

Trans@MIT: Allies Toolkit

<http://web.mit.edu/trans>

Useful Terminology about Trans and Gender Variant People

The following list of terms includes many common words and phrases used to describe transgender, transsexual, and gender variant lives and experiences. It is by no means a complete list, and the exact meaning of some terms may differ depending on the person using them. This list merely serves as an introduction to trans terminology.

Please use this terminology sheet in tandem with the other items in the "Trans Allies Toolkit," including the "What Does it Mean to be Transgender" brochure, "Action Tips for Allies of Trans People," and the "Recommended Reading List."

ag/aggressive: A Black or Latina lesbian with a very masculine gender presentation, often being read as boys or men, but usually not identifying as male.

ally: Generally speaking, an ally is a member of a privileged group who takes a stand against oppression (example: a white person who speaks out against racism). An ally works to become part of social change rather than part of oppression. A trans ally is someone who commits to being open-minded and respectful to people who may have different or unconventional gender identities or presentations; who takes the time to learn more about trans people and trans lives; who confronts assumptions around gender roles and gender presentation; and who works to change the misunderstanding and mistreatment of transgender and transsexual people.

androgynous: A person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender that is mixed, neutral, or androgynous.

anti-androgens: Drugs that are used to block the production or interfere with the action of male sex hormones. Often used in combination with estrogen in MTF hormone therapy; commonly used anti-androgens are spironolactone and finasteride. See also "estrogen" and "hormone therapy."

berdache: A generic term used by European colonists/explorers to refer to a differently-gendered or cross-gendered Native people. The term 'berdache' is generally rejected as inappropriate and offensive. More appropriate Native terms for gender variant people will depend on the group or nation being described. See also "two-spirit."

bigendered: A person whose gender identity is a combination of male/man and female/woman.

bilateral mastectomy: see "chest surgery" and "double incision"

binding: The process used by FTMs and other transgender people of flattening one's breast tissue in order to create a male-appearing chest. Some FTMs and trans men don't bind at all due to comfort issues, because they may have small chests, or because they have undergone chest reconstruction surgery. Some use different methods of layering clothing to help hide their chests. Some bind only on certain occasions; some bind all the time.

boi: Pronounced "boy." A female-bodied person who intentionally or non-intentionally expresses and/or presents culturally/stereotypically masculine, particularly boyish, characteristics. Also, one who enjoys being perceived as a young male, and/or intentionally identifies with being a "boy" rather than a "man."

bottom surgery: see "genital reconstruction surgery"

butch: A person who identifies themselves as masculine.

chest surgery, chest reconstruction surgery: Surgical reconstruction to create a more male or more female appearing chest. Sometimes also referred to as "top surgery."

Chest surgery is the most common surgical procedure sought by FTMs. There are two basic procedures that are usually performed for FTMs: 1. Double incision/Bilateral mastectomy, or 2. Keyhole/Peri-areolar incision (see individual entries for more detail).

For MTFs, chest surgery may involve breast implants, which are sometimes used to augment the amount of breast development that may have already been achieved through estrogen hormone therapy.

clock: To be "clocked" is to be detected as a person who is cross-dressed or transsexual.

coming out: In a trans context, coming out may refer to the process by which one accepts one's own gender identity, and/or may also refer to the process by which one shares one's gender identity status with others. Keep in mind that coming out can happen in pre-, post- and non-transition stages and identities. Often called "disclosure" when telling others.

cross dresser: Someone who wears clothes of another gender/sex. The term cross dresser is most frequently used to describe a heterosexual male who cross dresses as a female some or all of the time, but does not typically desire gender transition.

cross-living: Usually refers to cross-dressing full-time (also referred to as "24/7"), and living as the gender which you perceive yourself to be.

cypionate: Short for testosterone cypionate, one of the main injectable forms of testosterone prescribed to FTMs in the United States. See also "testosterone."

double incision: Also called "bilateral mastectomy." A type of FTM chest surgery procedure that is effective for individuals with a medium to large amount of breast tissue. In this method, large incisions are made horizontally across each breast, usually below the nipple. The skin is then peeled back so that the mammary glands and fatty tissue can be removed with a scalpel. The muscles of the chest are not touched. Certain areas

of hard-to-reach fatty tissue may also be removed via liposuction (such as areas near the armpits). Once the extraneous tissue has been removed, the excess chest skin is trimmed and the incisions closed, leaving two seams/scars just below the line of the pectoral muscles. Nipples are usually resized and grafted into place. See also “chest surgery.”

drab: A term often used by cross dressers to indicate wearing the clothes traditionally associated with your birth sex. A male to female cross dresser would be “in drab” if he was wearing a man’s suit.

drag: The performance of one or multiple genders theatrically.

drag king: A person who performs masculinity theatrically.

drag queen: A person who performs femininity theatrically.

E: See “estrogen”

electrolysis: The painful and costly procedure of having hair permanently removed. MTFs and some cross dressers remove facial and body hair through electrolysis, while some FTMs undergo electrolysis before certain types of phalloplasty.

en femme: A term often used by male-to-female cross dressers to indicate being cross dressed and not in traditional male clothes.

enanthate: Short for testosterone enanthate, one of the main injectable forms of testosterone prescribed to FTMs in the United States. See also “testosterone.”

estrogen or estradiol: Sometimes shortened to “E.” A hormone responsible for producing feminine secondary sex characteristics such as breast growth and increased fat distribution around the hips and waist. Estrogen therapy is administered to MTFs to induce the presence of feminine secondary sex characteristics. It may also cause softening of the skin, slowing or stopping of scalp hair loss, decrease in muscle mass, decrease in sex drive, decreased erections, and decrease in testicular size. Estrogen can be taken in pill, patch, or injection forms.

female-to-male transsexual: Often referred to as FTM or F2M. A person who was born in a female body but whose gender identity is male. Also can refer to those assigned female at birth, in the case of intersex people, whose gender identity is male. Usually, female-to-male transsexuals will seek hormonal and/or surgical treatment in order to live successfully as men in society.

femme: Feminine identified person of any gender/sex.

finasteride: Brand name “Propecia,” an anti-androgen often prescribed in combination with estrogen therapy for MTF transsexuals. See also “anti-androgen,” “estrogen” and “hormone therapy.”

FTM (or F2M): Short for Female-To-Male. Usually said aloud as "F to M." Most commonly refers to female-to-male transsexuals. Sometimes also used by others who are born in female bodies and who move toward masculine or male presentation without hormones or surgery. See also "female-to-male transsexual."

full-time: Going full-time, or living full-time, in the social role of the sex opposite that assigned at birth.

gaff: A device used to conceal a genetic male's penis so that no "bulge" is visible.

gender-bender (also gender-blender): A person who merges characteristics of gender in subtle ways or intentionally flaunts merged/blurred cultural/stereotypical gender norms for the purpose of shocking others, without concern for passing. Unless someone chooses this label for themselves, it may be considered derogatory.

gender binary: The idea that there are only two genders or sexes—male/female or man/woman, and that a person must be strictly either/or.

gender cues: What people use to attempt to tell the gender/sex of another person. Examples include hairstyle, vocal inflection, body shape, body movements and gestures, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.

gender dysphoria: Also body dysphoria. The state of discomfort felt by transsexuals and some transgender people caused by the incongruity between one's physical sex and one's gender-identity.

gender identity: A person's internal self-awareness of being either male or female, masculine or feminine, something in-between, or something other.

Gender Identity Disorder (GID): A condition identified by psychologists and medical doctors wherein a person who has been assigned one gender at birth identifies as belonging to another gender.

gender normative: A person who, by nature or by choice, conforms to mainstream gender-based expectations of society. Also sometimes referred to as "Genderstraight."

gender variant: A person who, either by nature or by choice, does not conform to gender-based expectations of society.

genderfuck: The idea of playing with gender presentation and cues to purposely confuse "standard" or stereotypical gender expressions.

genderqueer: A gender-variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders.

genderstraight: see "gender normative."

genital reconstruction surgery (GRS): Sometimes also referred to as "genital reassignment surgery." For MTFs, this is usually the process of orchiectomy, or removal of the testes, and vaginoplasty, where the outer skin of the penis is surgically inverted to create a clitoris and vagina. See also "orchiectomy" and "vaginoplasty."

For FTMs, this is usually the process of constructing a phallus/penis from an individual's own donor tissue (this is usually referred to as "phalloplasty"), or the process of "freeing up" the enlarged clitoris from its connective tissue (the clitoris is typically elongated and changed somewhat in appearance from testosterone therapy) so that it is presented on the body in a more phallic/penis-like manner (this is usually referred to as "metoidioplasty"). Scrotal implants may or may not be added during these procedures. See also "phalloplasty" and "metoidioplasty."

getting read (or "clocked"): Being detected as a person who is cross-dressed or transsexual.

GG or GW: Used frequently in MTF circles, short for "Genetic Girl" or "Genetic Woman." A "female born female."

GID: see "Gender Identity Disorder"

GRS: see "genital reconstruction surgery"

Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association (HBIGDA): A professional organization devoted to the understanding and treatment of gender identity disorders. The organization is named after one of the earliest physicians to work with transsexuals, Dr. Harry Benjamin. The HBIGDA is best known for publishing the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care (HBSOC) for Gender Identity Disorders. See also "Harry Benjamin Standards of Care."

Harry Benjamin Standards of Care (HBSOC): The most widespread set of standards and guidelines used by professionals for the medical and mental health treatment of transsexuals. The HBSOC are periodically updated and revised as new scientific and medical information becomes available.

HBIGDA: see "Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association"

HBSOC: see "Harry Benjamin Standards of Care"

herbals: General term used to refer to over-the-counter herbal hormones that claim to simulate natural or prescription female or male hormones.

hermaphrodite: An outdated term, usually considered offensive, for intersex persons. See also "intersex."

hir: A gender-neutral pronoun, used in place of him/her. Pronounced "here." See also "ze."

Hormone Therapy (also Hormone Replacement Therapy, HRT, Hormonal Sex Reassignment): Administration of hormones to affect the development of masculine or feminine secondary sex characteristics. Hormone therapy is usually continued for life. Androgens (testosterone) are used for FTMs; Estrogens and anti-androgens are used for MTFs. See also "anti-androgens," "estrogen," and "testosterone."

hysterectomy: Sometimes shortened to "hysto." The surgical removal of the uterus. This surgery is often pursued by FTMs as part of the transition process, as well as for health reasons. A hysterectomy is required by some states in order to legally change one's gender status from female to male. See also "oophorectomy."

hysto: see "hysterectomy"

intersex: The condition of being born with genitalia that is difficult to label as male or female, and/or developing secondary sex characteristics of indeterminate sex, or which combine features of both sexes. The term "hermaphrodite" had been used in the past to refer to intersex persons, but that term is now considered negative and inaccurate. Some intersex people are also transgender, but intersex is not typically considered a subset of transgender, nor transgender a subset of intersex.

Many intersex infants and children are subjected to numerous genital surgeries and hormone treatments in order to conform their bodies to the standard of either "male" or "female." There is a growing movement to prevent such surgeries in children.

keyhole: A type of FTM chest surgery procedure that is effective for individuals with small amounts of breast tissue. In the keyhole method, a small incision is made along the border of the areola (usually along the bottom), and the breast tissue is removed via a liposuction needle through the incision. The nipple is left attached to the body via a pedicle (a stalk of tissue) in order to maintain sensation. Once the breast tissue has been removed, the incision is closed. The nipple is usually not resized or repositioned. See also "chest surgery."

lower surgery: see "genital reconstruction surgery"

male-to-female transsexual: Often referred to as MTF or M2F. A person who was born in a male body but whose gender identity is female. Also can refer to those assigned male at birth, in the case of intersex people, whose gender identity is female. Usually, male-to-female transsexuals will seek hormonal and/or surgical treatment in order to live successfully as women in society.

meta: see "metoidioplasty"

metoidioplasty: Sometimes spelled "metaoidioplasty;" sometimes shortened to "meta." The surgical process of "freeing up" the enlarged clitoris from its connective tissue (the clitoris is typically elongated and changed somewhat in appearance from testosterone therapy) so that it is presented on the body in a more phallic or penis-like manner. Scrotal implants may or may not be added. See also "genital reconstruction surgery."

MTF (OR M2F): Short for Male-To-Female. Usually said aloud as "M to F." Most commonly refers to male-to-female transsexuals. See also "male-to-female transsexual."

oophorectomy: The surgical removal of one or both ovaries. This surgery is often pursued by FTMs, usually in combination with a hysterectomy, as part of the transition process, as well as for health reasons. See also "hysterectomy."

orchiectomy: Orchiectomy (or "orchidectomy") refers to the surgical removal of the testes. This causes sterilization and greatly reduces the production of testosterone. It should not be confused with penectomy, which is the removal of the penis. Some MTFs undergo orchiectomy as an initial stage before vaginoplasty, while others may choose it as their only genital surgery. Orchiectomy, sometimes in combination with vaginoplasty, is often required to legally change one's gender status from male to female. See also "vaginoplasty."

outing: Involuntary disclosure of one's gender identity, sexual orientation, or intersex status.

new woman: A post operative male to female transsexual.

non-op (also non-operative): Individuals who have not attained and may not desire to attain gender reassignment surgery, and may or may not take hormone therapy. For many individuals, self-identification and self-expression, through cross-living or other methods of gender identity achieve harmony or congruence between one's body and one's gender identity and there is no need felt for surgical reconstruction.

packer: see "packing"

packing: The process of creating a male-looking bulge in one's crotch. This can be accomplished through a home-made or store-bought pants stuffer, or through a realistic-looking prosthetic device. A packing device may be referred to as a "packer" or "packy," or as an "STP packer" if it can also be used to pee through while standing up (STP= Stand To Pee). Some guys simply refer to their packer or prosthetic as a cock and balls, a dick, etc.

Some FTMs do not pack at all-- some find it too hot and/or sticky, others find it uncomfortable and/or inconvenient, and still others find it personally unnecessary. Some FTMs pack simply for the sake of creating a realistic-looking bulge in their pants. Others may pack only on certain occasions (while swimming, while in the locker room, or wearing tight-fitting pants). Still others may feel incomplete and/or conspicuous without wearing a packer or prosthetic device. Some have realistic prosthetics that are affixed to the skin for wear throughout the day and night. For some FTMs, the term "packing" itself is not even an accurate descriptor for the wearing of a prosthetic device-- a prosthetic may be considered more an extension of the body rather than merely a pants-stuffer

pangender: A person whose gender identity is comprised of all or many gender expressions.

passing: Successfully being perceived as a member of your preferred gender regardless of actual birth sex. Some transsexual people object to the term "passing," as it implies that one is being mistaken for something they are not. A preferable phrasing is "being read as a man" or "being read as a woman."

patch (T patch, or Estradiol patch): Refers to testosterone or estrogen hormone therapy as applied transdermally via a patch adhered to the skin. See also "estrogen" and "testosterone."

peri: see "peri-areolar"

peri-areolar: Sometimes shortened to "peri." A type of FTM chest surgery procedure that is effective for individuals with small to medium amounts of breast tissue. In the peri-areolar method, an incision is made along the entire circumference of the areola. The nipple is usually left attached to the body via a pedicle in order to maintain sensation. Breast tissue is then "scooped out" by scalpel, or with a combination of scalpel and liposuction. The areola may be trimmed somewhat to reduce its size. Excess skin on the chest may also be trimmed away along the circumference of the incision. The skin is then pulled taut toward the center of the opening and the nipple is reattached to cover the opening—much like pulling a drawstring bag closed. Thus, this procedure is also sometimes referred to as the drawstring or "purse string" technique. The nipple/areola may be repositioned slightly, depending on original chest size and the available skin. See also "chest surgery."

phallo: see "phalloplasty"

phalloplasty: Sometimes shortened to "phallo." A type of genital reconstruction surgery in which a phallus/penis is constructed from an individual's own donor tissue (usually taken from the forearm, leg, and/or abdomen) that has been shaped and grafted into place. Phalloplasty operations are usually done in stages requiring multiple surgeries. Scrotal implants may or may not be added. See also "genital reconstruction surgery."

post-op (also post-operative): Transsexual individuals who have attained one or more gender reassignment surgery procedures.

pre-op (also pre-operative): Transsexual individuals who have not attained gender reassignment surgery, but who desire to and are seeking that as an option. They may or may not cross-live full time and may or may not take hormone therapy.

progesterone or progestins: A hormone sometimes used in the treatment of both FTM and MTF transsexuals. On occasion, FTMs are treated with progesterone to treat menstrual issues in early transition (though the use of testosterone usually eventually suppresses menses in FTMs). MTFs are occasionally prescribed progesterone in combination with estrogen, but there is some disagreement about this practice. See also "hormone therapy."

queer: An umbrella term which attempts to embrace a matrix of sexual preferences, gender presentations, and habits of those who may not exclusively be heterosexual, monogamous, gender normative, or who may be into "alternative" sexual choices or lifestyles. Under this umbrella, queer might include lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, intersex persons, radical sex communities, and many other sexually transgressive people.

Queer is also a reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been semantically overturned by members of the maligned group, who use it as a term of defiant pride. The term queer is not necessarily embraced by all people in the above categories, and some people find it offensive. Also, because queer is usually used in the context of the LBG community, trans people may feel their experience or concerns are erased by being included under it. Therefore, it is best to find out if someone describes themselves as queer before applying that label to them.

Real Life Test (RLT): A period of time in which a transsexual person is required to live full time in the role of the sex they identify with (i.e., a transsexual person born female would be living full time as a male) before the medical community will begin the medical gender reassignment process. The RLT is required under the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care, but other Standards of Care do not require a RLT or may use discretion in determining the length of a RLT. Individual mental health and medical professionals may also use discretion when determining if a RLT is necessary for a given individual. See also "Harry Benjamin Standards of Care" and "Standards of Care."

secondary sex characteristics: Physical traits that distinguish a body as more "male" or "female" in appearance, but that are not directly part of the reproductive system/gonads. They include facial and body hair growth, muscle development, fat pattern distribution, voice changes, and breast development, etc.

sex: A medical term designating a certain physical combination of gonads, chromosomes, genitalia, secondary sex characteristics, and hormonal balances. Usually subdivided into "male" and "female," causing some trouble for categorizing intersex bodies and those who otherwise fall in between those poles.

sex change operation: see "sex reassignment surgery"

sex reassignment surgery (SRS): Commonly termed a "sex change operation." This term is somewhat of a misnomer (especially for FTMs), because it implies there is one surgical procedure for successful transition.

For MTFs, SRS usually indicates vaginoplasty and/or orchiectomy. Breast augmentation/implants may or may not be needed or desired by MTFs. For FTMs, there are several surgical procedures involved with gender transition, including chest reconstruction surgery, hysterectomy/oophorectomy, and different types of genital reconstruction surgery (GRS).

Many FTMs undergo chest surgery, but not GRS. Some have chest surgery and a hysterectomy, but not GRS. Some have all three procedures (which may total more than three surgeries, as GRS can often involve several surgical procedures).

Both MTFs and FTMs may not be able to afford any surgery at all, yet live very successfully as women men in society through ongoing hormone treatment.

The requirements for "changing sex" under the law (i.e., changing one's legally recognized sex) vary from state to state, and often depend on the amount and type of surgery or hormone therapy one has had. A few states will not allow for a change in legal sex no matter how much surgery or treatment one has had. Thus, the idea that there is one, clear-cut surgical solution for "changing sex" is a bit misleading. See also "chest surgery," "genital reconstruction surgery (GRS)," "hysterectomy," "oophorectomy," "orchiectomy," and "vaginoplasty."

sexual orientation: The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes. Typical examples are gay, straight, bisexual, asexual.

shemale: A term, usually derogatory, used most often in the porn industry for a pre-op transsexual who has already developed breasts but still has an intact penis.

silicone injections: Sometimes used by MTF women to augment the appearance of breasts, hips, thighs, buttocks, legs, cheeks, chins, and lips. Considered to be hazardous to the health of the recipient.

SOC: see "Standards of Care"

SOFFA: An abbreviation for Significant Others, Friends, Family, and Allies of trans people.

spironolactone: Brand name "Aldactone," an anti-androgen often prescribed in combination with estrogen therapy for MTF transsexuals. See also "anti-androgen," "estrogen" and "hormone therapy."

Spivakian pronouns: New terms proposed to serve as gender-neutral, third-person, singular, personal pronouns in English. See also "hir" and "ze."

SRS: see "sex reassignment surgery"

Standards of Care (SOC): When someone uses the term "Standards of Care," they are often (but not always) referring to the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care (HBSOC), which are a set of standards and guidelines used by professionals for the medical and mental health treatment of transsexuals. Certain health clinics and gender clinics have devised their own Standards of Care for transsexual and transgender people, which may differ from the HBSOC. See also "Harry Benjamin Standards of Care."

stealth: A transsexual, once transitioned, may choose not to reveal his or her transsexual status to others (for example, to coworkers, friends, neighbors, etc.); this is referred to as "going stealth" or "being stealth."

stem: A person whose gender expression falls somewhere between a stud and a femme. See also "femme" and "stud."

stone: A person who may or may not desire sexual contact with the genitals or breasts. Often used as "stone butch" or "stone femme."

STP device: Short for "Stand to Pee" device. A device designed to aid the user in standing to pee at a urinal or toilet. There are a few different types of STP devices, both homemade and store-bought.

stud: see "aggressive."

T: see "testosterone"

testosterone: Sometimes shortened to "T." An androgenic hormone responsible for producing masculine secondary sex characteristics such as facial hair growth, deepening of the voice, increased body hair growth, and increased muscle development. Testosterone therapy is administered to FTMs to induce the presence of masculine secondary sex characteristics.

testosterone gel: A form of testosterone applied directly to the skin on a daily basis. Care must be taken to avoid skin-to-skin contact with a partner on the site of application. Transfer of the testosterone from the site can be prevented by keeping the area covered. See also "testosterone."

third gender: A gender-variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders.

top surgery: see "chest surgery"

tracheal shave: A surgery sometimes obtained by MTFs to reduce the cartilage in the area of the throat to conform to more feminine dimensions, to greatly reduce the appearance of an Adam's apple.

tranny: Slang for transsexual, usually considered derogatory, though sometimes used as "in-group" slang.

tranny chaser: A term primarily used to describe people who prefer or actively seek transpeople for sexual or romantic relations. While this term is claimed in an affirmative manner by some, it is largely regarded as derogatory.

trans: Sometimes short for "transsexual," sometimes short for "transgender." See individual listings for those terms.

transgender: Broadly speaking, transgender people are individuals whose gender expression and/or gender identity differs from conventional expectations based on the physical sex they were born into. The word transgender is an umbrella term which is often used to describe a wide range of identities and experiences, including: FTMs, MTFs, cross-dressers, drag queens, drag kings, gender queers, and many more. Because transgender is an umbrella term, it is often thought to be an imprecise term that does not adequately describe the particulars of specific identities and experiences. (For example, the identity/experience of a post-operative FTM transsexual will probably be very different from that of a female-identified drag king who performs on weekends, but both are often lumped together under the term "transgender.")

transgenderist: A person who lives full-time in the gender role they are most comfortable in without the intention or desire for GRS. Electrolysis, cosmetic facial or body contouring surgeries or hormones may be undergone by a transgenderist.

transition: The act(s) of changing from one sex to the other, and/or the act(s) of changing one's physical body and/or appearance as part of a sex/gender change. For most FTMs, transition is not a single discrete event, but a gradual set of changes over a period of time. As such, it is difficult to determine exactly when transition begins and when it ends. Some feel that their transition begins the day they begin hormone treatment. Some feel it begins when they tell their loved ones about their identity. Some feel it begins when they change their name legally to a male name. Some feel they are "in transition" for a few years while hormonal changes settle in. Some feel that their transition has officially ended when and if they are legally recognized as male. Some feel their transition is complete when they have completed genital reconstruction surgery. In short, what constitutes "being in transition" differs among trans men.

transman: An identity label sometimes adopted by female-to-male transsexuals to signify that they are men while still affirming their history as females.

transphobia: The irrational fear or hatred of those who are gender variant.

transsexual: An individual whose gender identity does not match the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Usually, transsexual people will seek hormonal and/or surgical treatment in order to bring their body into alignment with their gender identity. See also "gender identity" and "female-to-male transsexual."

transvestite: A person who dresses in clothing generally identified with the opposite gender/sex. The preferred term in the U.S. is "cross-dresser." See also "cross-dresser."

transwoman: An identity label sometimes adopted by male-to-female transsexuals to signify that they are women while still affirming their history as males.

tuck: The technique of hiding male genitals.

two-spirit: A term for some Native persons who have attributes of both genders, may have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes. The term 'two-spirit' is usually considered to specific to the Zuni tribe. Similar cross-gender and gender variant identity labels vary by group or nation.

vaginoplasty: The surgical creation of a vagina. In MTF vaginoplasty, the skin of foreskin and penis is typically inverted to form a fully sensate vagina. A clitoris supplied with nerve endings can be formed from part of the glans of the penis. In cases of shortage of skin, or when a vaginoplasty has failed, a vaginal lining can be created from skin grafts from the thighs or hips, or a section of colon may be used. These linings may not provide the same sensate qualities as results from the penile inversion method, but the vaginal opening is identical.

vocal surgery: Because estrogen therapy leaves MTF voices unchanged, some transwomen choose to pursue surgery to alter their voices. This procedure carries the risk of impairing a trans woman's voice forever, so vocal surgery should be considered with caution.

ze: A gender-neutral pronoun, used in place of she/he. Pronounced "zee."