



Pan



Visibility

Factsheet

Pan refers to the sexual, romantic or emotional attraction towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity.

Pan Visibility Day is on May 24th each year and it aims to celebrate and recognise those who identify as pansexual and panromantic (pan). Pan Visibility Day is an opportunity to raise awareness, do some myth busting and improve inclusivity for pan people.

The difference between being bi and pan?

Bi and pan may have a lot of similarities but they are not the same. Being bi is defined as 'being attracted to more than one gender', whereas being pan is defined as 'all gender identities'.

All isn't the same as multiple.

Bi means different things to different people. To some people, it means attraction to two or more genders, or multiple genders. To others, it means attraction to people of the same gender and people who are another gender.

Pan means being attracted to people regardless of sex and gender.

What is pan-erasure?

Pan-erasure is the tendency to ignore, remove, falsify or re-explain evidence of pan identities in history, academia, the news media and other primary sources.

Pan people often face micro-aggressions, jokes and/or critiques, that claim being pan is not real or valid. This is an extreme act of erasure that, while on the surface seem harmless, can lead to much more dangerous implications.

Some things you should know.....

1. The word pan originally comes from Greek. Pan means 'all', and is related to words like panorama
2. Pan identifying people are not attracted to pots or pans – the joke isn't funny. Pan people have nothing against old jokes but this one about being sexually attracted to pans isn't just tired, it's also not funny



3. Being pan is different from being bi but the two aren't mutually exclusive. Pan and bi identities are not in conflict and some overlap of the term exists. In fact, some bi people also identify as pan, and vice versa.
4. There are lots of famous pan people! Recently, the fab Janelle Monae came out as pan, saying 'I'm open to learning more about who I am'. Other pan people include Angel Haze and Laci Green.
5. Being pan is just one part of who someone is. A pan person may also be trans, have a disability or be from an ethnic minority background, or all three. Pan people come from all backgrounds and all walks of life.



How do you know which term fits for you?

There's no test to determine whether you're pan or any other orientation, but try asking yourself some of these questions to help:

- Is there any sex, gender or gender identity that you don't ever feel attracted to?
- Is there any sex, gender or gender identity that you're not sure if you're attracted to?
- What term feels best?
- Are you romantically attracted to the same people you're sexually attracted to?

Remember, there's no right or wrong. You can identify with multiple terms – you can also change your mind at any time!

How to be a pan ally?

- Speak out against antagonism and erasure
- Avoid making assumptions – many assume that pan people are straight or gay depending on the gender of their partner. A pan person is pan regardless of their current or past partner (s).
- It's important to use the term 'LGBTQ+' if you mean to include pan people, rather than using 'gay' as an umbrella term
- Pan people are told they are 'straight' or 'really gay' and asked to pick a side. These comments and stereotypes are pan-phobic, and if you hear anyone expressing such views, call them out



Resources

[Skill Boosters – Inclusive Allyship](#)



Glossary

Orientation – an umbrella term describing a person’s attraction to other people. This attraction may be sexual (sexual orientation) and/or romantic (romantic orientation). These terms refers to a person’s sense or identity based on their attractions, or lack thereof

Romantic Orientation – a person’s romantic attraction to other people, or lack thereof

Sexual Orientation - a person’s sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof

Bi – an umbrella term for people who experience sexual and/or emotional attraction to more than one gender

Panromantic – is romantically attracted to people of all biological sex, gender or gender identity

Pansexual – not limited in sexual choice with regard to biological sex, gender or gender identity

Queer – a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression. Although some LGBTQ+ people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who embraced it

Stonewall Glossary of terms can be found [here](#)