

# Sexual and Romantic Orientation Dictionary\*

*Please note that this list is not exhaustive of all the terms people may choose to express their feelings of attraction (which may or may not reflect behaviour). It's essential that we use respectful, inclusive language to demonstrate an understanding of these unique experiences. Also, for many people, feelings of attraction are fluid and change over time.*

- **Aromantic:** Someone who doesn't experience romantic attraction to others, but may still experience sexual attraction and have close and meaningful relationships. The related term 'gray-romantic' can be used to describe people who might experience romantic attraction once in a while, but usually don't.
- **Asexual** (sometimes referred to as 'ace'): Someone who doesn't experience sexual attraction to others, although may still experience romantic or emotional connections. The related term 'gray-ace' can be used to describe people who might experience sexual attraction once in a while, but usually don't. The term asexual is an umbrella term of sorts, with lots of different variations included in it.
- **Bisexual/Biromantic** (also known as 'bi' or 'bi+'): Someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to their own gender as well as at least one other gender. A person may feel equally attracted to many genders, or may experience stronger attractions to one gender, and this can vary over time.
- **Demisexual/Demiromantic:** Someone who only experiences sexual and/or romantic attraction after forming a strong emotional bond or deep connection with that person.
- **Heterosexual/Heteroromantic** ('straight'): Someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of a different gender. For example, a man attracted to women or a woman attracted to men.

# Sexual and Romantic Orientation Dictionary\*

- **Homosexual/Homoromantic:** Someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender. For example, a man attracted to other men or a woman attracted to other women. Because 'homosexual' has been widely used negatively and/or in a cold and clinical way, most 2SLGBTQIA+ people prefer the terms 'lesbian' 'gay,' or 'queer'. Also, in an effort to be more inclusive of gender identities, the term 'MLM' refers to 'men who love men'.
- **Lesbian:** A woman who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other women. A similar term, 'WLW', refers to women who love women. And the term 'sapphic' is used (among others) to broaden this definition to refer to 'non-men who are attracted to non-men'.
- **Pansexual/Panromantic:** Someone who doesn't see gender as a factor in their sexual or romantic attraction to others, focusing instead on personality and other physical characteristics.
- **Polyamorous:** Someone who has consensual, romantic or sexual relationships with multiple partners simultaneously. This is different from monogamy, which is characterized by exclusive relationships.
- **Polysexual/Polyromantic:** Someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to multiple genders, but not necessarily all genders. This orientation is similar to bisexuality but is inclusive of attraction to people outside the gender binary.



# Sexual and Romantic Orientation Dictionary\*

- **Queer:** This inclusive term is becoming more widely used among 2SLGBTQIA+ communities because it encompasses various non-heterosexual and non-cisgender orientations. It's still used to express hate, so it's important to use this term with caution.
- **Questioning:** Someone who is in the process of exploring their sexual orientation and, for this reason, feels uncomfortable using specific labels to describe it.
- **Skoliosexual/Skolioromantic:** Someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people who identify as transgender or non-binary.
- **Two-Spirit** ('2-Spirit'): An umbrella term used by many Indigenous communities to describe people with diverse gender identities, gender expressions, gender roles, and sexual orientations. Due to the homophobia that came with colonization, two-spirit people have overcome oppression and discrimination but remain respected (by most) as important members of their community. Non-indigenous people should not use this term for themselves.

\*Adapted from Qmunity's excellent resource, Queer Terminology from A to Q: ([www.qmunity.ca](http://www.qmunity.ca))

Also an excellent resource: PFLAG's LBGTQ+ Glossary: (<https://pflag.org/glossary/>)