

Agender

Someone who does not identify with any sort of gender identity. This term may also be used by someone who intentionally has no recognizable gender presentation. Some people use similar terms such as “genderless” and “gender neutral”.

Ally

A Safe Zone ally honors sexual diversity, challenges heterosexist and cissexist remarks and behaviors, and explores and understands these forms of bias within their experiences. This person also works to end oppression personally and professionally through support and advocacy of an oppressed population. In this context Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Ally and Asexual individuals

Androgynous

This word describes both a gender identity as well as a manner of gender presentation. Those who identify as androgynous may identify as between man and woman or something else entirely. Those who present androgynous may dress in a manner that incorporates clothing that is traditionally for men and clothing that’s traditionally for women

Androgyne

An androgyne is a person who does not fit cleanly into the typical masculine and feminine gender roles of their society. Many androgynes identify as being mentally "between" male and female, or as entirely genderless. The former may also use the term *bigender* or *ambigender*, the latter *non-gendered* or *agender*. They may experience mental swings between genders, sometimes referred to as being *gender fluid*

Androsexual/Androphilic

Attracted to males, men, and/or masculinity

Asexual

A person who does not experience sexual attraction or has lost interest in sex but may still have romantic interests

Bigender

A person who fluctuates between traditionally “woman” and “man” gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both genders (and sometimes a third gender)

Binary Gender

a traditional and outdated view of gender, limiting possibilities to “man” and “woman”

Binary Sex

a traditional and outdated view of sex, limiting possibilities to “female” or “male”

Biological Sex

The classification of people as male, female, or intersex. Biological Sex is assigned at birth, and is associated primarily with physical attributes such as chromosomes, hormone prevalence, and external and internal anatomy

Bisexual

A person emotionally, romantically, sexually and relationally attracted to both men and women, though not necessarily simultaneously. A bisexual person may not be equally attracted to both sexes, and the degree of attraction may vary as sexual identity develops over time

Butch

A term used by some lesbian and bisexual women to describe their masculine style of gender presentation and may describe dominant gender roles they ascribe to. This term is less commonly used in the gay and bisexual male culture

Cis - man

a person who identifies as a man, presents himself masculinely, and has male biological sex, *often referred to as simply "man"*

Cis - woman

a person who identifies as a woman, presents herself femininely, and has female biological sex, *often referred to as simply "woman"*

Cisgender

A term meaning "not transgender," that is, having a gender identity or performing in a gender role that society considers appropriate for one's sex

Cissexism

Cissexism is the attitude that being cisgender is the only valid gender identity. Cissexism often takes the forms of ignoring transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. For example: bathrooms are for "men" and "women", "ladies, and gentlemen", etc

Closeted

A person who is keeping their sexuality or gender identity a secret from many (or any) people, and has yet to “come out of the closet”

Cross-dressing

A person who, regardless of motivation, wears clothes, makeup, etc. that are considered by the culture to be appropriate for another gender but not one’s own. This is the preferred term to “transvestite”, which is considered archaic and pejorative

D/L or Down Low

Label adopted by some African-American men (and recently, many Latino men) who seek same sex relations, but do not necessarily identify as gay or bisexual

Demisexual

A word to describe a person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone. This identity is a part of the asexual spectrum

Drag

An art form where a person who consciously performs in “feminine” “masculine” clothes assigned to the opposite sex on a temporary basis; they may or may not have any opposite sex expression in their usual life. Generally in reference to an act or performance

Dyke

A derogatory term for lesbian. Some lesbians have reclaimed this word and use it as a positive term, but it is still considered offensive when used by the general population

Fag/faggot

Fag/faggot - A derogatory term for a gay man. Some gay men have reclaimed this word and use it as a positive term, but it is still considered offensive when used by the general population

FTM/MTF

a person who is or has undergone medical treatments to change their biological sex (Female To Male, or Male To Female), often times to align it with their gender identity; *often confused with “trans-man”/“trans-woman”*

MTF/FTM

Some female to male transsexuals dislike the term FTM, because they feel that they were never female, and were always male, and that all this surgery is merely cosmetic, to make it clear to everyone else that they are male. Male to Female, usually referring to a transsexual, but also sometimes to a transgendered person or a crossdresser

Female-Assigned At Birth (FAAB)

A person who is FAAB was assigned the female sex at birth, most likely based on how that person's genitalia were perceived by the attending physician. Where this assignment corresponds with someone's gender identity they are said to be cisgender. Similar terms: Designated Female At Birth (DFAB), Coercively Assign Female At Birth (CAFAB)

Male-Assigned At Birth (MAAB)

A person who is MAAB was assigned the male sex at birth, most likely based on how that person's genitalia were perceived by the attending physician. Where this assignment corresponds with someone's gender identity they are said to be cisgender

Femme

A term used by some lesbian and bisexual women to describe their feminine style of gender presentation and may describe submissive gender roles they ascribe to. This term is less commonly used in the gay and bisexual male culture

Gay

A word describing a man or a woman who is emotionally, romantically, sexually and relationally attracted to members of the same sex

Closeted

A person who is keeping their sexuality or gender identity a secret from many (or any) people, and has yet to "come out of the closet"

Coming out

The process of revealing your sexuality or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one - time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process; *not to be confused with "outing"*

Gender

A person's gender is comprised of gender expression and biological sex. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for boys and men or girls and women. These influence the ways that people act, interact, and feel about themselves. Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviors that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity

Gender and/or Sexuality Minority (GSM)

This term can be used instead of LGBTQ, as many people are still not comfortable using the word queer. It describes those who are not heterosexual and/or not cisgender

Gender Expression

Refers to all of a person's external characteristics and behaviors – such as dress, grooming, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions – socially identified with a particular gender

Gender Fluid

This gender identity is when an individual's gender can flow and fluctuate from month to month or even day to day. They may fluctuate between man and woman or through multiple genders

Gender Identity

Refers to a person's innate, deeply felt psychological sense of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's assigned sex at birth

Gender Non-Conforming or Gender Variant

A person who does not subscribe to gender expressions or roles expected of them by society. Includes those who are genderqueer, gender fluid, agender (genderless), bigender, etc

Gender Role

Gender role is the set of roles and behaviors assigned to females and males by society. Our culture recognizes two basic gender roles: masculine (having the qualities attributed to males) and feminine (having the qualities attributed to females)

Genderqueer

A term that people use who identify their gender as falling outside the binary constructs of "male" and "female."

LGBTQ/GLBTQ

LGBTQ/LGBTQ - Acronym used to describe people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer. Implies inclusivity to people of all gender and sexual orientations

Gynesexual/Gynephilic

Attracted to females, women, and/or femininity

Hate Crime

An action that causes physical, mental or emotional harm to someone simply because they are part of, or thought to be a part of, the GLBTQ (or other diverse) community. Often the result of homophobia, this can also be seen as "gay bashing." Many states have laws that offer stricter criminal penalties for committing hate crimes

Heteronormativity

The tendency to marginalize, persecute, or make invisible any behavior, belief, or lifestyle that deviates from the socially-accepted and enforced model of heterosexuality and the gender binary

Heterosexism

Behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more "right" than queerness, or ignores/doesn't address queerness as existing

Heterosexual

The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or relational attractions are to people of the opposite sex. Also: straight

Homophobia

Homophobia is a fear, hatred of or discomfort with people who love and are sexually attracted to members of the same sex

Homonormativity

The tendency to project heteronormative values onto behavior, relationships, and family models within the queer community. At times, this may be a matter of assimilating heterosexual values into a queer context and/or community (i.e., the assumption that [LGBT families] all have “two moms” or “two dads” without a thought to other family structures such as those that include single or multiple parents)

Homosexual

The term is an outdated clinical term considered derogatory and offensive by many gay people. Gay and/or lesbian are more commonly accepted terms to describe people who are attracted to members of the same sex

Internalized homophobia

Self-identification of societal stereotypes by lesbian, gay and bisexual people, causing them to dislike and resent their sexual orientation or gender identity

Intersex

People born with or who develop varying degrees of biological aspects of both biological males and biological females. Often “assigned” a male or female identity at birth that may not correspond with identities later in life

Lesbian

Refers to a woman whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional, and/or relational attractions are to other women

Lifestyle

The term "lifestyle" is inaccurately used to refer to the sexual orientation of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Avoid using this term. As there is no one heterosexual or straight lifestyle, there is no one lesbian, gay, bisexual lifestyle

Living openly

A state in which LGBT people are open with others about being LGBT how and when they choose to be

Metrosexual

Part of gender expression for males, where one’s appearance is highly valued and well-groomed.

Misgender

To ascribe a gender to that person that does not correspond to their actual gender identity. Some actions that would be misgendering are using the wrong pronoun or using a gender specific word for said person (“miss” or “man”, for example)

Outing

When someone reveals another person’s perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity to an individual or group without the person’s consent or approval; not to be confused with “coming out”

Pansexual

Defined as someone who is attracted to other people regardless of their gender or sexual orientation; essentially, they are “gender blind”. This person experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

Passing

A term used by transgender people to mean that they are seen as the gender with which they self-identify. For example, a transgender man (assigned female sex at birth) who most people see as a man

Queer

Describes all people who are not heterosexual or who do not conform to rigid notions of gender and sexuality. For many LGBTQ people this word has negative connotation; however, some are comfortable using it and have reclaimed the word as a symbol of pride

Questioning

The process of exploring one's own sexual orientation, investigating influences that may come from their family, religious upbringing, and internal motivations

Romantic Attraction

A feeling that causes people to desire a romantic relationship with a specific other person(s)

Same-gender loving (SGL)

Some prefer to use "same-gender loving" instead of "lesbian" or "gay" to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender

Second Generation (LGBT)

A term that we use to describe queer, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, gay, and questioning children who also have gay parents

Sensual Attraction

The attraction one feels to engage in sensual, usually tactile, forms of affection and/or intimacy with someone (that lacks sexual intent)

Sexual Attraction

A feeling of wanting to be sexual with another person(s). This can often occur because of emotional or physical factors, but not always

Sexual Orientation

An enduring physical, romantic, emotional, and/or relational attraction to another person

Sexual Preference

sometimes used to mean the same thing as sexual orientation. Many lesbian, gay and bisexual people find this term to be offensive because it implies that their sexual orientation is a choice

Trans*

Inclusive term to refer to anyone who is transsexual, transgender, crossdressers, drag queens and kings, genderqueer, two-spirit, third gender, or intersex

Transgender

An umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression, or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth

Transgender man (trans man)

a person who was assigned a female sex at birth but who identifies as a man. Trans man is an identity label sometimes adopted by female-to-male transgender people to signify that they are men while still affirming their gender history. See also —Transgender

Transgender woman (trans woman)

a person who was assigned a male sex at birth but who identifies as a woman. Trans woman is an identity label sometimes adopted by male-to-female transgender people to signify that they are women while still affirming their gender history. See also —Transgender

Transitioning

The period during which a transgender individual (usually transsexual) begins to live a new life in their gender. Also, includes the period of full-time living (Real Life Test) required before gender reassignment surgery

Transsexual

A person who, through experiencing an intense long-term discomfort resulting from feeling the inappropriateness of their assigned gender at birth and discomfort of their body, adapts their gender role and body in order to reflect and be congruent with their gender identity. This may include cross-living, synthesized sex hormones, surgery and other body modification which may or may not lead to the feeling of harmony between a person's body and gender identity

Transphobia

A fear, hatred of, or discomfort with, people whose gender identity or gender expression does not conform to cultural gender norms

Two Spirit

This term for third gender people is mainly used among Native American and Canadian First Nations tribes. It usually implies a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit living in the same body. It is also used by some contemporary gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex Native Americans to describe themselves

Preferred Gender Pronoun / Personal Pronouns

Ze/Per/Hir/They - Pronouns used in the trans community instead of “he/she” or “him/her.” These pronouns offer inclusion and accuracy for someone who doesn’t identify by the male/female gender classifications.

Note: Not all trans people use these pronouns; many use “he” or “she.”

[Hir: (here) A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “her” and “him.”

Sie or Ze: (see or zee) A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “she” and “he.”

Ve: (vee) A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “she” and “he.”]

	Subject	Object	Possessive Adjective	Possessive Pronoun	Reflexive
Female	She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself
Male	He	Him	His	His	Himself
Gender Neutral	Ze	Hir	Hir	Hirs	Hirself
Gender Neutral Pronunciation	/zee/	/here/	/here/	/heres/	/hereself/

Terminology

	Nominative (subject)	Oblique (object)	Possessive determiner	Possessive pronoun	Reflexive
Spivak (old)	<i>E</i> laughed	I called <i>em</i>	<i>Eir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>eirs</i>	<i>E</i> likes <i>eirself</i>
Spivak (new) ^[32]	<i>Ey</i> laughed	I called <i>em</i>	<i>Eir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>eirs</i>	<i>Ey</i> likes <i>emself</i>
Tho and Thong (new) ^[33]	<i>Tho</i> laughed	I called <i>Thor</i>	<i>Thors</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>Thor</i>	Tho likes <i>Thongself</i>
Humanist ^[34]	<i>Hu</i> laughed	I called <i>hum</i>	<i>Hus</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>hus</i>	Hu likes <i>humself</i>
Per ^[35]	<i>Per</i> laughed	I called <i>per</i>	<i>Per</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>pers</i>	Per likes <i>perself</i>
Thon ^[36]	<i>Thon</i> laughed	I called <i>thon</i>	<i>Thons</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>thons</i>	Thon likes <i>thonsel</i>
Jee, Jeir, Jem ^[37]	<i>Jee</i> laughed	I called <i>jem</i>	<i>Jeir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>jeirs</i>	Jee likes <i>jemself</i>
Ve ^[38]	<i>Ve</i> laughed	I called <i>ver</i>	<i>Vis</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>vis</i>	Ve likes <i>verself</i>
Xe ^[39]	<i>Xe</i> laughed	I called <i>xem</i>	<i>Xyr</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>xyrs</i>	Xe likes <i>xemself</i>
Ze (or zie or sie) and zir ^[40]	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>zir/zem</i>	<i>Zir/Zes</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>zirs/zes</i>	Ze likes <i>zirse</i>
Ze (or zie or sie) and hir ^[41]	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>hir</i>	<i>Hir</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>hirs</i>	Ze likes <i>hirself</i>
Ze and mer ^[42]	<i>Ze</i> laughed	I called <i>mer</i>	<i>Zer</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>zers</i>	Ze likes <i>zems</i>
Zhe, Zher, Zhim ^[43]	<i>Zhe</i> laughed	I called <i>zhim</i>	<i>Zher</i> eyes gleam	That is <i>zhers</i>	Zhe likes <i>zhimself</i>

Asexuality Triangle

The AVEN Triangle is the symbol of AVEN and is also widely regarded as the symbol of asexuality.



The top line represents the Kinsey scale, the left being homosexual, the right being heterosexual and the third dimension, leading to the bottom point of the triangle, represents sexual attraction. Asexuals lie in the bottom regions of the triangle, which is why you might see the triangle two-toned, having only the bottom corner black. AVEN chooses to display it as a gradient, which allows room for demisexuals and grey-asexuals. It signifies that there really is no clear cut black-and-white; it is a continuum.

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Western Oregon University Safe Zone, 345 Monmouth Ave. N., WUC 210, Monmouth, OR 97361 safezone@wou.edu

Terminology