



Trans 101 Resource Guide

Although this is a comprehensive list, the terms in the list are ever-evolving as we learn and grow.

- **Sex Assigned at Birth (SAAB)**: the sex classification people receive at birth, typically based on external reproductive anatomy. In the United States, this can be either male or female.
- **Biological Sex (n)**: a person's chromosomal makeup, genitalia and reproductive anatomy, hormone levels, and secondary sex characteristics (such as facial hair and breasts).
- **Gender**: social classification based on one's identity, presentation of self, behavior, and interaction with others.
- **Gender Identity**: a deeply held, internal sense of one's gender.
- **Gender Expression**: how a person communicates their gender to the world (including hairstyle, clothing, and personality characteristics).
- **Gender Dysphoria**: emotional distress caused by societal inequities that are associated with the incongruence between a person's gender identity and their sex assigned at birth and/or between a person's gender identity and their biological sex.
- **Transgender**: an umbrella term, sometimes abbreviated as "trans," which indicates that a person has a gender identity that is different from their sex assigned at birth.
 - Being transgender has nothing to do with sexuality or sexual orientation, which are related to whom a person is attracted to. Transgender people may be attracted to women, men, and/or genderqueer/non-binary identified folks; they may be straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or queer, etc.
 - Transgender is an adjective, not a noun, so you could say "transgender person," but it would be improper to say "a transgender" or "transgenders."
 - Transgender isn't a verb, so a person cannot transgender or be "transgendered." An appropriate verb for this is transition.
- **Transgender woman**: a woman who has a female gender identity and was male assigned at birth (MAAB). Sometimes people use the term male-to-female (MTF) to refer to transgender women, but this is less accurate and less affirming of their gender identity.
- **Transgender man**: a man who has a male gender identity and was female assigned at birth (FAAB). Sometimes people use the term female-to-male (FTM) to refer to transgender men, but this is less accurate and less affirming of their gender identity.
- **Cisgender**: an adjective describing a person whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth. Examples would be cisgender woman or cisgender man. (Ellen DeGeneres is a cisgender woman; Ricky Martin is a cisgender man).
- **Genderqueer**: an adjective describing a person whose gender identity is neither male/man nor female/woman.
- **Non-binary**: an adjective describing a gender identity that is neither male/man nor female/woman. This is typically used as an umbrella term for genderqueer, androgynous, etc.



- **Intersex**: a person whose natal biological sex characteristics do not align with male or female characteristics. This is typically due to chromosomes that are neither XX nor XY (e.g., XXY).
- **Pronouns**: the word we use in place of a person's name when referring to them. In English, these are typically gender-specific: he/him/his for men and boys and she/her/hers for women and girls. There are also gender-neutral pronouns, including they/them/theirs. Using the pronouns a person uses for themselves is an important way of affirming their gender identity.
- **Gender transition**: the process a transgender person undertakes to align their gender expression and/or biological sex with their gender identity. This can be social, in which a person may change their name or pronouns or change their gender expression to be more masculine, more feminine, or more androgynous; it can be medical, in which a person uses physical interventions, such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and/or surgery to alter biological sex and secondary sex characteristics (i.e. breasts, facial hair, voice vocalization); or it can involve in both. **Many transgender people undergo social and medical gender transitions, but not everyone has the ability or desire to do so—and some people may not be in a safe enough environment to do so.**
- **Transsexual**: an outdated term historically used to refer to a person who had a binary gender identity that differed from their sex assigned at birth and who sought surgical intervention as part of their gender transition. **Unless a person identifies themselves as transsexual rather than transgender, this term should not be used.**
- **Cross-dresser**: a term used to refer to someone who alters their gender expression in order to present as a gender different from their assigned sex at birth, but maintains a gender identity that matches their sex assigned at birth. This can include individuals who cross-dress for performative purposes, such as drag queens and drag kings. Cross-dressers do not typically undergo gender transition. Transvestite is an outdated term historically used to describe people who cross-dress.
- **Gender binary**: the gender classification system we have in Western culture that provides only two, discrete gender options (man and woman), which are associated with specific gender expressions: masculine and feminine, respectively. Typically the gender binary is further enforced by a cisnormative assumption that gender is predetermined by a binary biological sex and matches sex assigned at birth. In other words, in our gender binary system, it is assumed that a person is either a man or a woman, and if they are a man, they have male biological sex characteristics, were male assigned at birth, and are masculine; if they are a woman, it is assumed they have female biological sex characteristics, were female assigned at birth, and are feminine.
- **Gender diversity**: A term that highlights the natural diversity of biological sex, gender identity, and gender expression across the population. Gender diversity manifests in not only the variance of where people fall along the spectrum of biology, identity, and expression, but also in the variety of combinations of each construct (e.g., there are masculine/butch trans men, feminine/femme cisgender men, masculine/butch trans women, feminine genderqueer people, etc., etc.). Gender diversity runs counter to the gender binary system