

# WHAT DO THE LETTERS MEAN IN LGBTQIA+?



Sexuality is a spectrum in which anyone can identify themselves within. Outside of heterosexuality, where one gender is attracted to the opposite gender (ie. a male to a female) there is a variety of sexualities and gender identities that a person may align themselves with. Identities within the spectrum continue to grow as cultures become more accepting and individuals are free to express themselves.

## **L** LESBIAN

The term lesbian is used to describe female-identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female-identified people

## **G** GAY

The term Gay is used in some cultural settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men who engage in "homosexual behavior" identify as gay, and as such this label should be used with caution.

## **B** BISEXUAL

Bisexual refers to a person who emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to males/men and females/women. This attraction does not have to be equally split between genders and there may be a preference for one gender over others.

## **T** TRANSGENDER

The term transgender refers to a person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity.

## **Q** QUEER OR QUESTIONING

The "Q" in the LGBTQIA+ acronym has two meanings: "queer" and "questioning." But the former is the most common.

Queer is an umbrella term that embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively-heterosexual-and-monogamous majority.

Questioning is a term that refers to non-heterosexual people who are still "questioning" their place within the queer community—whether that means that they are still unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

## **I** INTERSEX

The term "intersex" is used to describe people who are born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the typical definitions of male and female

## **A** ASEXUAL, AGENDERED OR ALLY

Those who identify as asexual people are simply defined as those who do not feel a sexual attraction to others. This term is not to be confused with "aromantic," which refers to individuals who feel little or no romantic attraction to others. Asexual people can often be romantically attracted to someone, but sexual attraction doesn't play a role in the relationship.

Agendered refers to a person who is internally ungendered (i.e. doesn't prescribe to any gender).

Ally is a term used to define someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual, and genderstraight privilege in themselves and others.

## **+** PLUS (OTHER IDENTITIES)

The "+" in the LGBTQIA+ acronym is used to symbolize and explain a number of different gender identities and sexual orientations that are not already present in the lettered acronym. The "+" includes pansexuals who are people who can feel a sexual, romantic, and emotional attraction toward a person, regardless of their gender identity or orientation. The "+" also includes genderqueer term is used to define those whose gender identity is outside of the strict male and female binary.

