

# IDENTITY BUDDY

## key definitions & distinctions

People are taught to conflate "sex", "gender", and "sexual orientation". While connected, they're not the same. When sex is assigned at birth according to a male-female binary, a child's gender is then presumed to match this binary. Depending upon one's supposed gender, assumptions are then made about who this person is attracted to. Parsing out these terms and questioning assumptions is key to seeing folks as their authentic selves and freeing all of us from limiting ideas of gender, sex, and attraction.

### SEX

Sex is a label that's assigned at birth based on the genitals and chromosomes someone's born with. Most cultures then connect certain expectations to this label, which in turn impacts how we see our body and ourselves.

### spectrums

We can think about all of these things as existing on different continuums, where people can see themselves as existing across multiple spectra across their lives as they learn more about themselves and learn new ways to express this!



### GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity is our internal experience and naming of gender. It can correspond with or differ from assigned sex at birth. Understanding of gender may come early for some, while how we communicate it can change over time.

### ATTRACTION

Attraction is how we are drawn to other people. This could be in sexual, romantic, sensual, platonic, and/or aesthetic ways. Attraction is usually presumed to consist of all five of these ways and is assumed based upon one's gender identity and presentation.

### GENDER EXPRESSION

Gender expression is how you present your gender through clothing, behavior, lifestyle, and personal appearance. This interacts with society's expectations around gender.



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#### GENDER IDENTITY

our internal experience and naming of our gender

- → woman-ness
- → man-ness
- → non-binariness

#### GENDER EXPRESSION

style, grooming, clothing, mannerisms, affect, appearance, hair, make-up, etc.

- → femininity
- → masculinity
- → other

#### SEX

body hair, chest, hips, shoulders, hormones, genitals, chromosomes, voice pitch, etc.

- → femaleness
- → maleness
- → intersex

#### ROMANTIC ATTRACTION

desire to have romantic relationship/do romantic things with (feeling butterflies, writing poems about them, going on dates)

- → women/femme/female people
- → men/masculine/male people
- → non-binary people

#### SEXUAL ATTRACTION

desire for intimate physical contact, usually but not exclusively, including genitals with another person(s)

- → women/femme/female people
- → men/masculine/male people
- → non-binary people

● means an absence of what is on the right side of the arrow

### remember

just because you know one thing about someone's identities doesn't necessarily mean you know how they identify in other ways. save yourself the work and try not to make assumptions!

**IDENTITY ≠ EXPRESSION ≠ SEX ≠ GENDER ≠ ATTRACTION**



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