

Transgender Terminology

Crossdressers: Individuals who, regardless of motivation, wear clothing, makeup, etc. that are considered by the culture to be appropriate for another gender but not one's own (preferred term to "transvestites").

Drag or In Drag: Wearing clothing considered appropriate for someone of another gender.

Drag Kings and Drag Queens: Female-bodied crossdressers (typically lesbians) and male-bodied crossdressers (typically gay men), respectively, who present in public, often for entertainment purposes.

En Femme: A term in the male crossdressing community for expressing a more "feminine" personality and displaying more "feminine" gender behavior while crossdressing.

FTM Individuals: Female-to-male transsexual people, transsexual men, transmen, or transguys—individuals assigned female at birth who identify as male. Some transmen reject being seen as "FTM," arguing that they have always been male and are only making this identity visible to other people (instead, they may call themselves "MTM").

Gender: The social construction of masculinity and femininity in a specific culture. It involves gender assignment (the gender designation of someone at birth), gender roles (the expectations imposed on someone based on their gender), gender attribution (how others perceive someone's gender), and gender identity (how someone defines their own gender).

Genderism: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender or gender-typical people and subordinate and disparage transgender and gender-diverse people.

Gender Expression: How one chooses to express one's gender identity through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, body characteristics, etc.

Gender Identity: An individual's sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Identity Disorder (GID): The classification for transsexuality in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th Edition, Text Revision, 2001). Most transsexual people strongly object to being considered mentally ill, arguing that it is a completely inaccurate diagnosis and serves to dehumanize and pathologize them. However, some transsexual individuals in countries such as Canada and Holland support GID being recognized as a mental disorder, because it enables them to have their gender reassignment surgeries covered by government health insurance (gender reassignment surgeries are rarely covered in the U.S.).

Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS): Surgical procedures that change one's body to conform to one's gender identity. These procedures may include "top surgery" (breast augmentation or removal) and "bottom surgery" (altering genitals). For female-to-male transsexual individuals, GRS involves a bilateral mastectomy (chest reconstruction), panhysterectomy (removal of the ovaries and uterus), and sometimes a phalloplasty (construction of a penis) and scrotoplasty (formation of a scrotum) or a metoidioplasty (restructuring the clitoris). For male-to-female transsexual individuals, GRS consists of optional surgical breast implants and vaginoplasty (construction of a vagina). Additional surgeries might include a trachea shave (reducing the size of the Adam's apple), bone restructuring to feminize

facial features, and hair transplants. Sometimes GRS is referred to as “gender confirming surgery,” to recognize that one’s gender does not change—it is only being made visible to others.

Gender Variant, Gender Diverse, or Gender Non-Conforming: Alternative terms for transgender, meaning one who varies from traditional “masculine” and “feminine” gender roles.

Genderqueer Individuals: People who identify as neither male nor female, as both, or as somewhere in between, and who often seek to blur gender lines. It is a particularly common identity among transgender youth.

Hir: A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “her” and “him.”

Intersex or Disorders of Sexual Development: Congenital conditions in which development of chromosomal, gonadal, or anatomical sex is atypical (preferred term to “hermaphrodite”). About one in 1,500-2,000 children are born with an intersex condition.

MTF Individuals: Male-to-female transsexual people, transsexual women, transwomen, or transgrrls—individuals assigned male at birth who identify as female. Some transwomen reject being seen as “MTF,” arguing that they have always been female and are only making this identity visible to other people (instead, they may call themselves “FTF”).

Second Self: A term in the male crossdressing community for an individual’s alternative gender preference. Male crossdressers express their second self through wearing “feminine” clothing and expressing “feminine” characteristics.

Sie or Ze: A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “she” and “he.”

Trans or Transgender People: Most commonly used as an umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity and/or expression is sometimes or always different from the gender assigned to them at birth. Transgender people include transsexuals, crossdressers, drag queens and kings, genderqueers, and others who cross traditional gender categories.

Transitioning: The period during which a person begins to live as their new gender. It may include changing one’s name, taking hormones, having surgery, and altering legal documents.

Transsexual People: Individuals whose gender identity is different from their assigned gender at birth. Transsexual people often undergo hormone treatments and gender confirmation surgeries to align their anatomy with their core identity, but not all desire or are able to do so.

Two Spirit People: A Native American/First Nation term for people who blend the masculine and the feminine. It is commonly used to describe anatomical women who took on the roles and/or dress of men and anatomical men who took on the roles and/or dress of women in the past (preferred term to “berdache”). The term is also often used by contemporary LGBT Native American and First Nation people to describe themselves.