

Pride: Refers to the celebration of being queer. It also refers to festivals that occur in cities around the world during the summer months. Pride Day, Pride Week or Pride Mardi Gras all commemorate the Stonewall Riots which took place in June 1969, in New York City. The riots are seen as the birth of the modern movement for attaining equal rights for gay people.

Queer Symbols:

The queer community has developed and adopted symbols throughout its history as a way to express their pride in who they are and as a support of their fellow community members. These symbols are also used to convey ideas and some of the identities of the queer community both to its members as well as the greater community. Here are a few of the many symbols that have been and still are used today:

Queer Pride Symbols:



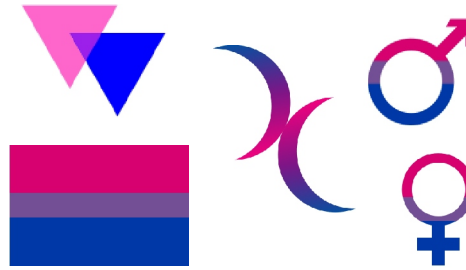
Lesbian Symbols:



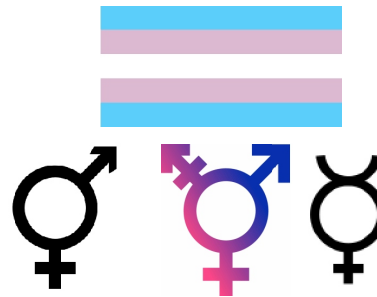
Gay Symbols:



Bisexual Symbols:



Transgender & Intersex Symbols:



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Words & Labels



Words & Labels.

As children we very quickly learn the power of words. They can make us feel afraid, happy, hurt or loved. Even as adults we understand this. Yet words by themselves do not have power, we give them power. Any word that can be used to hurt or insult can just as easily show love and respect. It is how we say the word and how we take it in that gives it power.

Sexual Orientation: Is the drive to establish intimate emotional and sexual relationships with other people. It has three forms: Heterosexual- attracted to opposite sex; Homosexual-attracted to same sex; and Bisexual-attracted to both sexes.

Sexual Preference: Is often used as a substitute term for sexual orientation. Sexual Preference really only applies to some bisexuals who prefer one sex to the other but still have relations with both genders.

Gay / Lesbian / Queer : Gay and queer are both generic terms used for homosexual men and women. Gay is more often associated with men than women. The term gay man/men is very common, gay people is also quite common, but the term gay woman/women is rare. Lesbian is a term exclusive to gay women. Queer is becoming popular in referring to both gay men and lesbians and it also includes bisexuals and transgendered people. Gay Community & Queer Community are used to describe all sexual minorities. And, since we live in the time of abbreviations, LGB or LGBT, are also seen.

Transgender/Transsexual, Cross-Dressers, Intersex & Drag Queens/Kings: Are often thought to be the same but are different. **Transgender/Transsexuals** are people who are mentally and emotionally one gender while their body is the other. **Cross dressers** are people who enjoy wearing clothes associated with the other sex; they may be straight, gay or bi. **Intersex** is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. This can occur chromosomally or can occur physically. **Drag Queens** are gay men who dress as women; **Drag Kings** are lesbians who dress as men; both do it to entertain, for fun, as a social commentary on gender and/or often as a means of fundraising.

Straight / Straight Not Narrow: Straight is a term used to refer to heterosexual people. Straight Not Narrow, are straight people who actively support the gay community.

The Closet: Being in the closet is when a person hides their true sexual orientation. It can be because of denial, fear, or a desire to “protect” family and friends.

Out: People at some point choose to leave the closet to be “out of the closet”. They accept and embrace their sexual orientation. There are three levels: personal-out to yourself, private-out to family and friends, and public-out to work and the world at large. Some people are “outed”, forced out of the closet by someone or some event. To be outed can be very upsetting.

Homophobia / Homophobe: The word Homophobia used to mean a fear of homosexuals. Today it also refers to hate, discrimination and intolerance towards the gay community. A homophobe is a person who hates, fears, discriminates against and attacks gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and those seen or perceived as gay.

Transphobia / Trans-bashing: The discrimination of transsexual and/or transgender people. The practice of victimizing a person because they are transgender/transsexual. Unlike gay-bashing, this type of violence is associated with the individual's gender identity instead of their sexuality.

Heterosexism: Is the belief that being straight is better and morally superior to being gay or bisexual. It also means the assumption that everyone is straight and thus should be treated as such.

Fag, Queer, Dyke, Lesbo, Gay and Homo: Are all terms that were/are used to attack gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and those who appear gay. When used as insults and slurs they are hateful. Yet many in the gay community have reclaimed these same words using them as terms of affection and pride.

This is not a new idea. The African-Canadian community have done the same for racist comments. When the African-Canadians use these terms it is acceptable, when the caucasian community uses them it's insulting.