

Sexual Attraction, Behaviour, and Orientation

It's okay to feel unsure or overwhelmed by all the labels that are to follow that describe sexual and romantic orientation, attraction, and behaviour. Expanding the language, you use to describe your sexuality can provide important guidance, validation, and access to community while on your journey of sexual self-discovery and satisfaction.

How many terms are there?

All together there are 46 terms that describe sexual attraction, behaviour and orientation.

Why do we need to know this?

Familiarizing yourself with language that describes different types of sexual and romantic feelings and orientations will help you, your partners, your friends, colleagues and patients navigate and understand the many ways people experience and identify their sexuality.

Terms to avoid

The fields of medicine and psychology previously referred to gay sexual orientation as homosexual. Homosexual is now viewed as an outdated and offensive term and shouldn't be used to refer to LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Can transgender and cisgender be straight?

People who identify as cisgender and transgender can be straight.

Below is a table defining each 46 terms and the meaning behind them, you can also view this on <https://www.healthline.com/health/different-types-of-sexuality#a-c>

Term	Definition
Asexual	Asexual identity or orientation includes individuals who don't experience sexual attraction to others of any gender. Also referred to as "aces," some people who are asexual do experience romantic attraction to people of one or multiple genders.
Allosexual	A word and category describing those who experience sexual attraction. Use of this term helps to normalize the experience of being asexual and provides a more specific label to describe those who aren't part of the asexual community.
Allosexism	This refers to norms, stereotypes, and practices in society that operate under the assumption that all human beings experience, or should experience, sexual attraction. Allosexism grants privilege to those who experience attraction and leads to prejudice against and erasure of asexual people.
Androsexual	A term used to communicate sexual or romantic attraction to men, males, or masculinity. This term intentionally includes attraction to those who identify as men, male, or masculine, regardless of biology, anatomy, or sex assigned at birth.
Aromantic	Aromantic orientation describes people who experience little or no romantic attraction, regardless of sex or gender.
Autosexual	A person who's sexually attracted to themselves. Someone's desire to engage in sexual behaviour such as masturbation doesn't determine whether they're autosexual.
Autoromantic	Aromantic orientation that describes a person who's romantically attracted to themselves. Those who identify as autoromantic often report experiencing the relationship they have with themselves as romantic.
Bicurious	This refers to people who are questioning or exploring bisexuality, which typically includes curiosity about one's romantic or sexual attraction to people of the same or different genders.
Bisexual	A sexual orientation that describes those who experience sexual, romantic, or emotional attractions to people of more than one gender. Also referred to as "bi," bisexual typically includes individuals who are attracted to a variety of people, with genders that are similar to and different than their own.
Bioromantic	Those who experience romantic attraction, but not sexual attraction, to individuals of more than one gender.

Closeted	<p>Closeted, also referred to as “in the closet,” describes people in the LGBTQIA+ community who don’t publicly or openly share their sexual identity, sexual attraction, sexual behaviour, gender expression, or gender identity.</p> <p>Closeted is often understood as the opposite of “out,” and refers to the metaphorical hidden or private place a LGBTQIA+ person comes from in the process of making decisions about disclosing gender and sexuality.</p> <p>Some individuals may be out in certain communities but closeted in others, due to fear of discrimination, mistreatment, rejection, or violence.</p>
Coming out	<p>A phrase that refers to the process of being open about one’s sexuality and gender. For many LGBTQIA+ people, “coming out” isn’t a one-time event, but a process and series of moments and conversations.</p> <p>(see link on page 6 for more info)</p>
Cupiosexual	<p>Cupiosexual describes asexual people who don’t experience sexual attraction but still have the desire to engage in sexual behaviour or a sexual relationship.</p>
Cisgender	<p>This describes someone who is not transgender. For instance, someone who is named a boy at birth and continues to live as a man would be cisgender.</p>
Demisexual	<p>On the asexual spectrum, this sexual orientation describes individuals who experience sexual attraction only under specific circumstances, such as after building a romantic or emotional relationship with a person.</p>
Demiromantic	<p>This romantic orientation describes individuals who experience romantic attraction only under specific circumstances, such as after building an emotional relationship with a person.</p>
Fluid	<p>This term refers to the fact that sexuality, sexual attraction, and sexual behaviour can change over time and be dependent on the situation.</p>
Gay	<p>A term that describes individuals who experience sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction to people of the same or a similar gender.</p> <p>Some gay-identified women prefer the term lesbian, while others prefer queer or gay. It’s also best to ask which word or term someone uses to describe themselves.</p>
Graysexual	<p>Graysexual is a term used to acknowledge the gray area on the sexuality spectrum for people who don’t explicitly and exclusively identify as asexual or aromantic.</p>

Grayromantic	A romantic orientation that describes individuals whose romantic attraction exists in the gray area between romantic and aromantic.
Gynesexual	A term used to communicate sexual or romantic attraction to women, females, or femininity. This term intentionally includes attraction to those who identify as women, female, or feminine, regardless of biology, anatomy, or the sex assigned at birth.
Heterosexual	A term that describes people who experience sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction to people of the “opposite” gender (e.g. male vs. female, man vs. woman) or a different gender.
Lesbian	A woman or female-identified person who experiences sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction to people of the same or a similar gender.
LGBTQIA+	The acronym that often describes individuals who don’t identify as exclusively heterosexual or exclusively cisgender. The + symbol in LGBTQIA+ refers to the fact that there are many sexual orientations and gender identities that are part of the broader LGBTQIA community, but aren’t included as part of the acronym.
Libidoist asexual	A term used to describe an asexual person who experiences sexual feelings that are satisfied through self-stimulation or masturbation. This label acknowledges that, for some people, acting on libido or sexual feelings doesn’t necessarily involve sexual behaviour with others.
Monosexual	A broad sexual orientation category that includes people who experience romantic or sexual attraction to people of one sex or gender. Monosexuality typically includes those who are exclusively heterosexual, gay, or lesbian.
Non-libidoist asexual	Referring to an identity on the asexuality spectrum, a non-libidoist asexual is someone who doesn’t experience any sexual feelings or have an active sex drive.
Omnisexual	Omnisexual is similar to pansexual and can be used to describe individuals whose sexuality isn’t limited to people of a particular gender, sex, or sexual orientation.
Pansexual	A term that describes individuals who can experience sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction to any person, regardless of that person’s gender, sex, or sexuality.

Panromantic	A term that describes individuals who can experience romantic, or emotional (but not sexual) attraction to any person, regardless of that person's gender, sex, or sexuality.
Polysexual	A term that describes individuals with a sexual orientation that involves sexual or romantic attraction to people with varying genders. Polysexual orientations include bisexuality, pansexuality, omnisexuality, and queer, among many others.
Pomosexual	A term (not necessarily an identity) used to refer to those who reject sexuality labels or don't identify with any of them.
Passing	Passing refers to society's perceptions and assumptions of someone's sexuality or gender. Specifically, this term is most commonly used to discuss the frequency and extent to which an LGBTQIA+ person is perceived as or assumed to be straight or cisgender.
Queer	An umbrella term that describes individuals who aren't exclusively heterosexual. The term queer (the Q in LGBTQIA+), acknowledges that sexuality is a spectrum as opposed to a collection of independent and mutually exclusive categories. (see link on page 6 for more info)
Questioning	The process of being curious about or exploring some aspect of sexuality or gender. Questioning can also be used as an adjective to describe someone who's currently exploring their sexuality or gender.
Romantic attraction	(see link on page 6 for more info)
Romantic orientation	(see link on page 6 for more info)
Sapiosexual	A word used to describe those who experience attraction based on intelligence, rather than sex or gender.
Sexual attraction	(see link on page 6 for more info)
Sex-averse	Sex-averse describes those who are asexual and are averse to or extremely disinterested in sex or sexual behavior.
Sex-favorable	On the spectrum of asexuality, sex-favorable is viewed as the "opposite" of sex-repulsed and describes those who are asexual, and in certain situations can have favorable or positive feelings toward sex.
Sex-indifferent	Sex-indifferent describes those who are asexual and feel indifferent or neutral about sex or sexual behavior.
Sexual orientation or sexuality	(see link on page 6 for more info)

Sex-repulsed	Similar to sex-averse, sex-repulsed is on the spectrum of asexuality and describes those who are asexual and are repulsed by or extremely disinterested in sex or sexual behaviour.
Skoliosexual	A sexual orientation that describes those who are sexually attracted to people with non-cisgender gender identities, such as people who are nonbinary, genderqueer, or trans.
Spectrasexual	A term that describes people who are sexually or romantically attracted to multiple or varied sexes, genders, and gender identities — but not necessarily all or any.
Straight	Also known as heterosexual, straight describes people who experience sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction to individuals of the “opposite” gender (e.g. male vs. female, man vs. woman) or a different gender.

I have chose to leave *homosexual* out of the above grid for the following reason:

This is an outdated term rooted in the fields of medicine and psychology that refers to individuals who experience sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction to people of the same or a similar gender.