity is woman.

**Two Spirit:** A modern term, used by some Indigenous North Americans, to describe people who have the spirit of both man and woman or are a third gender. It is embraced by some Indigenous North Americans and rejected by others.