

What are the different types of sexual orientation?

KEY WORDS

attraction | expression | exploration



Sexual orientation defines the sex or sexes for which a person feels a sexual or physical attraction. Unlike stereotypes would have you believe, it has nothing to do with behaviour, the way you dress or present yourself.

Unfortunately, inaccurate stereotypes related to sexual orientation are still present in society, contributing to misunderstandings and judgment. Some **common misconceptions** you may have heard are:

- All gay men are feminine; all lesbians are masculine.
- Bisexuality is just a phase and the person just needs time to decide whether they're straight or gay.
- LGBTQ+ people are more likely to cheat and sleep with many people.

- LGBTQ+ people can "convert" or be "cured" through therapy.
- Asexual people do not feel emotions for others

You can challenge these stereotypes with the right knowledge and empathy. We've created a quiz to help you find out the truth behind these stereotypes in our Alex chatbot!

"Lesbian", "bisexual", "gay" and "homosexual" are just the most commonly used terms, but there are many other categories of sexual orientation. Knowing the various facets of different sexual orientations will help you to be more tolerant and respect diversity. There's beauty in our differences!

Now, let's dive into a quick classification:

Straight (or heterosexual): This is when you're attracted to people of the opposite gender. If you're a boy and you like girls, or if you're a girl and you like boys, you're straight.

Gay (for men) or Lesbian (for women): This is when you're attracted to people of the same gender. So, if you're a boy who likes other boys, you're gay. If you're a girl who likes other girls, you're lesbian.

Bi (or Bisexual): This means you're attracted to both boys and girls. It's like having a crush on someone, and it doesn't matter if they're a boy or a girl.

Pansexual: This is when you're into people, regardless of their gender. It's like saying, "I like you for you, no matter if you're a boy, a girl, or anything else."

Asexual: Some people just aren't that interested in the idea or practice of dating and romance. If you're asexual, it means you might not feel a strong pull to have romantic or sexual attractions, and that's perfectly okay!

Demisexual: If this is you, you're the type who might need a deep connection with someone before you start feeling romantically and sexually interested in them.

Queer: This is like a catch-all term for not fitting into the usual categories, so it can describe people who might be gay, bi, or any other non-straight orientation.

Questioning: If you're still figuring out who you're attracted to, that's totally fine. You might use the term 'questioning' until you land on what feels right for you.

Fluid: Sometimes, your feelings about who you're attracted to might change over time. If that's you, you could say your sexual orientation is fluid.

Those were some categories of sexual orientations, but did you know that **sexuality is not rigid**? Sexuality exists on a spectrum – this means that, just as no two people are exactly alike, who you're attracted to also can't always be neatly categorised into separate identities. And similarly, **sexuality can evolve and change over time**, too. As people navigate life's twists and turns, they may find their attractions and preferences transforming. You should know that this natural evolution is a normal part of the human experience!

So, explore and understand yourself at your own pace. And hey, using labels to describe your sexuality is a great idea if they help you express who you are, but if they don't, that's cool too. Choose what feels most comfortable for you!!

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION
AND GENDER**

