

Is My Friend LGBTQ+?



Out Alliance
All Ways Authentic

How can I tell if my friend is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer/questioning... (LGBTQ+)?

Despite what movies and shows might lead you to believe, you can't actually tell a person's sexual orientation or gender identity by looking at them. So what is a person to do? First of all, think about why you want to know. If it is because you suspect your friend might be LGBTQ+ and you are scared, confused, angry and/or uncomfortable please contact the Out Alliance and we will connect you with people, support groups, resources and educational materials that might help. If you want to know because you want to support your friend and let them know that you will be there for them no matter what, then read on!

When do people know that they are LGBTQ+?

By the age of 11 or 12, many people already know their sexual orientation and many know their gender identity at a much younger age. Teens and young adults are often looking to family and friends for information and opinions about LGBTQ+ people. They may be trying to figure out whether or not it's safe to talk about it. They will notice when people use homophobic and transphobic slurs or non-inclusive language.

How do I show my friend that I will support them no matter what?

- 1) Next time you're watching a show together and something LGBTQ+ related comes on, talk about it in a positive way or make a positive comment, like, "I love how our city is so diverse."
- 2) Use gender neutral language. Ask your friends if they are seeing someone, rather than if they have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- 3) Start a discussion with your friend about an LGBTQ+ issue you've heard about like same sex marriage or transgender rights.
- 4) Next time you choose a book or magazine pick up something about LGBTQ+ people and leave it lying around where your friend can see it.
- 5) Put a pride pin or an ally button on your backpack.
- 6) Invite your friend to a Roc Pride event!
- 7) Become SafeZone Trained at the LGBTQ Academy at the Out Alliance and wear your SafeZone pin proudly!

What if my friend isn't LGBTQ+?

Regardless of how your friend identifies, knowing that you are there for them no matter what, will make them less prone to depression and less likely to harm themselves. If your friend isn't LGBTQ+, what a powerful message you will be giving them about acceptance and respect for all people.

www.outalliance.org