

Types of Attraction



Sexual: the pull or craving towards a specific person for sexual contact. Finding someone “hot” or “sexually appealing.”

Romantic: The intense need to have feelings of romantic love reciprocated by a specific person.

Platonic: A desire to connect and bond with another person, usually in the form of friendship.

Aesthetic: An appreciation of or connection to another person’s appearance or presentation. It is usually visual but can also be auditory, olfactory, or relate to any of the other senses.

Sensual: A desire for touch that may include hugging, cuddling, kissing, petting, and/or other contact.

More Resources

Ace by Angela Chen

The Invisible Orientation by Julie Sondra Decker

Aros Eros Arrows by Michón Neal

Singled Out by Bella DePaulo

Minimizing Marriage by Elizabeth Brake

How to Be a Happy Bachelor by Craig Wynne

The Asexual Visibility and Education Network:
asexuality.org

Aromantic-spectrum Union for Recognition, Education, and Advocacy:
aromanticism.org/

American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists:
aasect.org/asexual-rights

TAAAP Learn: <https://taaap.org/learn/>

About The Ace and Aro Advocacy Project

TAAAP is an organization dedicated to providing resources on asexuality and aromanticism to the public.

Our goals are to increase the visibility of ace and aro identities, to provide resources on asexuality and aromanticism to professionals, and to support ace and aro members of society.

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The Ace and Aro Advocacy Project

Ace and Aro Identities 101



The asexual flag



The aromantic flag

Disclaimer: This is just an introduction, and all of these definitions are fluid and can change. Please use this as a starting point to learn more and not as the final word in any discussion of orientations or identities.

Basics

Asexual (ace): people who experience little to no sexual attraction or desire.

Aromantic (aro): people who experience little to no romantic attraction or desire.

Allosexual (allo): people who are not on the asexual spectrum.

Alloromantic (alloro): people who are not on the aromantic spectrum.

Aspec: an umbrella term for anyone who identifies as part of the asexual and/or aromantic spectra.

Split Attraction Model (SAM): the concept of distinguishing between ("splitting") romantic and sexual orientations or attractions, and/or other orientations. Aces can have any romantic orientation and aros can have any sexual orientation. When people do not experience their attractions in conjunction and/or in alignment with each other, the SAM can help them explain their experiences, desires, and patterns of attraction. However, not everyone will find it a useful tool and it can be overapplied.

Cake is a symbol for ace communities, and arrows are a symbol for aro communities



Spectrum 101



Aspec flag, representing everyone in the aspec community, designed by Tumblr user The-Moon-Is-Aroace

Gray: describes people who experience attraction only rarely, weakly, under limited circumstances, or in another way that significantly differs from allo(ro)s. It is both a complete identity in itself and used as an umbrella term for people on the aro or ace spectra that are not at the far end of it.

Demi: describes people who do not experience attraction unless a strong emotional bond has been formed first. The emotional connection is necessary, but does not guarantee attraction.

Quoi/WTF: describes people who cannot clearly distinguish between different types of attractions or bonds. They may mistake one for the other or not differentiate them at all.

Aego: describes people who may have fantasies and enjoy the idea of specific activities, but they do not wish to be a participant themselves.

Flux: describes people who fluctuate along the spectrum, between asexual and allosexual or aromantic and alloromantic.

Cupio: describes people who do not experience a certain attraction but still desire to be in that kind of relationship.

Institutional Harms



Compulsory sexuality: the societal assumption that everyone feels sexual attraction and desire, pressure to act on those feelings, and treating of sex as a life milestone.

Amatonormativity: the societal focus on and prioritization of romantic relationships above all else, assumption that finding romantic love is a universal goal, and steering of people into marriage. The obsession with marriage in particular is called **matrimania**.

Singlism: the stereotyping, stigmatizing, marginalization of, and discrimination against people who are single.

Heteronormativity: the assumption, belief, and expectation that people are romantically and sexually attracted to people of the "opposite" gender and that this attraction is the "default" or "norm."

Gatekeeping: the act of restricting access to a space by doubting others' identities and lived experiences - in queer culture, it includes telling aspec people, among others, that they don't belong in the LGBTQ+ community.