

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING (DEI-B)

# GLOSSARY OF DEI-B TERMS Companion piece to the Pivot Point DEI-B Beauty Industry Reference



# NCLUSION AND BELONGING DELB

# GLOSSARY OF DEI-B TERMS

When communicating in the beauty industry, it's important capture and accurately portray the diversity of the human experience. This glossary is intended to inform and support your communication efforts and help ensure that your messaging, education and even everyday conversation are inclusive, accessible, accurate and representative of the many communities and constituencies in our industry.

Inclusive communication avoids expressions, stereotypes and imagery that exclude or discriminate against certain groups and aims to make everyone feel seen and heard. It is not about being "politically correct"; it's about using words and images that convey respect for all people, doing no harm and showing sensitivity to differences and a commitment to accuracy. It's true that "words matter," and the best way to navigate the beauty industry is to celebrate the uniqueness of all people.

Please consider this glossary as an educational tool to help anyone in your beauty world choose the most appropriate words and expressions. The glossary can be used as a resource for writing, social media posts and other types of content. And it will be especially helpful in the classroom, with your business writing and in your everyday conversations.

This glossary draws from research and recommendations from organizations that have expertise in inclusive communications, including *The Associated Press Stylebook*, the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* and *The Diversity Style Guide*, a compilation of more than two dozen style guides for DEI-B. A list of references is available at the end.

Look to Pivot Point's *DEI-B Beauty Industry Reference* as a companion piece to this glossary. The Reference Guide is organized by population group and includes best practices with guidance on usage and style regarding DEI-B and the beauty industry.

Keep in mind that language is constantly evolving and that meanings and connotations change. To stay up to date, refer to the resources at the end of this glossary and discuss concerns with your beauty industry colleagues.

# **QUICK LINKS**

Click on the hyperlinks to go to the Glossary for definitions, usage and appropriateness of terms.

# **DISABILITY TERMS**

able-bodied • abnormal/abnormality • albinism, albino • Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) • birth defect, defect • Deaf, deaf • deformed/deformity • differently abled • disabled/disability • disfigurement/disfigured • dwarf/little person/midget/short stature • handicap/handicapped/handicapable • invalid • lame • mentally retarded • non-disabled • people-first language • service animal/assistance animal/guide dog/Seeing Eye dog • suffers from, victim of, afflicted with, stricken with • wheelchair/wheelchair-bound/confined to a wheelchair

# **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING TERMS**

ally/allies • bias • codeswitching • cultural appropriation • cultural racism • diversity • dominant culture • equity • global majority • implicit bias, unconscious bias • inclusion • institutional/structural racism • microaggression, racial microaggression • performative allyship • prejudice • minority, racial minority • prejudice • social justice • White privilege

# **LGBTQ+ AND GENDER TERMS**

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# **PERSONAL APPEARANCE & AGE TERMS**

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# **RACE AND ETHNICITY TERMS**

AAPI • African American, Black • Alaska Native, Eskimo • American Indian, Indigenous, Native, Native American • Arab, Arab American • Asian American • biracial, multiracial, mixed-race, two or more races • BIPOC • Black • Caucasian • Chicana, Chicano • Desi • diaspora • ethnicity • First Nations • First World • Gypsy, Roma, Romani • Hispanic, Latino/a/x/e • illegal immigrant, Illegal alien, illegals • minority, racial minority • Oriental • Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian • people of color • race • South Asian • Third World • White

# **GLOSSARY OF DEI-B TERMS**

# AAPI

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The acronym is widely used by people within these communities but is not as well known outside of them. Spell out the full term; use AAPI only in direct quotations and explain the term. (AP)

# able-bodied

This term is used to describe someone who does not identify as having a disability. Some members of the disability community oppose its use because it implies that all people with disabilities lack "able bodies" or the ability to use their bodies well. They prefer *non-disabled* or *enabled* as more accurate terms. The term *non-disabled* or the phrase *does not have a disability* are more neutral choices. *Able-bodied* is an appropriate term to use in some cases, such as government reports on the *proportion of ablebodied members in the workforce*. (NCDJ)

 Instead of: an able-bodied person Consider using: a person without disabilities, a non-disabled person

# abnormal/abnormality

Abnormality is a term used to describe something deviating from what is normal. The term can be appropriate when used in a medical context, such as *abnormal curvature of the spine* or an *abnormal test result*. However, when used to describe an individual, abnormal is widely viewed as a derogative term. Also, avoid referring to someone who does not have a disability as *a normal person* as it implies that people with disabilities are deviant or strange. *Typical* is a better choice. (NCDJ)

# African American, Black

People in the United States who share a lineage that can be traced directly or indirectly to Africa. African American and Black are both generally acceptable although some individuals may have a strong preference for one term or other. Black and African American do not necessarily mean the same thing and individuals may not identify with one term or the other. It's best to ask. If that's not possible, use either term. The Black Lives Matter Movement of recent years may be inspiring more people to prefer Black.

Bear in mind that some Black people do not identify as African American. This lineage, while collective, contains a diverse array of histories, cultures and experiences. This includes, but is not limited to, Black, African American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino and African immigrants living in the United States. (DSG)

#### ageism

Stereotyping and prejudice against individuals or groups because of their age. The term was coined in 1969 by

gerontologist Robert N. Butler, M.D., founder, president and CEO of the International Longevity Center at Columbia University, to describe discrimination against seniors and patterned on sexism and racism. Dr. Butler defined ageism as a combination of three connected elements: prejudicial attitudes towards older people, old age and the aging process; discriminatory practices against older people; and institutional practices and policies that perpetuate stereotypes about older people. (DSG)

# agender

A person who sees themself as not having a gender. Some agender-identified people see themselves as being gender neutral, rather than not having any gender, but in any case, do not identify with a gender. (GS)

# Alaska Native, Eskimo

Alaska Native is an umbrella term that includes Eskimo (Inupiat and Yupik), Alaskan Indians (Athabascan, Haida, Tlingit and Tsimshian) and Aleut. They are culturally distinct and most prefer to be called Alaska Native instead of being grouped with Native Amercians. An Eskimo is a member of the Indigenous people who have traditionally inhabited Alaska and other Arctic regions, including eastern Siberia in Russia, Canada and Greenland. The term is controversial and should be used with caution. Although the name Eskimo is commonly used in Alaska to refer to all Inuit and Yupik people of the world, this name is considered derogatory in many other places. Some people identify as Inuit or Alaska Native, while others prefer Eskimo. As with many controversial terms, it's best to ask individuals or community leaders what they prefer to be called. (DSG)

# albinism, albino

Albinism is a rare congenital disorder characterized by little or no melanin production in the hair, skin and/ or eyes. On the recommendation of the National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation (NOAH), Pivot Point uses people-first language when discussing people with albinism in our curriculum (i.e., a person with albinism). The term *albino* is offensive to some people, while others prefer to identify that way.

# ally/allies

People who recognize the unearned privilege they receive from society's patterns of injustice and take responsibility for changing these patterns. Being an ally is more than being sympathetic and feeling bad for those who experience discrimination. An ally is willing to act with, and for, others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equality. Real allies are willing to step out of their comfort zones. Those who decide to undertake the ally role must recognize and understand the power and privileges that one receives, accepts and experiences and they use that position to act for justice. (APA)

#### American Indian, Indigenous, Native, Native American

Native American and American Indian can be used interchangeably; however, the terms should be used only to describe two or more individuals of different tribal affiliation. When possible, identify individuals and communities by their tribal affiliation (e.g., *Lakota or a member of the Cherokee Nation*). The term *Indigenous* is also being used increasingly; it should be capitalized when referring to people but lowercased when referring to things, such as plants. Don't say simply *Indian*; that term applies to people from India. Some Canadian groups use the term *First Nations*. Try and be precise with these terms and honor the wishes of those you are describing.

The term *Native* can be used as an adjective to describe styles, for instance, *Native fashion, Native music* or *Native art*.

#### Some tips for writing about Indigenous people:

- 1. When possible, ask people about their tribal affiliations and which terms they prefer.
- 2. Use *native-born* to describe someone who is born in the United States but isn't American Indian.
- 3. The AP Stylebook says to avoid words such as *wampum, warpath, powwow, teepee, brave, squaw,* etc. in a casual or joking way, which can be disparaging and offensive. In addition, avoid colloquial phrases like *off the reservation* and *low on the totem pole*.
- Instead of: She is Native American; she is American Indian.
   Consider using: She is Lakota; she is a member of the Lakota Nation.
- Instead of: In some Indian tribes, hair is considered sacred and long hair is associated with a strong cultural identity. Consider using: In some Native (or Indigenous) tribes, hair is considered sacred and long hair is associated with a strong cultural identity.

# Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Use Americans with Disabilities Act on first reference. If the term is used multiple times within a piece, write Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on first reference, then ADA on subsequent references. (NCDJ)

#### Arab, Arab American

*Arab* refers to nations or people from an Arabic-speaking country and is not synonymous with Muslim. When referring to events in a specific country, name the country, rather than generalizing Arab. Arab is a noun for a person, and it can be used as an adjective, as in *Arab country*.

#### Asian American

Asian American is the proper term for people who come from Asia or descend from people who lived in Asia. Do not hyphenate. When possible, ask people how they identify (Asian American or Chinese American, Japanese American, etc.). (DSG)

#### bias

An attitude of mind that predisposes one to favor something. Everyone has biases; as a writer, be aware of your own.

#### biological women/men or born male/female

Avoid the terms *biological gender, biological sex, biological woman, biological female, biological man,* or *biological male.* These terms are inaccurate and often offensive. When necessary, you can refer to someone's assigned sex at birth using terms like *assigned male at birth* or *assigned female at birth* or *raised as a boy/girl.* Think seriously about whether the content requires this information. (TJA)

# BIPOC

An acronym that stands for Black, Indigenous and people of color. The term is meant to unite all people of color while acknowledging that Black and Indigenous people face different and often more severe forms of racial oppression and cultural erasure as consequences of systemic White supremacy and colonialism. It is a noun and since it includes the word "people" it would be redundant to say "BIPOC people." It is generally pronounced "buy-pock" as opposed to saying each letter individually. (DSG) However, the term BIPOC is still considered by many to indicate a hierarchy among communities of color. In writing, instead of BIPOC, more preferred terms to use are "people of color" and "communities of color." (APA)

#### biracial, multiracial, mixed-race, two or more races

*Biracial* refers to people of two races; *multiracial* refers to people of two or more racial backgrounds. Preferred terms include *multiracial*, *biracial*, *multiethnic*, *polyethnic*. Use *mixed* and *mixed-race* with caution, as some people find these terms offensive; however, others embrace them. (DSG)

### birth defect, defect

Many people consider such terms offensive when describing a disability as they imply the person is deficient or inferior to others. When possible, limit use of *defect* or *defective* when describing disability. Instead, state the nature of the disability or injury. (NCDJ)

## Black

Capitalize when referring to Black people or culture.

### Caucasian

Avoid as a synonym for White, unless used in demographic data. Use *White* or *of European descent*. (DSG)

### Chicana, Chicano

People of Mexican descent; *Chicano* refers to men and *Chicana* to women. The terms were originally considered derogatory. However, the Chicano movement during the 1960s embraced these names as a point of pride in ancestry. The terms remain controversial and should be avoided unless people call themselves by these terms or they are part of a proper name. Be aware they may be used to describe people of Mexican descent but are not interchangeable with Latino/a/x/e or Hispanic. (DSG)

#### cisgender, cis

A term used by some to describe people who are not transgender. "Cis-" is a Latin prefix meaning "on the same side as," and is therefore an antonym of "trans-." A more widely understood way to describe people who are not transgender is simply to say *non-transgender people*. Cisgender may be shortened to cis or combined as ciswoman or cisman. (DSG)

#### closeted, in the closet

Describes a person who is not open about their sexual orientation (or gender identity). Better to simply refer to someone as "not out" about being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Some individuals may be out to some people in their life, but not out to others due to fear of rejection, harassment, violence, loss of job or other concerns. (GLAAD)

#### codeswitching

Shifting between two or more different languages, dialects, accents or modes of speaking or modifying one's behavior or appearance to adapt to different situations or be accepted by different groups. (DSG)

#### cultural appropriation

Theft of cultural elements—including symbols, art, language, customs, dress, etc.—for one's own use, commodification, or profit, often without understanding, acknowledging or respecting its value in the original culture. (RET)

### cultural racism

Cultural racism refers to representations, messages and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with White people or whiteness are automatically "better" or more "normal" than those associated with other racially defined groups. Cultural racism shows up in advertising, movies, history books and in policies and laws. Cultural racism is also a powerful force in maintaining systems of internalized supremacy and internalized racism. It does that by influencing collective beliefs about what constitutes appropriate behavior, what is seen as beautiful and the value placed on various forms of expression. All these cultural norms and values in the U.S. have explicitly or implicitly racialized ideals and assumptions (for example, what "nude" means as a color, which facial features and body types are considered beautiful or which child-rearing practices are considered appropriate). (RET)

### dead name

The birth name of a person who has changed their name, particularly used in relation to trans people. Can be written as *deadname* or *dead name*. It can also be used as a verb, meaning to call somebody by their deadname. (DSG) It is considered disrespectful and even harmful to refer to someone by their dead name against their wishes.

# Deaf, deaf

Many people in the Deaf community prefer use of a lowercase "d" to refer to audiological status and the use of a capital "D" when referring to the culture and community of Deaf people. In general, lowercase when referring to a hearing loss condition or to a deaf person who prefers lowercase. Capitalize for those who identify as members of the Deaf community or when they capitalize Deaf when describing themselves. Deaf should be used as an adjective, not as a noun; it describes a person with profound or complete hearing loss. Other acceptable phrases include *woman who is deaf* or *person who is hard of hearing*. (NCDG)

#### deformed/deformity

The word *deformity* has a negative connotation when used in reference to those living with disabilities. Avoid using *deformed* as an adjective to describe a person. Deformity can be used in some contexts, such as a *deformed limb*, although it's preferable to describe the specific disability or cause. (NCDJ)

# Desi

An accepted term when speaking generally about people from the Asian subcontinent and their diaspora—people originating from what is now India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and some feel Sri Lanka. Sanskrit for "one from our country," Desi may however NOT be inclusive of everyone in that richly diverse region, notably people of Tamil descent. *South-Asian American* and *Asian American*, as well as *Pakistani, Indian* and *Bangladeshi American* are also accepted. Be aware and precise when using these terms.

## diaspora (dye-AS-po-rah)

People settled far from their ancestral lands. In North America, people often refer to the *Jewish diaspora*, the *African diaspora*, the *Indian diaspora* and many others.

#### differently abled

This term came into vogue in the 1990s as an alternative to *disabled, handicapped* or *mentally retarded*. Currently, it is not considered appropriate (and for many, it never was). Some consider it condescending, offensive or simply a way of avoiding talking about disability. (NCDJ)

 Instead of: differently abled person or people Consider using: a person with a disability, people with disabilities

#### disabled/disability

When describing an individual, do not reference their disability unless it is clearly pertinent to the story. If it is pertinent, it is best to use language that refers to the person first and the disability second. For example: *The salon owner, who uses a wheelchair,* as opposed to *the disabled salon owner.* When possible, refer to a person's specific condition. (NCDJ)

#### disfigurement/disfigured

Do not call someone *disfigured* as it is considered derogatory. Refer specifically to the physical changes. (NCDJ)

- Instead of: His face has been disfigured since the accident.
   Consider using: He's had scars on his face since the accident.
- Instead of: She tried to hide her disfigurement/her disfigured arm.

Consider using: She tried to hide the burn marks on her arm.

#### diversity

There are many kinds of diversity, based on race, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, class, age, country of origin, education, marital status, parental status, religion and physical or cognitive abilities. Diversity can also mean differences in geography, thought, experiences, etc. Valuing diversity means recognizing differences among people, acknowledging that these differences are a valued asset and striving for diverse representation as a critical step toward equity. (RF)

### dominant culture

The cultural beliefs, values and traditions that are dominant, or centered, in a society. Dominant cultural practices are thought of as "normal" while other practices are undervalued or marginalized. Conversely, in a multicultural society, various cultures are celebrated and respected equally. (DSG)

#### dwarf/little person/midget/short stature

According to Little People of America, dwarfism is a medical or genetic condition that results in a stature below 4'10" while the average height of a dwarf is 4'0". Use of the word *dwarf* is considered acceptable when referring to the genetic condition, but it is often considered offensive when used in a non-medical sense.

The term *midget* was used in the past to describe an unusually short and proportionate person. It is now widely considered derogatory.

The terms *little people* and *little person* refer to people of short stature and have come into common use since the founding of the Little People of America organization in 1957. The appropriateness of the terms is disputed by those within and outside of the organization. However, Little People of America recommends using the descriptors *short stature, little person* or *someone with dwarfism*.

Only refer to a person's short stature if it is relevant. It is best to ask people which term they prefer to describe them. Use the term *dwarf* only when applied to a medical diagnosis or in a quote. Avoid the terms *vertically challenged* and *midget*. The plural of *dwarf* is *dwarfs*. (NCDJ)

 Instead of: He is a midget; he is vertically challenged Consider using: He is a little person; he is of short stature; he has dwarfism

#### dyke

Originally a pejorative term for a lesbian, it is now being reclaimed by some lesbians. Offensive when used as an epithet. Use only if there is a compelling reason. (NLGJA)

#### equity

Fairness and justice with a focus on outcomes that are most appropriate for a given group, recognizing different challenges, needs and histories. It is distinct from diversity, which can simply mean variety (the presence of individuals with various identities). It is also not equality, or "same treatment," which doesn't take differing needs or disparate outcomes into account. Systemic equity involves a robust system and dynamic process consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice. (RF) Equity is an ongoing process of assessing needs, correcting historical inequities and creating conditions for optimal outcomes by members of all social identity groups. (APA)

### ethnicity

A socially constructed grouping of people based on culture, tribe, language, national heritage and/or religion. It is often used interchangeably with race and/or national origin, but should instead be considered as an overlapping, rather than identical, category. (RF)

### female/feminine pronouns, male/masculine pronouns

Not all people who use she/her are women, and not all people who use he/him are men. Instead use *pronouns*, *she/her pronouns*, *he/him pronouns*. (TJA)

# First Nations

*First Nations* is a term used to describe Indigenous peoples of Canada who are ethnically neither Métis nor Inuit. The term is not widely used in the U.S. (DSG)

## First World

Outdated term that refers to the developed, capitalist, industrial countries with more-or-less common political and economic interests in North America, Western Europe, Japan and Australia. Instead, some use *developed world countries* and *developing world countries*. (DSG)

# gay

The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex (e.g., *gay man, gay people*). Sometimes *lesbian* (n. or adj.) is the preferred term for women. Avoid identifying gay people as *homosexuals* or *homosexual people*, outdated terms that are considered derogatory and offensive to many lesbian and gay people. (GLAAD)

#### gender assigned at birth

The gender a person is identified at birth. Avoid born a male/man, born a female/woman.

#### gender expansive

The term *gender expansive* is increasingly being used for people who challenge cultural expectations regarding gender roles, identities, expressions or norms. Some gender-expansive individuals identify as a man or a woman, some identify as neither, and others identify as a mix of both or on a spectrum between male and female. Some express their gender in ways that differ from stereotypical presentations. Sometimes gender-expansive people use gender-neutral pronouns. Gender-expansive individuals may further describe themselves as *nonbinary, gender fluid* or *genderqueer*. (DSG)

#### gender expression

External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice and/or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to align their gender expression with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth. (GLAAD)

### gender identity

A person's internal, deeply held sense of their gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. (GLAAD)

#### gender-neutral pronouns

Some people don't feel that traditional gender pronouns, such as she/her and he/him, reflect their gender identities. Transgender, genderqueer and other people who step outside the male-female gender paradigm often adopt new pronouns for themselves. If a person doesn't identify as male or female, it's best to ask which pronouns they prefer. Many nonbinary people prefer *they, them, theirs*. (DSG)

#### gender nonconforming

A term used to describe some people whose gender expression is different from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. Not all gender nonconforming people identify as transgender; nor are all transgender people gender nonconforming. It is best to ask gender nonconforming people which pronouns they prefer. (GLAAD)

#### gender normative

Refers to people whose sex assignment at birth corresponds to their gender identity and expression. (GS)

#### genderqueer

Refers to a person who identifies as neither male nor female. Some genderqueer people, but not all, also identify as transgender. Use only if self-referential or in a quotation where there is a compelling reason. See also **nonbinary**. (NLGJA)

#### gender transition, transition

The process by which transgender people change their physical characteristics from those associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. It occurs over time and may include the following: adopting the aesthetic markers of the new gender, such as makeup or facial hair; telling one's family, friends and/or coworkers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and surgery or other body modification procedures. Avoid the obsolete term *sex change*. Not synonymous with gender confirmation/affirmation or sexual reassignment. (NLGJA)

### global majority

A collective term that encourages those of African, Asian, Latin American and Arab descent to recognize that together they comprise the vast majority (around 80 percent) of people in the world. Understanding the truth that whiteness is not the global norm has the power to disrupt and reframe our conversations on race. (APA)

### Gypsy, Roma, Romani

Gypsy is a word used to indicate Roma people, a traditionally itinerant ethnic group that lives in Europe and has branches in the Americas, Asia and North Africa. The word *Gypsy* has negative connotations, and many Roma people see it as a racial slur. In general, it's best to use *Roma people* when referring to the ethnic group unless people self-identify as Gypsies, in which case the term should be capitalized. Avoid casual use such as "they lived like gypsies, traveling from place to place" and the pejorative term *gyp*, (e.g., "I got gypped,") which is derived from Gypsy and connotes a negative stereotype of Roma people as swindlers and thieves. (DSG)

#### hair

Hair is the cornerstone of Pivot Point as an organization. Models and clients can have an infinite variety of hair textures, types and styles. All types of hair should be addressed with specific language; be inclusive and judgment-free in your descriptions.

### African American or Black hairstyles

Some hairstyles worn by Black adults or children may be unfamiliar to a writer, and "hair discrimination" against Black hairstyles have been reported in the workplace, in athletics and even in schools. The CROWN Act was created in 2019 by Dove and the CROWN Coalition, in partnership with then State Senator Holly J. Mitchell of California, to ensure protection against discrimination based on race-based hairstyles by extending statutory protection to hair texture and protective styles such as braids, locs, twists and knots in the workplace and public schools.

Specificity and familiarity with the styles listed below are important to this work:

- afro The expansion of curled to tightly curled texture styled into a rounded shape. Note the word is not capitalized.
- bald, shaved Not synonymous. A bald person has naturally lost some or all of their hair. A person with a

shaved head chose to have their hair close to the scalp or shave it completely off, replicating the bald look.

- braids Traditional style worn by people with textured hair in which hair is sectioned into parts and then, in each part, three or more strands of hair are intertwined. Also known as plaits.
- cornrows Braiding technique close to the head; also known as French braids.
- dreadlocks, dreds or locks (sometimes spelled locs or loks) – Long, uncombed, twisted or matted locks of hair, a style worn originally by Rastafarians.
- extensions Human or synthetic hair used to make a person's existing hair longer. Often used with braiding.
- Jheri curl A type of chemical curl reformation process resulting in a looser curl texture. Other names include California curl, S-curl, carefree curl and luster curl. Jheri Redding, a Chicago-based entrepreneur and stylist, created the style in the late 1970s and then produced his own line of hair care products.
- twists Name for several different styling techniques that involve sectioning into parts and then twirling.
- hair addition Synthetic or human hair added to existing hair or scalp to give the appearance of a fuller head of hair. Also commonly known as hair weave in the industry.

#### Other hair terms:

- blond Use blond as an adjective in all applications when relevant: She has blond hair. Avoid using either blond or blonde as a noun: He has blond hair, not he is a blond or she is a blonde.
- brown (hair), brunette Use brown as an adjective in all applications when relevant: She has brown hair. Avoid using brunette as a noun unless in a direct quote. She has brown hair, not she is a brunette.
- comb-over Do not use; derogatory way to mention hair loss.
- Mohawk A hairstyle in which the head is shaved except for a band of hair down the middle of the scalp. It's associated with men, particularly young warriors, from the Mohawk people, an Indigenous group who historically lived in Northern New York State and Southern Canada. But some sources tie it to other Indigenous tribes, such as the Pawnee or Huron. Some consider the name offensive, and the hairstyle is considered by some to be a form of cultural appropriation. The hairstyle is also sometimes called a

"scalp lock," because it made it harder to lift the scalp from an enemy warrior. Use the terms *scalp lock* and *Mohawk* with caution.

- mop top A medium-length hairstyle that covers the forehead and ears with vertical bangs, similar to a bowl cut. It was popularized by the Beatles in the early 1960s.
- red-haired, red-headed Acceptable adjectives for a person with red hair.
- textured hair vs. natural hair The term natural hair has evolved over recent years into textured hair with many professionals in the industry. Though all hair, even straight hair, has its own texture, textured hair refers to hair textures that range from wavy to tightly curled. Some may still refer to textured hair as natural hair, but for Pivot Point, textured hair is preferred.
- tightly curled texture is also commonly known in the industry as *coiled texture*. The term *tightly curled texture* refers to fast texture speed only.
   Fast texture speed can be present in a variety of texture characters. Coiled texture is a type of hair with fast texture speed and a distinct formation as its texture character.

#### handicap/handicapped/handicapable

Avoid using *handicap* and *handicapped* when describing a person. Instead, refer to the person's specific condition or use *person with a disability.* The terms are still widely used and generally acceptable when citing laws, regulations, places or things, such as *handicapped parking*, although many prefer the term *accessible parking*. Avoid *handicapable* as it will not be understood by many. (NCDJ)

#### Head Coverings and Adornments

Many people have religious or cultural reasons for covering their hair. Take care to be inclusive of religious and cultural expressions beauty professionals might encounter in the salon. In general, it's good to approach these topics with open-mindedness and ask questions when unsure. For instance, an esthetician might ask a client wearing a hijab whether they'd like some privacy while they remove it prior to the treatment.

- chador A long cape-like garment worn by some Muslim women, mainly in Iran. It covers the hair and body but not the face.
- gele, duku These are two types of headtie worn by women in some African countries. A gele, worn by Nigerian women, is usually large and ornate, and as a result, is often worn for weddings, church services and special occasions. Some women wear simpler, less

formal geles for everyday activities. In South Africa and Namibia, women wear simpler headscarves, called *duku*.

- henna A plant used to make ink or hair dye. To make the ink, leaves are ground to a powder and mixed with water and lemon juice or oil. The ceremonial application of henna to make designs on the body, usually hands or feet, is called *mehndi*. Indian women often wear mehndi for special occasions, such as weddings. In some cultures, men also wear henna. The designs start to fade after about a week. (DSG)
- hijab A scarf many Muslim women use to cover their head, but it can also refer to the modest dress, in general, that women wear because of the Quran's instruction on modesty. The practice of veiling varies by region, community and class. While some say that it denigrates women, many women who dress this way say it liberates them. In fact, some say it is more oppressive to be expected to dress in revealing ways. In American families, a mother, a daughter or a sister might decide to cover her head while the other does not. (DSG)
- kafiyyeh A checked scarf-like garment worn on the head by some Arab men. It is traditional, not religious; the kafiyyeh shows identity and pride in culture. Different styles and colors of the kafiyyeh can have significance. May also be spelled keffiyeh or kufiya. (DSG)
- niqab A veil worn by some women who are Muslims; it covers all of their face except the eyes. (DSG)
- turban A head covering that involves winding cloth around the head. People wear turbans for different reasons, and there are different types of turbans. Sikh men wear turbans that peak at the forehead to protect their hair, which they do not cut for religious reasons. Turbans are also worn by some Muslim men and in some cultures by women. The shape of turbans varies by country and culture.

#### heterosexual

An adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex. Also *straight*. (GLAAD)

#### Hispanic, Latino/a/x/e

*Hispanic* is an umbrella term referring to a person whose ethnic origin is in a Spanish-speaking country, as well as residents or citizens of the United States with Latin American ancestry, except for those from Brazil, which is not a Spanish-speaking country. (DSG)

Latina/Latino are umbrella terms referring to residents or citizens of the United States with Latin American ancestry. Latina is the feminine form of Latino and means a woman

or girl. Use *Latina(s)* for a woman or women; use *Latino(s)* for a man or men. *Latino* is principally used west of the Mississippi, where it has displaced *Chicano* and *Mexican American*. (DSG)

Latinx is a gender-neutral word, increasingly used instead of Latino and/or Latina, to refer to people of Latin American cultural or ethnic identity. The -x suffix replaces the standard -o/-a ending of nouns and adjectives, used to signify grammatical gender in Spanish. Its plural is Latinxs. Can also be used as an alternative to Latino or Latina for people who don't necessarily identify as female or male.

Latine is also a gender-neutral word, considered to be easier to pronounce in Spanish than Latinx. The -e noun ending is already used in Spanish (in words like estudiante) and can sound more familiar.

Be aware that many people who identify as Latino/a or Hispanic are not familiar with the terms *Latinx* or *Latine*.

The term *Hispanic* is more commonly used in the Eastern United States and is generally favored by those of Caribbean and South American ancestry or origin. (DSG)

#### homosexual, homosexuality

Outdated clinical term considered derogatory and offensive. Avoid as a noun or as an adjective describing people. Homosexuality may be used as an umbrella term when needed. (GLAAD)

- Instead of: He is homosexual, he is a homosexual. Consider using: He is gay.
- Instead of: Homosexuals are allowed to serve in the U.S. military.

Consider using: Gay men and lesbians are allowed to serve in the U.S. military.

Instead of: They are in a homosexual relationship.
 Consider using: They are in a gay/lesbian relationship.

# identify as/identifies as

Avoid the phrase *identifies as* to write about a trans person's gender when replacing it with *is* doesn't change the meaning of the sentence. This language questions a trans person's gender by calling it an "identity" instead of just stating someone is nonbinary or a man/woman. Instead use *is*. (TJA)

## illegal immigrant, Illegal alien, illegals

Avoid these terms when referring to immigration status. Use *undocumented immigrant* or *undocumented worker* instead. Never use *illegal* as a noun. (DSG)

# implicit bias, unconscious bias

Attitudes that unconsciously affect one's decisions and actions. People often think of bias as intentional, i.e., someone meant to say something racist. However, brain science has shown that people are often unaware of their biases, and the concept of implicit bias helps describe a lot of contemporary racist acts that may not be overt or intentional. Implicit bias, which affects automatic functions such as reactions and thinking patterns, is just as harmful as explicit bias, so it is important to take steps to address it. (RF)

#### inclusion

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/ policy making in a way that shares power. (RET) Inclusion is an environment that offers affirmation, celebration and appreciation of different approaches, styles, perspectives and experiences, thus allowing all individuals to bring in their whole selves (and all their identities) and to demonstrate their strengths and capacity. (APA)

#### institutional/structural racism

The ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The policies may not actually mention any group, but their effect is to create advantages for White people and oppress people of color. Examples include government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans. (RET)

#### intersectionality

A lens that recognizes identities such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives, in society and in social systems. This lens also can help clarify the ways an individual, such as a White gay man, can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. (DSG)

#### intersex

An umbrella term describing people born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or a chromosome pattern that can't be classified as typically male or female. Avoid the outdated and derogatory term *hermaphrodite*. (GLAAD)

#### invalid

Avoid using *invalid* to describe a person with a disability except in a direct quote. (NCDJ)

 Instead of: His mother has been an invalid for many years.
 Consider using: His mother has been ill for many years. His mother has had multiple sclerosis for many years.

#### lame

Lame is a word commonly used to describe difficulty walking as the result of an injury to the leg. Some people object to the use of the word lame to describe a physical condition because it is used in colloquial English as a synonym for weak, as in "That's a lame excuse." Avoid using *lame* to describe a person with a disability. (NCDJ)

# lesbian

Preferred term, both as a noun and adjective, for women who are attracted to other women. Some women prefer to be called *gay* instead of *lesbian*; when possible, ask the subject which term they prefer. (NLGJA)

# LGBTQ+

Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer. Sometimes, when the Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it can also mean questioning. The + represents other identities and communities, including intersex, pansexual, agender, asexual, nonbinary, etc. The term *gay community* should be avoided, as it does not accurately reflect the diversity of the community. Rather, *LGBTQ*+ *community* is preferred. (GLAAD)

### marriage

When referring to marriage for same-sex couples, preferred terminology includes *marriage equality* and *marriage for same-sex couples*. Note, the terms *gay marriage* and *same-sex marriage* should be avoided, as they can suggest marriage for same-sex couples is somehow different than other marriages. (GLAAD)

# mentally retarded

The terms *mentally retarded, retard* and *mental retardation* were once commonly used but are now considered outdated and offensive. Always try to specify the type of disability being referenced. Otherwise, the term *intellectually disabled* is acceptable. Use people-first language. Ask the person which terms they prefer. (NCDJ)

# microaggression; racial microaggression

The everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile or negative messages toward culturally marginalized groups. Racial microaggressions include judgments like "You don't act like a typical Black person," and "You probably can't afford that." They can be actions like locking the car door when a person perceived as a threat walks by. They may seem subtle at times, but there is evidence these experiences pile up and can hurt mental health. (DSG)

# minority, racial minority

These terms have historically referred to non-White racial groups, indicating that they were numerically smaller than

the dominant White majority. Defining people of color as "minorities" is not recommended because of changing demographics and the ways in which it reinforces ideas of inferiority and marginalization of a group of people. Defining people by how they self-identify is often preferable and more respectful. The term *minority* may be needed in specific cases (such as "minority contracting" and "minority-owned businesses") to reflect data that is collected using those categories. Avoid referring to an individual as a *minority*.

# Native American

See American Indian, Native American

# nonbinary

An umbrella term for people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the binary of man and woman. While *nonbinary* (sometimes written with a hyphen, *non-binary*) is considered a trans identity, some people who identify as nonbinary do not consider themselves transgender. When possible, consult your source. Some people define their gender as falling somewhere on a spectrum between man and woman, some may see their gender as fluid and others may define gender in different terms altogether. People who identify as nonbinary often don't feel comfortable being referred to by conventional pronouns like he and she; when possible, ask which pronouns they use. (DSG)

# non-disabled

*Non-disabled* refers to someone who does not have a disability. *Non-disabled* is the preferred term when the context calls for a comparison between people with and without disabilities. Use *non-disabled* or *people without disabilities* instead of *healthy, able-bodied, normal* or *whole. Non-disabled* or *does not have a disability* are acceptable terms when referring to people who do not identify as having a disability. In general, avoid using *able-bodied* except in a quote. (NCDJ)

- Instead of: He is able-bodied; healthy; normal; whole.
  Consider using: He is not disabled; he is non-disabled; he does not have a disability.
- Instead of: The disabled and normal people worked together in the garden.
   Consider using: The people with disabilities and the non-disabled people/people without disabilities worked together in the garden.

# Oriental

Use this term to describe things and not people. This term has been used in the past to describe people from Asia and those of Asian descent, but it is widely considered offensive. It is appropriate to refer to *Oriental medicine*, a centuries-old system of medicine still practiced today, as well as *Oriental rugs* or *art*. (DSG)

## Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian

This umbrella term, used by the U.S. Census Bureau and other agencies, includes people who can trace their roots to the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific islands. (DSG)

### people-first language

Language that avoids defining a person in terms of their disability. In most cases, this entails placing the reference to the disability after the reference to a person, as in *a person with a disability* rather than *a disabled person*. Some people with disabilities, particularly in the autism and Deaf communities, prefer identity-first language. When possible, ask. The discussion of people-first versus identity-first language was first applied to issues regarding people with disabilities. However, the language has been broadened to refer to other identity groups. Authors who write about identity are encouraged to use terms and descriptions that both honor and explain people-first and identity-first perspectives.

### people of color

*People of color* is a generally acceptable term to describe people of races other than White. While it can be a useful to have an inclusive umbrella term, it is also important whenever possible to identify people by their specific racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience. Be aware that the term *people of color* evokes strong feelings among many people and some don't like the idea of lumping people of different racial/ ethnic groups together. Avoid using *POC*. (DSG)

#### performative allyship

Also known as *optical allyship*, this term refers to someone from a nonmarginalized group professing support and solidarity with a marginalized group but in a way that is not helpful. Worse yet, the allyship is done in a way that may actually be harmful to "the cause." The "ally" is motivated by some type of reward. On social media, that reward is a virtual pat on the back for being a "good person" or for being "on the right side" of a cause or "on the right side of history." (APA)

#### preferred pronouns

Avoid using the term *preferred pronouns*. Someone's pronouns are not a preference, but rather the only appropriate way to refer to that person. The term *preferred pronouns* is only appropriate when someone uses more than one set of pronouns and has a preference for one over the other. Instead use *pronouns*. (TJA)

#### prejudice

Preconceived judgment or opinion with or without grounds or experience. A pre-judgment is an unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or group toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes typically are based on unsupported generalizations or stereotypes that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics. (RET)

## privilege

Unearned power that is afforded to some but not others based on status rather than earned merit; such power may come in the form of rights, benefits, social comfort, opportunities or the ability to define what is normative or valued. Privilege arises in relation to systems of oppression. A person has privilege not because they desire to have privilege or promote inequity but because they exist within a system where biased values, attitudes and behaviors have become integrated and normalized. (APA)

### queer

Originally a pejorative term for gay, now reclaimed by some LGBTQ+ people. Use with caution; still extremely offensive when used as an epithet and still offensive to many LGBTQ+ people regardless of intent. Its use may require explanation. (NLGJA)

#### race

The social construction and categorization of people based on perceived shared physical traits that result in the maintenance of a sociopolitical hierarchy. (APA)

# service animal/assistance animal/guide dog/ Seeing Eye dog

Service animals are trained animals, mostly dogs, that provide services to people with disabilities. They also are sometimes called assistance animals, guide dogs, or Seeing Eye dogs. The federal definition of a "service animal" applies to "any guide dog, signal dog or other animal trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability." This may include animals that guide individuals with impaired vision, alert individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, provide minimal protection or rescue work, pull a wheelchair or fetch dropped items.

#### sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is the accurate description of an individual's enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex and is inclusive of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and queer people, as well as straight men and women. (GLAAD)

## sex reassignment surgery

Also called *gender confirmation surgery*. Refers to doctorsupervised surgical interventions and is only one small part of transition. Avoid the phrase *sex change operation*. Do not refer to someone as being *pre-op* or *post-op*. Not all transgender people choose to, or can afford to, undergo medical surgeries. Avoid overemphasizing the role of surgeries in the transition process. (GLAAD)

# social justice

Commitment to creating fairness and equity in resources, rights and treatment of marginalized individuals and groups of people who do not share equal power in society. (APA)

### South Asian

This collective term refers to people from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. *Desi American* is a term commonly used by people from India, but not by all South Asians. Check with the source/individual to confirm how they prefer to be identified and ensure that identifying their race/ethnicity is essential to the content. (DSG)

### suffers from, victim of, afflicted with, stricken with

These terms carry the assumption that a person with a disability is suffering or has a reduced quality of life. Not every person with a disability suffers, is a victim or is stricken. Use neutral language when describing a person who has a disability, simply stating the facts about the nature of the disability. For example: "He has muscular dystrophy" or "he is living with schizophrenia" and avoid characterizing those conditions as afflictions. (NCDJ)

# Third World

Commonly used to describe underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. These nations and the people there are often cast as being uncivilized or primitive. Avoid using term because of its negative connotations. Better to say *developing countries*. Use in quotes only if necessary. (NABJ)

#### transition

Altering one's assigned birth sex is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a long period of time. Transition can include some or all of the following personal, medical and legal steps: telling one's family, friends and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition vary from person to person. Avoid the phrase *sex change*. (GLAAD)

## Two-Spirit

An identity used by some indigenous/Native American individuals whose gender identity, sexual orientation or spiritual identity differs from the societal norm. A person may be believed to have both the male and the female spirits within them. (TBCS)

#### wheelchair/wheelchair-bound/confined to a wheelchair

People who use mobility equipment such as a wheelchair, scooter or cane consider the equipment part of their personal space, according to the United Spinal Association. It is acceptable to describe a person as *someone who uses a wheelchair*, followed by an explanation of why the equipment is required. Avoid *confined to a wheelchair* or *wheelchair-bound* as these terms describe a person only in relationship to a piece of equipment. The terms also are misleading, as wheelchairs can liberate people, allowing them to move about, and they are inaccurate, as people who use wheelchairs are not permanently confined in them, but are transferred to sleep, sit in chairs, drive cars, etc. (NCDJ)

- Instead of: She has been confined to a wheelchair since the accident. Consider using: She has used a wheelchair since the accident.
- Instead of: The wheelchair-bound man bought the house in 2020. Consider using: The man, who uses a wheelchair, bought the house in 2020.

# White

People who share a lineage that can be traced directly or indirectly to Europe. Don't use *Caucasian*. Some organizations, including the Associated Press, don't capitalize White, but many do. The National Association of Black Journalists, the *American Psychological Association Style Guide, The Chicago Manual of Style,* and *The Diversity Style Guide* all endorse the capitalization of *White* when used in reference to race. (DSG) Pivot Point follows the *Associated Press Stylebook* but makes this exception to capitalize *White* in this context.

#### White privilege (racial privilege)

Unearned power that is afforded to White people based on status rather than earned merit that protects White people from the consequences of being racist and benefitting from systemic racism; such power may come in the form of rights, benefits, social comforts, opportunities, or the ability to define what is normative or valued. As White people are dominant in the U.S. racial hierarchy, racial privilege in the United States is a benefit of being White. This does not mean that White people seek to be privileged, only that they inherently benefit from being dominant in a biased system. (APA)

# REFERENCES

This glossary uses terms and recommendations from a wide range of sources, including *The Diversity Style Guide*, a website and book edited by Rachele Kanigel (DSG), and:

- American Psychological Association's Inclusive Language Guidelines (APA)
- Asian American Journalists Association and its Handbook to Covering Asian America (AAJA)
- Gender Spectrum (GS)
- GLAAD and the GLAAD Media Reference Guide, 10th Edition (GLAAD)
- Media Takes: On Aging, a publication of the Robert N. Butler Columbia Aging Center and Aging Services of California (Media Takes)
- Michigan State University School of Journalism cultural competence series:
  - 100 Questions & Answers About African Americans
  - 100 Questions & Answers About Americans
  - 100 Questions & Answers About Arab Americans
  - 100 Questions & Answers About East Asian Cultures
  - 100 Questions & Answers About Indian Americans
  - 100 Questions & Answers About Hispanics & Latinos
  - 100 Questions & Answers About Muslim Americans
  - 100 Questions, 500 Nations (co-sponsored by the Native American Journalists Association)
  - 100 Questions and Answers About Veterans: A Guide for Civilians

- National Association of Black Journalists and the NABJ Style Guide (NABJ)
- National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
- National Center on Disability and Journalism and the Disability Style Guide (NCDJ)
- NLGJA, the Association of LGBTQ Journalists and the NLGJA Stylebook Supplement on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Terminology (NLGJA)
- National Institute on Drug Abuse Media Guide
- Race Forward and its Race Reporting Guide (RF)
- Racial Equity Resource Guide, W. K. Kellogg Foundation (RERG)
- Racial Equity Tools Glossary (RET)
- Religion News Association and its Religion Stylebook
  (RNA)
- Trans Journalists Association Style Guide (TJA)
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBCS)



# RESOURCES

# AGING

# Media Takes: On Aging, Style Guide for Journalism,

Entertainment and Advertising International Longevity Center-USA and Aging Services of California Published in 2009, this guide is a little out of date but it remains the most comprehensive style guide to reporting on aging and older people.

https://www.issuelab.org/resources/11981/11981.pdf

# DISABILITY

Disability Awareness Toolkit, Center on Disability Studies University of Hawai'i - Manoa http://www.ist.hawaii.edu/products/toolkits/pdf/ DisabilityAwarenessToolkit.pdf

Disability Language Style Guide, National Center on Disability and Journalism

The NCDJ developed this guide to provide context and recommendations for commonly used disability words and phrases.

https://ncdj.org/style-guide/

# NCDJ List of Disability Organizations

The National Center on Disability and Journalism put together this comprehensive list of disability-related organizations that may be useful in writing about disability. https://ncdj.org/resources/organizations/

# Syracuse University Disability Cultural Center Language Guide

This guide provides readers with some information on the different types of language that are used when communicating about disability. It includes notes on capitalization and reclaiming words. http://sudcc.syr.edu/resources/language-guide.html

# GENDER

Understanding Gender, Gender Spectrum https://www.genderspectrum.org/quick-links/ understanding-gender/

# LGBTQ

# An Ally's Guide to Terminology, GLAAD

https://www.glaad.org/sites/default/files/allys-guide-toterminology 1.pdf

GLAAD Media Reference Guide, 10th Edition

https://www.glaad.org/reference

# NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ Journalists Stylebook Supplement on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Terminology

https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook/

### Trans Journalists Association Style Guide https://transjournalists.org/style-guide/

# **BACE AND ETHNICITY**

Guide to Covering Asian America, Asian American Journalists Association https://www.aaja.org/aajahandbook

# Michigan State University School of Journalism cultural competence series:

- 100 Questions & Answers About African Americans
- 100 Questions & Answers About Americans
- 100 Questions & Answers About Arab Americans
- 100 Questions & Answers About East Asian Cultures .
- **100 Questions & Answers About Indian Americans** •
- 100 Questions & Answers About Hispanics & Latinos •
- 100 Questions & Answers About Muslim Americans
- 100 Questions, 500 Nations (co-sponsored by the Native American Journalists Association)

https://news.jrn.msu.edu/culturalcompetence/

National Association of Black Journalists Style Guide https://www.nabj.org/page/styleguide

Race Forward Race Reporting Guide, The Center for Racial Justice Innovation https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20 Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward\_V1.1.pdf

# Reporting and Indigenous Terminology, Native American

Journalists Association (NAJA) https://najanewsroom.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ NAJA Reporting and Indigenous Terminology Guide.pdf

# RELIGION

Religion Stylebook, Religion News Association http://religionstylebook.com/