



A Guide for Young Trans People



**KNOWLEDGE
IS POWER**

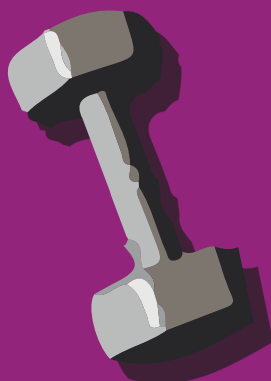
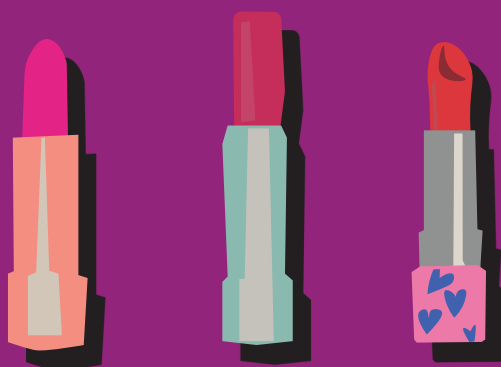
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Introduction

This resource is for all trans, non-binary, and questioning young people and their families, carers, friends and loved ones. It provides key information about exploring your gender, where to find support, what your legal rights are, how to express yourself in ways that feel comfortable and affirming, and trans joy and all the great things about being trans. Through this resource you will gain a better understanding of how to navigate the world as a young trans person in

the UK, and hopefully find empowering and useful knowledge for wherever you may be on your trans journey. This resource was created collaboratively by trans and non-binary staff at GI and draws upon direct contributions from the wider community here as well as other trans-led organisations. It is by the community, for the community and we hope you enjoy it and find it useful.



On Trans Identities

Trans Identities

The trans umbrella represents a diverse range of individual identities. There is no 'right' way to be trans and everyone will have different experiences. We believe that all gender identities should be visible and valued, all trans people should live healthy, safe, and fulfilled lives, and that all people should be

able to explore their identities. There are lots of different ways of expressing identity, and the words we use change over time. None of them are more right or wrong than others, and we support you in whatever name or word feels right for you.

Gender Questioning

Feeling unsure about your gender identity can be a scary and isolating experience. It can feel like everyone is very sure about their gender and that there is not much space for uncertainty. In reality, a lot of people will have felt unsure about their gender identity or expression (or still do!). Not everyone who questions their gender will go on to identify as trans, and indeed it is a perfectly normal thing for any person to do! Whoever you are, and whatever your journey, we're here to help you ask these questions in a safe, welcoming environment.

Language & Pronouns

Pronouns are words used to describe you and replace your name in a sentence, as well as for describing others. In grammatical terms, they act as a placeholder for other nouns. For example: 'Sabrina is coming. They are here.' For some trans people, changing pronouns is an important part of transition - and indeed may be the only part of their transition. Some people may feel unsure about what pronouns to use and never feel fully comfortable with any set of pronouns. However you feel about pronouns is completely valid and it is perfectly acceptable/encouraged to try out different pronouns and see what feels right for you. Some people may prefer a combination of multiple pronouns, or may not specify any sort of preference. You might want to check out GenderKit's guide on pronouns [here](#).

On Finding Support

Finding a community of others who understand you can be really helpful and is a key way to feel supported. It can often feel intimidating at first to make new friends, or enter a 'trans' space if you're feeling unsure about your gender identity. But just remember not to worry about

not feeling 'trans enough', and that many people will be in the same position as you. There are several groups that offer in-person and online support for young trans people. See details on the following page for how we can support you at GI and what groups are on offer.

What We Offer

Gendered Intelligence runs youth groups for those between the ages of 7-30, separated by age range, where you can meet other young trans/gender questioning people in a safe, welcoming environment. These run in both online and in-person settings. Check out our [trans youth page](#) for more info. We also run an annual camping trip for those between the ages of 11-25 (divided into 11-17 and 16-25 age groups).

Our youth groups are open to all young trans people, no matter how you identify or whether you are questioning your gender. We use trans as an umbrella term and are fully inclusive of non-binary individuals or any other diverse identities; please don't worry about not feeling 'trans enough'. Details of these groups and time can be found on [this page](#). We offer youth groups in person to those based in London and Leeds.



In-person Groups

Whether in London or in Leeds, our in-person spaces give young trans people the opportunity to get together, meet other trans, non-binary and gender-exploring people, and speak to trustworthy adults who are also trans. After arrivals each group starts with an (optional) opening circle in which everyone gets to introduce themselves with their name and pronouns. After that, there are activities planned by youth workers you can join, do arts and crafts, take part in conversations, eat snacks, or just enjoy the space and chill. You get to choose what you want to do in the group, and your youth workers will be there to support you to make the group work for you and your needs.



Online Groups

In online groups you'll be able to meet other young trans, non-binary gender-exploring people across the UK. You can choose to have your microphone and camera on or off, type in the chat or just observe how the group is for the first couple of sessions. Each group starts with an optional go-around in which you can share your name and pronouns. Across the year our youth workers will prepare sessions based on different themes, including Pride, relationships, self-care and games. You can join in discussions, share your own experiences, make new friends or just have fun and play some games together. If you're not familiar with Zoom, one of our youth workers can help you with it before the group begins.



Camp and Residentials

Every summer we take a group of young trans people camping with us. At the camp, you get to spend more time with other trans, non-binary and gender-exploring people, have fun, join in activities like raft building or archery, make your own food, share stories around a campfire, and sleep in a tent. We also have a swimming pool booked just for us! Our camps are suitable for experienced campers as well as people who have never slept in a tent before. We can also provide some indoor sleeping options for those who need access. On top of our annual camps, we also provide other residentials for different groups, identities and geographical locations.

Transfem

Our transfem group meets once a month to provide a space for transfeminine people aged 13-25 to connect, build friendships, play games, share experiences and have a laugh together. On top of that, there are different special projects and in-person meet ups across the year. The group is aimed at young trans women, trans girls, and non-binary people who were registered male at birth. There is no right way to be a transfeminine person and we proudly welcome people with a variety of different gender expressions, and people at different points of their trans journeys.



Swimming Groups

Gendered Intelligence runs different swimming sessions for young trans people between the ages of 8-25, with sessions operating in both London and Leeds. These operate twice a month. Sessions are run/accompanied by youth workers. Wear whatever you like as long as your bottom half is covered. Check out our [youth page](#) for more information.

Trans People of Colour (TPOC)

Our TPOC groups, renamed TPOCalyipse by our young people, are a space for joy, sharing, getting creative and inspired! TPOCalyipse is a safe space for young people of colour, with disabilities, with religious beliefs who are trans men, trans women, gender non-conforming or non-binary. It's okay if you don't feel Black enough, or Asian enough, we welcome all young people of colour including mixed-heritage people. Full of great vibes and even greater snacks (usually), there are a few TPOC groups every month to get involved with both in person and online. So bring your wonderful and whole selves as we are always open to being shaped by our young people's needs.



Nature Connections

We run an online space for us to slow down as a community together and connect with the world around us, and trips will be arranged as part of the group. Our nature group is all about taking a moment to slow down and connect with the natural. We share animal facts, contemplate natural structures, share poetry, watch videos, and discuss our latest nature findings and experiences. The group has a very calm atmosphere and is a nice way to chill out on a Saturday afternoon.

Youth Board

The Youth Board is your place to have a say in how GI is run, to create projects, and share your ideas with other young people. Feedback about GI can be taken back to our workers and board of trustees through our youth representatives and youth trustees, or through Robin, our Senior Practitioner for Youth Voice. You can also get involved with reviewing GI documents and with helping us recruit new staff. Some of our Youth Board sessions are paid. You do not have to be elected to attend our Youth Board, you just need to show up! (This is predominantly held online but with a couple of annual, in-person meet-ups as well)

Parents' and Carers' Group

The Parents' and Carers' Group is open to all parents and carers of young trans, non-binary or gender questioning people. The monthly forum for parents and carers provides a safe space, both online nationally and in-person (in London), where practical information is exchanged, and empathetic support given. There is no agenda, but people bring challenges as well as uplifting stories. By being empowered they feel better able to walk with their young people on their journey.



Support Line

The Gendered Intelligence Support Line offers independent and confidential support to trans and non-binary patients (and their families) undergoing the NHS gender care waiting list and assessment process. The Support Line is now offering support to gender care patients at our new NHS partner Sheffield Porterbrook Clinic, The Laurels Exeter, as well as continuing support services at the Nottingham Centre for Transgender Health.

The GI Support Line Team is here to listen. We

can offer you support and a listening ear at this difficult time for patients of gender services. We can offer you an informed, listening ear and affirmative support from fellow trans people who share your experiences.

Get in touch:

- To access confidential support
- To source helpful information
- To chat about resilience and self-care
- To talk about how handling difficult times

Other Community Support

There are several trans/non-binary groups and social activities beyond what we offer at GI. Check out [Gender Kit's list of different trans groups](#) across the country.

Allyship

An ally is someone who supports a particular marginalised community without being a part of it themselves. Allyship is about understanding and standing up for the rights and difficulties faced by that community and actively raising the voices of those in it. The LGBT Foundation has created [this guide](#) on how to be an ally to the trans/non-binary people in your life. You could also check out [Guide to allyship](#) dos and don'ts of allyship: a general guide of what good allyship looks like.

Key Steps to allyship:

- Educate yourself - Better understanding the particular struggles of a community is a key starting point to good allyship. With trans/non-binary communities there is often so much misinformation in the media it can be hard to know where to look, or how to unlearn things you may have heard about trans communities. Read accounts from trans/non-binary people themselves
- Be open and receptive to criticism - It's inevitable and normal that you may make mistakes and use the wrong pronouns or name for someone. If you can, correct yourself, swiftly apologise and move on.
- Respecting people's identities - a good start to allyship is listening to the trans/non-binary people in your life and respecting and using their chosen name and pronouns. It may take a while to adjust if you've known someone for a long time by a different name/identity but putting in the effort to use and respect individuals' names/pronouns is a fundamental and minimal way to support the trans/non-binary people in your life. If you're finding it hard to adjust, it can be useful to practise using someone's name/pronouns when they're not there.
- The main things to remember are that it's OK to make mistakes, and important to be open and receptive to criticism and understand you may get things wrong.

If someone comes out to you as trans/non-binary

If a friend, family member, or indeed anyone in your life comes out to you as trans it's important to show your support and acknowledge how scary it may be for them to share this with you. It might be helpful to thank the person for sharing this with you and ask them if there are particular pronouns or a different name they'd like you to use. Keep in mind that they may not themselves know what they'd like to be called, in which case you can show your support by asking them to let you know if they want to change pronouns or name in the future.

It can also be helpful to check in whether this person is openly 'out' to everyone or just a few people, to make sure you don't accidentally 'out' them to others. In general, it's better not to ask too many questions, particularly personal ones, about further plans for transition or deeper feelings about gender, as these questions are invasive and personal. Be guided by your friend/loved one about how much they are willing to share, and don't press for answers where you are not being offered them.



Helping others be an ally to you

Part of what you may face if you decide to share your trans/non-binary identity with others is having to explain your gender identity to others (this may not be possible for everyone - see the 'Coming Out' section for more information). It can often feel overwhelming and your friends, family or peers may inadvertently ask intrusive, inappropriate questions that you may not have the answers for. It is absolutely OK to not be able to explain everything, and you shouldn't feel that you have to justify your decisions or identity. Some key things to keep in mind are listed below:

- Remember that it can take your friends/loved ones time to adjust to you 'coming out' and they may take a while to get used to the right language.
- It is absolutely OK to share some

things and not others. You can keep boundaries around what you are ready or willing to share, e.g. things that people 'need to know' such as pronouns or a name change but not deeper feelings about gender or plans for further transition.

- You can direct friends/family to other resources if their questions are too difficult to answer, or if doing so is too emotionally tiring. For IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia) 2022 we put together [this guide](#) for trans allies.
- If any aspect of sharing your identity with friends, carers or family threatens your safety or housing security, there are places you can turn for help. See our 'Safety' section for details.

Coming Out

“Coming out” is a term used to describe sharing information about your identity or past that has previously not been known, particularly around your gender or sexuality. There is no right way to ‘come out’ and it is worth noting that the entire concept hinges there being a ‘norm’ which individuals then depart from. In a perfect world, all diversity of gender expression and sexuality would be celebrated and no one would have to ‘come out’.

It is likely that if you do not fit into these default or centred categories, you will have to come out. Coming out can take lots of different forms and is not just something that happens once, but an ongoing process. It may be that you come out only privately, realising and accepting for yourself what your gender identity and/or sexual orientation are. Or it may be that you decide to share this with others. Disclosing your identity or feelings for others should always be voluntary and you shouldn’t feel pressured into sharing something you are not ready to share. It is absolutely ok to be out in some places and not others.

If you are outed against your will, there are places that can provide support (see below).



Safety

Not everyone will have a safe environment in which to come out and it is absolutely okay not to come out if it will threaten your safety or security. This doesn’t make you less trans or any less of who you know yourself to be. It is also completely okay to be out in some situations and not others. If you are worried your identity will threaten your housing security,

[Stonewall Housing](#) or the [Outside Project](#) can help support you and provide a safe place to go. The Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) also offer [support](#) for LGBTQ+ people who are experiencing homelessness, or living in a hostile environment. You can refer yourself via their website.

Coming Out to Yourself

Coming out to yourself can often be one of the hardest parts of coming to terms with your identity. It may be that you have internalised transphobia and/or homophobia informed by certain stereotypes and perceptions, or that you’ve been brought up and socialised in a way that makes it difficult to be in touch with certain parts of yourself.

The main things to note when ‘coming out’ to yourself is that it doesn’t matter how long it takes and it is absolutely okay to feel confused or unsure. It may take a while to sit with certain ideas and work out how you feel, as well as to accept certain parts of your identity. You might

have certain perceptions about what it means to be trans, and how difficult you imagine life would be if you realise this about yourself.

Remember that there is a lot of misinformation out there and everyone’s experiences are different. It is completely normal to explore your gender identity by trying things out, even if not all of them stick. Exploring your gender doesn’t mean you have to commit forever or be absolutely sure about how you identify. If you need support or someone to talk to, check out our Community and Support section to find out how GI can help.

Identity

Everyone's experience of identity - and how they come to it - will vary depending on their background and experiences. Your understanding of your identity may be different depending on your education, your family life, your community, your religion, and other things around you. You may find it hard to talk about your identity because of your background. For instance, if your family isn't tolerant of trans

people, or your religious community shares homophobic or transphobic beliefs, then it can feel difficult or even dangerous to openly be yourself. Even if you can't come out at home, there's nothing wrong with asking questions of yourself and finding safe spaces to explore your identity. Being from a particular background doesn't mean you can't be trans.

Trans People of Faith

Trans people come from every different background, religious belief and lifestyle. There is often a misconception that being trans and a person of faith is somehow contradictory. This is not the case, and there are many trans people of faith around the world. For trans people of faith, it can be important to find community spaces that celebrate both your trans identity and religion; spaces where you can unquestionably bring your whole self and be seen. Below are some groups tailored towards celebrating queer and trans people of different faiths.

- Stonewall has created [this resource](#) for LGBT people of faith. It has information for LGBT people of all faiths and recommendations of where to find community and support.
- [Hidayah UK](#) (meaning guidance in Arabic) helps provide support for LGBTQ+ Muslims and promotes social justice and education about the community to counter discrimination, prejudice and injustice. Hidayah organises monthly meet-ups

in cities across the UK, from London to Glasgow. They also offer a mentoring program called 'Walk with Me' providing advice and guidance to those who need it. See Hidayah's [event calendar](#) for upcoming dates and events to get involved in.

- [KeshetUK](#) works with all Jewish communities across the UK (including various Liberal, Masorti, Orthodox and Reform denominations) to ensure no one is forced to choose between being LGBTQ+ and their Jewish identity. Keshet works with Jewish schools, youth and young adult organisations, synagogues and wider community organisations.
- [Diverse Church](#) is an inclusive community of Christians. Diverse Church (DC) runs community groups for 18-30 year olds living in the UK and Ireland. These are spaces of dedicated peer to peer pastoral support where individuals can find Christian community to process their understanding of LGBT+ Christian identity and find meaningful friendship.



Transition

Gender transition can be roughly divided into three main categories: social, medical and legal. However, transition looks very different for everyone, and it may be that you transition in just one of these ways, or a combination

thereof, or that your transition doesn't fit easily into these boxes. Whichever way you decide to transition is completely valid and there is no type of transition that makes you any more or less trans.

Social Transition

Social transition includes non-medical ways of transitioning such as changing your name and pronouns. You can change your name, pronouns and title at any time - just tell people what you'd like to be called! - but changing your legal name requires a certain process. See our *Changing Your Name* section below.

It may be that you also change your gender expression - the way that you present your gender through clothes, make-up or hair, for example. This might mean presenting in what's often considered a more 'masculine' or 'feminine' way, or experimenting with different styles. Of course, not all trans people will want to present in the same way and it is about finding what feels right for you. See G(end)er Swap's section on Style Guides below for advice on how to present in a way that feels right for you.



Part of social transition may also involve transitioning at school or work: sharing your pronouns or name with others. Some trans people may be 'out' in some spaces but not others, and it is always okay not to share your identity if it is unsafe to do so.



Medical Transition



For some trans people, medical intervention may be part of how they transition and live/experience their gender. It is not necessary to have surgery, take hormones, or have any kind of medical intervention to be trans and happy, and doing so in no way makes you more trans than you would otherwise be. However, medical transition is important for many trans people,

(Disclaimer: please note we are not a healthcare organisation and are not able to provide direct medical advice, nor are we in a position to help anyone start hormone treatments. All the advice below is intended solely as guidance for the process of accessing hormones/surgery via the NHS).

In order to access gender identity services on the NHS you typically need a referral from the GP. This can be difficult as often GPs are not always informed about trans healthcare. It is possible to change GP if you are struggling to get a referral, but bear in mind that this may lengthen your overall waiting times for you. Spectra's [Trans Health Advocacy](#) service can help with advice on how to talk to your GP about gender care.

If you're under 18 in England or Wales you will then be referred to the Gender Identity Development Service at Tavistock. If you're in Scotland it will be the Sandyford Clinic Glasgow, and for Northern Ireland, it will be the Brackenburn Clinic in Belfast. Because wait times can often be long, you may be transferred to adult services from the age of 17. If you are aged 18 and over you will be referred directly to regional adult services.

There are two types of hormone treatments: puberty delaying treatment (PDTs) or 'blockers', and hormone replacement therapy (HRT). PDTs are used to delay the onset of the changes associated with puberty to allow time for exploration of gender identity, and are also used in adults to suppress existing hormones. HRT is used to gradually raise the desired hormone to a healthy level causing physical change over months or years (e.g. breast development in trans women and facial hair growth in trans men). NHS guidelines mean that you can acquire HRT from the age of 16 following a minimum of 12 months on PDTs. Access to hormones on the NHS typically requires referral to a specialist gender identity clinic (GIC) and a series of appointments with psychological professionals, with wait times ranging from approximately two to five years. Trans people who receive HRT will require lifelong monitoring and medication via the NHS.

Surgical Interventions

Surgical interventions are not offered to anyone under the age of 18; these services are provided to adults only.

Surgical interventions make physical changes to bring an individual's body in line with their gender identity and reduce gender dysphoria.

Surgical interventions typically refer to either chest reconstruction/breast augmentation, or 'top' surgery, and genital reconstructive surgery (GRS), or 'bottom surgery'. GRS and top surgeries are available on the NHS but require a referral from a GIC following commencement of hormone therapy and a waiting period (at least six to twelve months). Facial feminisation, vocal feminisation, and most cosmetic procedures are not typically available on the NHS. Some trans people seek out private surgery, but this is expensive and subject to long waitlists.

You can contact our support line if you are receiving gender care at Exeter (The Laurels), the Nottingham Centre for Transgender Health, or the Sheffield Portersbrook Clinic. For more information check out [GIC FAQ's](#), or Gender Construction Kit's list of [specialist UK clinics](#), as well as their [homepage](#) for more general advice (NB: these services often start at 17+). For information on puberty delaying treatment and gender affirming hormones available to younger people check out GIDS page on [puberty and physical intervention](#).

Legal Transition

Legal and documentary transition refers to changing your legal gender, your legal name, or your gender marker on official documents.

Changing your legal gender



Legal gender refers to the gender that is registered to you at birth. In the UK this will be male or female. It relates to birth certificates, marriage certificates, and death certificates.

A gender marker is the identifying mark on an official document that confirms your gender. In the UK this will be an M for male or an F for female, and by default is the same as your legal gender. It relates to driving licences, passports, and other forms of ID.

Changing your legal gender requires a process known as gender recognition, and is available only to people over the age of 18.

In the UK, legal gender recognition is governed by the Gender Recognition Act (2004), and requires a diagnosis of gender dysphoria, documentation of living in the 'acquired gender', and two medical reports in order to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). Whether or not you have a GRC does not affect your rights or your access to single-sex spaces (this is governed by the Equality Act 2010). Medical transition (or no medical transition) does not affect your ability to legally change your gender.

Obtaining a GRC will allow you to change your legal gender on your birth certificate. It will also mean that in future your marriage and death certificates will also be recorded with the correct gender. Legal gender does not affect passports, driving licences, or other forms of ID.

If you are over 18 you can apply for a GRC [here](#). It costs £5, but bear in mind that there may be additional costs such as obtaining medical reports.

The UK only recognises two legal gender markers: male or female. Non-binary people do not have legal recognition and cannot change their legal gender to anything other than 'male' or 'female'.

Legal Transition

Changing your name and gender marker on official documents

Changing your name

As part of your transition you may wish to change your name. This could be to a name that better fits with your gender identity, or to any name that you feel best fits for you. At first this can be done informally amongst friends, in your educational or work setting and any clubs or interest groups you may be part of. Some trans people experiment a bit with names and it is absolutely OK to try something out and then change your mind if it doesn't feel right. There is no rule around how many times you can change your name so feel free to keep trying different options until you find one that fits well!

Formally changing your name

Anyone can change their name and title at any time. You can change your name and title in social contexts any time you want, and you might want to do this to try out a new name. Changing your name allows you to change it on official documentation, medical records, bank details, and other formal contexts. Birth certificates and marriage certificates cannot be changed by deed poll.

Many services charge an administrative fee for deed polls, but this is not necessary. Deed polls obtained for free are just as valid as a paid service.

The cheapest and easiest way to get a deed poll is to use a template. These can be acquired online (we have an [example](#) on our website), printed out and signed. You will need two witnesses to sign the deed poll. You may need multiple copies of the deed poll, so keeping an original and scanning/photocopying it might be useful.

Changing your documents

GenderKit has a useful [guide](#) on how to change your documents and also a comprehensive list of institutions/organisations to inform of any changes you might make. The [government guide](#) on how to change your name by deed poll provides quite a clear explanation as well.

GIDS also have comprehensive [advice](#) on how to change your name and update legal documents.



Gender Expression

We live in a world of gender binaries where certain styles and ways of acting/presenting are reserved for 'men' and others for 'women'. At Gendered Intelligence we believe in a world where all gender expressions are visible and valued and no one is constrained by narrow perceptions of gender. For everyone under the trans umbrella, expressing your gender in a way that feels right for you can be an incredible, affirming experience. But it can also be intimidating and you may not know how to

present in the way you would like to.

We have gathered some useful tips and resources for how to express your gender in a way that feels right for you. We know that gender is far more complex than makeup or clothes, but finding the right style can certainly help you on your way! In this section we discuss some of the ways of presenting/expressing your gender.

Haircuts

A haircut can be an incredible, gender affirming experience. However, it can also be an intimidating space to navigate. Barbershops and hairdressers can be very gendered spaces, with styles and prices divided along the binary of 'men' and 'women'.

Below are some tips on how to navigate the haircut and find the right style for you.

Getting the haircut you want

Deciding on the haircut you want can be a difficult – and sometimes scary – although exciting prospect. The best way to get an idea of what you want, and to communicate this to your hairdresser/barber, is by finding a picture of the style you want. If you know a celebrity whose hair you've always admired, bring a photo! Or if you're envious of a friend's haircut, take a picture of them to show to your hairdresser. Some hairdressers also have Instagram accounts where they upload pictures of their previous work.

It can help to be familiar with a bit of terminology to best communicate what you want. If you're getting a clipper cut, you'll need to know what the grade of each blade means - you can find out here. Fashionbeans also has a good guide to terminology.



Trans Friendly Hair Stylists

Finding a trans barber or trans-inclusive space can make a world of difference to your experience of a haircut.

Check out [this article](#) for recommendations of seven trans/trans inclusive London based stylists. [Stand for Trans](#), although primarily US based, also have an interactive map of trans inclusive barbers/stylists across the UK.

- [Open Barbers](#) are a hairdressing service welcoming of all/no genders and sexualities, with any hair length and type. As a non-for-profit social enterprise their price system operates on a sliding scale and you can pay what you can.
- [Barberette London](#) are a gender neutral hub hairdresser and welcomes all hair types. They are for LGBTQ+ humans and allies and offer a range of styles.
- [Rooibos](#) - all genders and no genders, Rooibos is a genderfluid, trans/non-binary hair dresser offering haircuts to all genders and no genders. They offer a trans inclusive, friendly environment.
- For those with natural hair or curly hair check out [unrulycurls](#), catering to all types of curly hair.
- [Mako](#) are a trans run friendly salon, building community and spreading love.

In the Space

Whilst trans barbers can be a great way to go they can sometimes be a bit more expensive or inaccessible depending on location. If you just want to go to your local hairdressers/barber, here are some tips about navigating the space.

It can be hard to advocate for yourself and ask for a haircut that might not fit into the binary gender stereotypes, or one that might conflict with how you're perceived by the hairdresser. Remember: you have a right to be there.

If you feel like you have been unfairly treated while trying to get your haircut because of your trans status, Citizens Advice has some tips on [here](#). The first step is making a complaint to the business that treated you unfairly. Please do not assume that this will happen, however - most hairdressers - like most people - will treat you fairly and try to help you get the result you want.



Style Guides and Tips

An exciting part of transition or beginning to experiment with your gender can be finding clothes that you feel good in. The best way to learn what suits you is to try different things on and see what feels most comfortable. However, if you're in the early stages of transition, or just beginning to experiment with a different style this can be an intimidating prospect. It can be a good idea to bring a friend or family member with you to try things on, or if you can afford it ordering things online can be a good way to try things on.

For some, particularly those on the transfeminine spectrum, presenting in the way you want can feel scary and you may be worried about your safety. It is down to individual choice on how you want to present and in what space, and it's also completely OK to try out certain things at home/where you feel comfortable and others in public. It goes without saying that no one should feel threatened for how they dress/present.

If you have experienced harassment, discrimination, or violence because of the way you dress or present, or you're worried about being at risk of it, [Galop](#) can help.

You can also check out our 'knowing your rights' section for more information on legal protections against discrimination.

G(end)er Swap Style Guide

The section below is a style guide contribution written by Santi (they/he), the Founder and Creative Director of G(end)er Swap. G(end)er Swap is the first LGBTQ+ clothing outreach organisation based in the UK that supports trans and gender non-conforming individuals to access clothes and community via style workshops, pop up, and consultancy.

This guide will help equip you with the tools, knowledge and resources to go out there

and build your own wardrobe in creative and sustainable ways. BE WHOEVER and WEAR WHATEVER - always!

Style is individual. Please wear (and tailor suggestions) to whatever feels comfortable for you. Mix and match style tips with your own inspiration. All style tips can be applied to anybody of all/no genders.

Upcycling tips

- Bleach dye or tie dye
- DIY jacket patches
- Paint your clothes using acrylics
- Create vests and crop tops from old t-shirts
- Make shorts out of old trousers
- Add gems, spikes and safety pins for more alternative looks

How to Build a Gender Affirming Wardrobe

- Reflect on what style you want: think of what/who inspires you and write it down (or draw it)!
- Go through your wardrobe and get rid of stuff you don't wear.
- Re-organise: colour code, re-arrange categories
- Upcycle your old clothes: how can you re-purpose what you have?
 - Start small: start with one pattern/colour/garment that you like and branch out later.

Other Resources

- [10 tips on how to build a gender affirming wardrobe](#)
- [Make your own brooch](#)
 - [Pretty Boy Spice: upcycled garments by Santi](#)

G(ENDER)ER SWAP

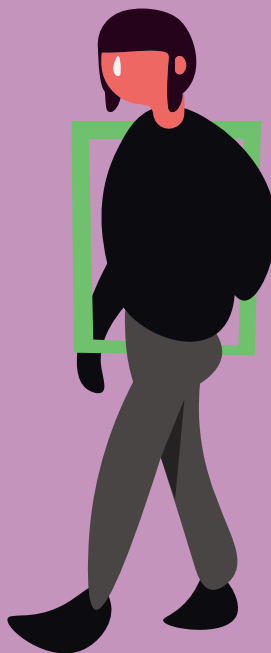
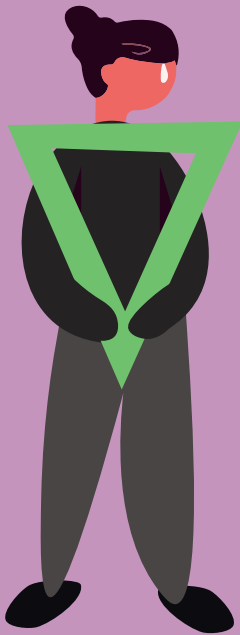


Transmasculine Style Tips

Please note: We believe that gender/style has no limit and that anyone of any/no genders can dress however they want. These tips are a guide to support trans-masc people or anyone who wants to present in a more masc way.

Dressing your Top Half: Shirts and Layers

Think about creating particular shapes that bulk out your shoulders and torso. Aim for a traditional 'v' shape, square or circular shape.



Ways to Broaden Shoulders & to Hide Chest Bumps & Curves:

- Thick layers
- Shoulder pads
- T-shirts that do not go past your belt line
- Boxy T-shirts hide curves
- Thick fabrics with big logos or wording across the chest
- Textured/patterned layers

Layering Ideas:

- Flannel shirts over a button up
- Long sleeves under a t-shirt
- Oversized utility vest over a hoodie
- Oversized coat
- Sweater vests over turtlenecks!
- Denim or leather vests with sweaters
- Sweater with a collared shirt underneath
- Oversized blazers

Things to Remember:

- Make sure sleeves don't run past your wrist.
- If you want to conceal a binder, try rounded crew neck shirts
- Have your shirts stop right below your belt line to balance leg/torso proportion
- Don't go up more than one size for your oversized look
- Look for bigger sleeves with a wider shoulder seam to broaden shoulders

Binding Tips & Safety

Basic Tips:

- Invest in a good quality binder: GC2B and Spectrum Outfitters are recommended
- Make sure to wash your binder by hand weekly
- Do not wear your binder for more than 8 hours a day
- Take breaks throughout the day from wearing your binder
- Do not sleep in your binder or play sports in one as this could injure your ribs and affect your breathing

How to Measure Yourself for a Binder:

1. Prepare a soft measuring tape and a notepad
2. Take off as many top layers as you can
3. Measure around your chest where there is the most chest tissue
4. Relax your shoulders and measure across the back

Sizing & Fitting Tips & Other Resources

- If you are in between sizes make sure you go up a size
- Don't order a binder based on bra cup size
- Full length binders are good for individuals who have a lot of chest tissue or for plus size folks
- Wear white binders in the summer so they absorb less heat
- [Tips for fat bodies](#)
- [Binding without a binder](#)
- [Information about Spectrum binders](#)
- [Binding tips from a G\(end\)er Swap community member](#)
- [Self-measuring tutorial](#)

Seek support from a medical practitioner, perhaps your GP. If your GP knows you are binding and you experience any complications, they should take into account your binding and not mis-diagnose you. If you do not feel safe to tell your GP, or have been treated transphobically in health settings before, talk to a GI youth worker about this.

Dressing your Bottom Half

Trousers:

Finding trousers that fit, especially jeans, can take a really long time. Start off with lighter, stretchy material first and then once you figure out your size and style, go ahead and try some jeans!

Denim alternatives:

- Printed joggers
- Tracksuit bottoms
- Shorts over leggings combo (sport goth)
- Cargo/camo pants (looser fit)
- Harem pants
- Flares and bell bottoms
- Dungarees (fit more body shapes and are adjustable)

What to look for when looking for trousers:

- Low set and wide pockets at the back flatten the backside
- Opt for vintage jeans or oversized "mom" jeans (these are also very fashionable!)
- Look for a long inseam which provides more fabric at the bottom of the zipper. This creates a baggy look, provides a better fit for packing gear, and doesn't cling
- Cuff jeans to create equal proportions.
- Khakis, joggers and stretchy jeans have easier fits
- 'Boot leg' and 'straight leg' labels

Shoes:

If you have smaller feet and want more 'masculine' style shoes it can be worth checking the kids section for more gender neutral options or looking in the women's section for more neutral styles. 'Men's' shoes normally start at a 6 or 7.

Doc Martens have a long history with the LGBTQ+ community as they are largely gender neutral and have an extremely wide range of styles. If you can't afford a new pair you can often find them second hand in good condition on depop or vinted

Transfem Style Tips

Please note: We believe that gender/style has no limit and that anyone of any/no genders can dress however they want. These tips are a guide to support transfemine people or anyone who wants to present in a more femme.

Dressing your Top Half: Shirts and Shapes

For a more feminine look, you can dress your top half to soften your shoulders and give more movement and shape to the chest.

Ways to create shape and movement:

- Flowy/lightweight materials add shape/movement
- Textures create curves: ruffled blouses, glittery/sequins or fringe tops
- Look for shirts that flare out at the bottom: this creates a waistline/curves
- Wear bandeau bras/sports bras

with heavy padding or inserts for breast forms

- Crop tops create waist curves

Shirt ideas:

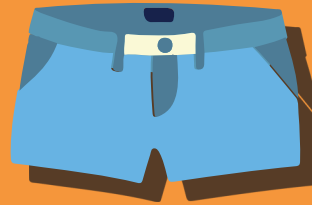
- Lightweight layers on top can soften the shoulders
- Shawls in light colours or with patterns and prints can soften the shoulders and add a sense of movement
- Ponchos and cropped sweaters over a colourful shirt is a great combo
- Knitted gilets, denim, and brightly coloured cardigans are

also a good choice!

- Loose fitting shirts with a wide neckline can emphasise your décolletage

Accessories can break up your outline, add a pop of colour or glitter to your outfit, and draw the eye.

- Neck scarves
- Braces (or suspenders in the US!)
- Faux fur accents
- Brooches/badges
- Tie a sweater around your shoulders



Styling your Bottom Half

Finding jeans that fit you well and are comfortable can take a long time, and it might be easier to start out experimenting with some easier combinations of bottoms and go from there.

- Knitted or patterned tights with a skirt
- Wide-leg, high-waisted trousers with a shirt tucked in can give definition to your waist (to create shape). High waisted corduroys are such a good look!
- Pencil skirts can emphasise the waist and legs, and widen the hips
- Dungarees are always a fun and comfortable option
- One piece rompers with a belt (add accessories to make it your own!)
- If you're uncomfortable about your lower half, it can help to wear a skirt over thick leggings or skinny jeans, or baggy trousers over leggings or tights

- Dresses with a cinched/elasticated waist
- Maxi skirts are a great look on tall women, and can help keep you cool on hot days

What to look for:

- Small back pockets create volume and a rounded butt shape
- One piece rompers fit a variety of body shapes and are easy to layer on top
- Look for stores that have 'tall' sections to get trousers with the right leg fit
- Vintage stores sometimes carry vintage jeans - like Levi's - in a variety of shapes and sizes for all bodies
- Try bottoms that are loose-fitting with plenty of give before going for more rigid materials
- Stretchy slacks are great for plus size folks

Transfem Underwear

As many as 80% of women are wearing bras that don't fit, and trans women are no exception. This might not seem like a problem, but ill-fitting bras can lead to back, neck and shoulder pain, and tightness of breath, not to mention sore breasts (especially if you're on HRT!). This is especially important in hot weather. Transfeminine people tend to need longer band and strap measurements proportionate to their cup size than cis women, and if these measurements are too small it can increase the risk of overheating and breathing difficulties.

Transfeminine people may find it difficult to access bra fitting services because they're worried about being judged or excluded. This is understandable, but there are plenty of retailers like Bravissimo who have a policy of trans-inclusivity. You can also take your own measurements at home. A Bra That Fits has put together a self-sizing guide with all the information and measurements you need based on your body type.

If you tuck or wear a gaff you can find underwear and swimwear with built in support online. [Zoah](#) designs underwear specifically created with tucking in mind, and includes guides on how to do this.

Transmasc Underwear

[Both & Apparel](#) are a great clothing line geared towards trans masc folk, they have boxers, T shirts and swimwear designed to fit AFAB bodies and have designed swimming trunks to create maximum gender euphoria. If you are wanting to pack [Get Your Joey Packing Pouches](#) which you can get on the [trans shop in the UK](#), these are sturdy, reliable and hygienic - designed with a double lined hole and o-ring to accommodate a range of different sized packers. [Paxies](#) offer a range of underwear products for everyone and have all-in-one packing boxers for ease. [Spectrum Outfitters](#) have 3-in-1 boxers that accommodate a foam packer (which can also be purchased from them), designed for comfort and ease of wear.

If you want to wear boxers but don't want to pack boxers purchased from most men's sections are a good option. It can sometimes take a bit of time to find the right size and these don't always fit in the same way as different types of underwear. It can be helpful to try a few different styles to work out what's best for you. A good starting point is to try your normal size in underwear and see how that translates to boxers and then adjust accordingly.

Shoes for Transfems

Some transfeminine people have slightly larger feet, which can make finding the footwear you want quite hard. There are a range of places to look for more feminine style shoes in larger sizes:

- [Demonia](#) offer alternative footwear, from platform boots to sandals in a range of styles and stock up to size 12, (however they can also be a bit pricey!)
- [Long Tall Sally](#) also offer shoes in a range of sizes, up to 13 in some styles and have options for wider feet in a range of more 'feminine' styles.
- [Cinderella Shoes](#) - can also be quite good for transfem styles, and stock in a wide range of larger sizes.
- [Tskenya](#) are a sustainable vegan shoe brand ranging from sizes 8-13 (UK sizes)



Makeup

As part of your gender expression you may wish to experiment with makeup. Learning to do this for the first time can be tricky, but there are lots of tutorials and advice to help you on your way.

One key focus could be covering the 5 o'clock shadow in the beard area. This can be hard to do with minimal make-up.

You may be able to use foundation from a high street drugs store such as [Boots](#), but you may need something with strong coverage. A lot of trans girls use [Estee Lauder's Double Wear](#) or [MAC's studio sculpt](#). Others use [Kryolan TV paint stick](#), because, as the name indicates, it's make-up for TV and theatre, so it's much thicker and fuller coverage than normal foundations. This means it's able to conceal a beard shadow more effectively.

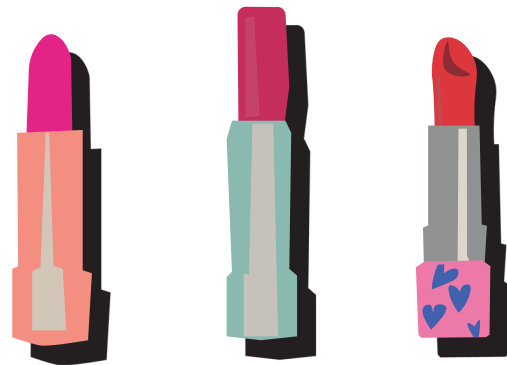
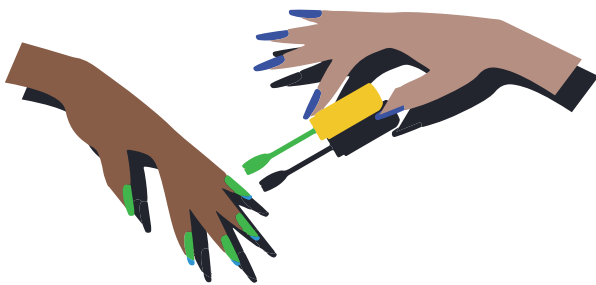
For lighter skin [Derma Colour](#) (a dark orange coloured camouflage crème) can be used to colour correct the blue undertone of a 5 O'clock

shadow and cancel out the darkness of that area.

If you are a person of colour, some make up brands fall short of providing a wide range of suitable shades. [This article](#), and another [here](#), feature some foundation brands that offer a better range of darker tones. If you are looking for full coverage, you might want to test out a brand in advance.

If you have undergone laser hair removal treatment, which removes facial hair, you may wish to use less product, and high street foundation.

[Jecca Blac's](#) makeup page is also a great resource. Blac's mission is to be a brand that represents all beauty lovers: all expressions, genders, sexualities, abilities, pronouns, shapes and sizes. These [tutorials](#) for beginners explain basics like how to apply primer, contour, create a base and add colour.



More G(end)er Swap Resources

- G(end)er Swap [Winter + Summer](#) Style Guides on our website as well as [downloadable resources](#) on self-care, exercise, make-up and style tips
- Visit our [YouTube Channel](#) and [Tik Tok](#) for style tutorials
- Check out [Instagram saved live](#) videos for bespoke interviews and digital workshops/resources.
- Join the [G\(end\)er Swap n' Shop Facebook](#) page to offer/request clothes and transitional items. Open to trans and gender non-conforming individuals in the UK only.
- Visit [The G\(end\)er Shop](#): our online shop that stocks transitional items, merch and upcycled apparel

Health

Physical Health

Staying active and being able to participate in physical activity are important for health and wellbeing. Sport and physical activity can be hard to access for trans people, as these spaces can be overly gendered, exclusionary and not generally as accessible. This can be particularly true for non-binary people who are forced to choose between 'men's' or 'women's'

spaces, or for trans people who may be worried about not 'passing' in their gender. We believe sport is for everyone and no one should have to choose between being themselves and playing sport. We have collated some trans-friendly sport teams and spaces below for anyone who's interested in participating.

Sports and Accessibility

[Pride Sports Finder](#) has a search engine that allows you to find sports groups across the country. It provides a good overview, but some details may be out of date so make sure to check ahead.

Whilst joining a trans-inclusive sports team or group can be a great way to stay active, these are not always accessible depending on your location or other factors. If this is the case you

could try and find a friend or other people to plan walks, runs or kickabouts with. Remember nature is a gender-neutral space, and getting out for walks or a cycle or a run - or just some fresh air, depending on what you're able to do - is always good for your physical and mental wellbeing. That's not to say physical exercise is the answer to all problems, but it is an important part of maintaining wellbeing.



London-based Sports

London-based Groups

- **Boxing/Muay:** [ThaiBender Defenders](#) - BENDER DEFENDERS is a community empowerment, Muay Thai and self-defence training movement empowering our community and confronting rising hate crime. It has lots of transmasc and transfem attendees and is taught by queer/trans coaches.
- **Weights:** [Pecs Education](#) is a transmasc and non-binary strength and conditioning class that takes place in Barbers gym, East London.
- **Basketball:** [London Cruisers](#) is London's only basketball team for LGBTQ+ women and non-binary people. Lesbians, bisexuals and queers all welcome!
- **Netball:** [Queer Ballers](#) run netball training for queer women, trans, and non-binary people of any ability, check them out in Highbury Fields.
- **Cycling:** [Velociposse](#) are a cycling club open to all women, trans and non-binary people in London.
- **Running:** [Frontrunners](#) is an inclusive running and triathlon club for lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals, non-binary, trans and other people belonging to the wider LGBT+ community and our allies.
- **Climbing:** [Climbing qts](#) are an LGBTQ+ climbing and social group in London.
- **General Fitness:** The Outside Project are currently running a sports group called '[Outsiders United](#)' with the aim to create a space for LGBTQ+ people who feel they can't access sport due to poverty, bad experiences, body shaming, competitive or gendered spaces. All groups are free to attend, beginner level and non-competitive. See their website for current days and time.

- **South East:** [BLAGSS](#) is a sports and social group that now has around 450 lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender members from across Brighton and Hove, Sussex and beyond. They aim to encourage LGBT people to play sport. It's as simple as that. Sport is so important because health and fitness is such a vital part of our lives.
- **Sheffield:** [Trans Active](#) aims to help the trans community in and around Sheffield socialise and improve their fitness and mental wellbeing through sport in a safe, relaxed environment. The offer: Yoga, Swimming, Climbing, Table Tennis and Cycling.

Football Groups

- **Haggerston, East London:** trans inclusive football teams [Goal Diggers](#) and [Camden Bells](#) based in East London. Camden Bells have recently been running trans inclusive leagues to raise money for Football v Homophobia and The Outside Project.
- **Hackney Downs:** [Queer Space](#) are a trans inclusive, queer football team for all abilities.
- **Across London:** [Stonewall FC](#) - is an inclusive football team, committed to creating footballing environments where people can be comfortable as their authentic-selves while facilitating their footballing ability.
- **Across UK:** [TRUK FC](#) are an LGBTQ+ friendly football team playing friendlies throughout the UK and beyond. They are very trans inclusive and have made history in fielding the first all trans women team!

Swimming Groups

- **Lewisham, London:** [TAGS](#) provide safe and inclusive swimming for the trans and non-binary community, running sessions in Lewisham, London.
- **London and Leeds:** Gendered Intelligence runs swimming sessions for young trans people between the ages of 8-25, with sessions operating in both London and Leeds. Check out our [youth page](#) for more information.

Outside London

- **Brighton and Hove:** [Trans Can Sport](#) is a not-for-profit project based in Brighton and Hove. It was created to get trans people into exercise and healthy living, and aims to help anyone who feels their transgender identity makes participating in sport difficult, including people who are questioning or exploring their gender. They also welcome their friends, families and allies.
- **West Midlands:** [Trans/Gender non-conforming circuit class](#) - is a fitness session exclusively for people who identify as trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming. The session is free, and takes place in the Vault Fitness Studio at the Birmingham LGBT Centre. The studio is a private space in the basement of the centre with a gender-neutral changing space.

Mental Health

Being trans or questioning your gender, can be an exciting time of change and self-discovery, but it can also be challenging, and many young trans people struggle with their mental health. This is not because of something innate about being trans but due to living in a society that is not set up for trans people, and in which transphobia persists.

It may be that you have anxiety around how you might be perceived or coming out to friends and family, or other difficulties around what it means to be trans in the UK. You might be questioning your gender identity, and feeling unsure about what pronouns you want to use, or what gender you are. However you're feeling, remember that you're not alone, and there are people who can support you, and who understand what you're going through.



Depression

Trans people are disproportionately affected by depression, low mood and/or suicidal feelings compared to the general population. These feelings can be brought on or worsened by issues such as waiting times for medical transition, feelings of discomfort around the body or clothes, negative self-image, difficulty finding employment or housing, bullying, social isolation, or family and friends' reactions to transition. These can all lead to feeling hopeless or sad.

Many trans people experience these feelings and it's important to remember that they do not make you a weaker person. For some people, self-care can be an important part of dealing with this, for others medication or therapy can help. Dealing with depression, low mood or suicidal feelings is about finding what works best for you and not being afraid to ask for help.



Looking After Yourself

If you're struggling with mental health it can be really difficult to 'look after yourself'. This Galop [Self-Care Guide](#) has advice on small things you can do to get through the day and increase our ability to cope.

Of course self-care isn't everything, and finding community and the support you need as well as an environment that works for you is really important. But focusing on some small, manageable daily tasks can help you to manage when things are really difficult.



Getting Support

It can often be really hard to seek the support you need, or recognise and admit to yourself that you are struggling. Just know that however bad everything may feel, it does get better, and there are always people who can help you, and who will love and appreciate you for who you are.

If you are feeling low, there are lots of places you can turn to. If you feel able to, speaking to an adult, whether a family member, teacher, or trusted community member, can be a really good first step. If this isn't possible in your situation, there are helplines you can contact for advice and support, listed below. In an emergency, always dial 999. GIDS have a guide for [how to cope with really difficult feelings](#). You can also find support through [CAMHS](#) (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) where you can get referred to your local service by a GP, parent/carer, teacher or social worker and then they can help support you. See the following page for various helplines.

Navigating the Healthcare System

Once you have realised you may need help, accessing help can be difficult, and it can feel hard to advocate for yourself when you're struggling. This can be harder for trans/non-binary people trying to navigate the healthcare system due to fear of prejudice or being misunderstood or misgendered.

It is helpful to write down what you want to see from an appointment before going, take a friend/family member along with you, and be aware of what your rights are before going.

This [resource](#) comprehensively explains your rights as a trans/non-binary person navigating the healthcare system, as well as including a guide on how to advocate for yourself.

This [resource](#) explains the experience of trans/non-binary people who have navigated the healthcare system and documents their experiences, with some advice on how to navigate the space.

Support for Black Trans People

[Black Trans Foundation](#) offer free therapy to trans and non-binary people aged 16+ based in the UK. They are not currently taking new people on but have launched a mentoring scheme in collaboration with Spectra where you can sign up to a one-to-one mentoring program for Black Trans people in the early stages of Transition, your mentor can help you with the unique obstacles facing Black Trans people in the UK. Sign up [here](#).

Therapy

Finding a therapist can be a really good step in getting the support you need. If you feel comfortable going through your GP they can refer you on to services that can help. This is the best way to access therapy on the NHS, although waitlists can be long. Gendered Intelligence also maintains a [directory](#) of trans-affirmative therapists who you can contact. [Pink Therapy's online directory](#) of therapists is also a good resource, and has a comprehensive list of therapists of all sexualities and gender identities who work with gender and sexual diversity across the UK from a non-judgmental standpoint. Unfortunately, accessing therapy can be quite expensive, but some therapists offer subsidies or bursaries for those who need them.

Help Lines

Switchboard - LGBT+ Helpline

Available 10am-10pm every day and for online chat and email service. Call 0300 330 0630

Samaritans – Helpline

They offer emotional support and befriending in complete confidence at any time of day or night

Call 116 123 for the national helpline

Mind Out

Online chats with one of their Online Support Workers. Fridays 12pm - 1:30pm is their trans specific session. Check out their [website](#).

Childline – Helpline

A free service for people up to the age of 19 where you can speak to a counsellor at any time of day or night, and via online chat and e-mail services

Call 0800 11 11

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, please reach out for help. Talk to a parent, a teacher, your GP, a member of your faith community or a youth group leader. If you feel unable to do that, you can contact one of the UK helplines.

The Samaritan's myths about suicide [factsheet](#) is a helpful resource for helping others who are struggling to cope.

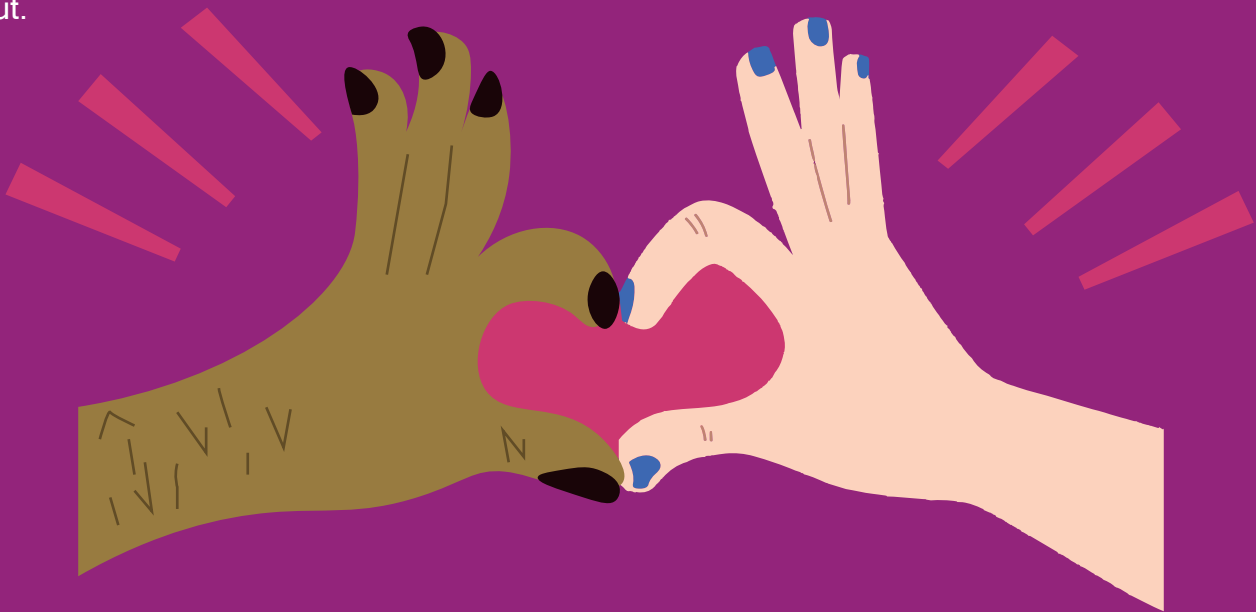


Sexual Health

Staying on top of sexual health can sometimes be harder for trans/non-binary people.

It may be that due to the gender registered with your GP - you won't get called up for cervical screenings, or other routine check-ups associated with your anatomy. Or it may feel harder to attend routine sexual health check-ups for fear of being misgendered or engaging with body parts that you may feel uncomfortable about.

It's really important to put your health first, and make sure that you're always communicating your needs with your doctor. Whilst it can be difficult, there are ways of navigating these spaces that can help and make the experience more manageable. Below are some places to go that offer services explicitly for trans/non-binary people, and advice on how to navigate the space if these are not accessible to you.



Navigating appointments in non-trans led spaces

For those outside of London, accessing services that are specifically for trans/non-binary people can be harder. If this is the case, here is some general advice on how to navigate the space and what can make it easier.

- Call in advance and explain your needs
- Ask for space to discuss procedures ahead of time
- Bring a friend or ask for a chaperone
- Ask for additional sedation or pain relief (e.g. for cervical screening or getting a coil fitted)

Resources:

- Terrence Higgins Trust sexual health [resource](#) for trans men/trans masc people
- Terrence Higgins Trust sexual health [resource](#) for trans women/transfem people

Trans Inclusive Services

- [56 Dean Street](#) is a holistic sexual health and wellbeing service for all trans and non-binary people and their partners.
- Jo's Cancer Trust offer [cervical screenings](#) for non-binary people who have a cervix and trans men.
- [CliniQ](#) also offer holistic wellbeing and sexual health services for trans, non-binary and gender diverse people.

Bereavement

Bereavement for trans/non-binary people can be different, and getting the right support/finding advice is really helpful. [This guide](#) has useful information on the experience of bereavement for trans people and their loved ones.

Legal Considerations

Knowing your Rights

Trans rights are still being fought and won in the UK, and we are still some way off achieving true justice and equity for trans people. As you come out or navigate the world as a trans person, it's important to be informed of what your rights are (and what rights are yet to be won.) This section explains the context of trans rights in the UK and outlines what rights and protections are in place for trans people, as well as what rights are still subject to ongoing legal battles. It is important to note that whilst GI has significant

expertise in the field of trans inclusion, we are not qualified solicitors or medical professionals. The advice below is therefore a guide, aiming to explain legal rights in a clear way, and equip you with an overview of trans rights in the UK. If you find yourself in a situation where you need direct legal advice it is important to seek appropriately qualified advice. GI will continue to work with legal and medical organisations at the forefront of the fight for trans rights.



**KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS**

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 is an anti-discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment. The act makes it illegal to discriminate against someone based on 'protected characteristics', which include:

- age
- gender reassignment*
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

What this means

In practice, The [Equality Act](#) means that if you are discriminated against based on any of the above 'protected characteristics' you have legal protection and can seek protection under the law.

*The Equality Act doesn't explicitly recognise or include non-binary/genderfluid people. However, a recent case (Taylor v Jaguar Road Ltd (2020)) saw protections under

You're protected from discrimination:

- at work
- in education
- as a consumer
- when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- as a member or guest of a private club or association

The Equality Act protects individuals against different types of discrimination, these include:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- harassment
- victimisation

'gender reassignment' extended for someone who identifies as genderfluid. The case argued that the protected characteristic of 'gender reassignment' speaks to all those who "move away from one's birth sex in to a state of one's choice". This includes anyone who no longer identifies with the sex they were assigned at birth. Therefore there is scope for protection and inclusion of non-binary/genderfluid people under the 'gender reassignment' characteristic, and no medical transition is needed for this to apply.

Where to Get Support

- Galop can offer [advice and support](#) for anyone whose experienced anti-LGBT hate crime, and are able to advise you on your rights, where to find support and how to navigate the criminal justice system, if this is necessary.
- The Equality and Advisory Service (EASS) can offer [advice and support](#) on how the Equality Act works and how it might be relevant to your situation
- The Equality Advisory Support Service discrimination helpline can help if you've been affected by [discrimination](#)
- [Queer Care](#) is a transfeminist autonomous care organisation, providing training, [support and advocacy](#) for trans and queer people in the UK. They can provide support and advice on navigating healthcare appointments, advocacy around being sectioned, and referrals to other organisations that may be able to help.
- If you are facing discrimination in your workplace, consulting your union can be a great way to gather support and expertise. Whilst unions sometimes fail to act for their trans members, we are seeing increasingly trans inclusive unions, helping individuals to challenge transphobia in their workplaces.

Gender Recognition Act

The legal gender recognition process is described in our 'Legal/Documentary Transition' section above.

At the moment, getting a Gender Recognition Certificate is a long and difficult process, requiring a diagnosis of gender dysphoria, two

medical reports, and proof of two years 'living in role'.

In 2017 the UK government promised to make this process easier, and held a consultation to reform the GRA. But despite popular support, no reforms have been made.



Ban on Conversion Practices

In 2018 the UK government promised to totally ban conversion practices (sometimes also called conversion therapy). Conversion practices refer to any attempt to change or suppress a person's sexuality or gender identity, or to persuade a person that one sexuality or gender identity is preferable to another. Conversion practices are discredited by all major healthcare bodies, and generally considered a form of abuse.

The government was on track to make the proposed ban into law, but U-turned in 2022 to exclude trans people excluded from a conversion therapy ban. This means that forms of conversion therapy specifically targeted at trans/non-binary people will still be legal, in a loophole in the government's proposal to ban so-called 'gay conversion therapy'. Butch cis lesbian, bi and queer women, and camp cis gay, bi, and queer men are all likely to continue to fall victim to conversion practices if this loophole persists into actual legislation. Research suggests that young people, people of faith and people of the global majority are particularly at risk of conversion practices.

It is important to be aware that conversion practices still take place in the UK, and these can sometimes be hard to identify. This could be a therapist who has so-called 'gender critical' beliefs and tries over time to influence

their patient, or a community or religious leader, or a family member or friend. It is important to remember that there is no such thing as 'consensual conversion therapy' and if this is offered to you or someone you know it still forms part of harmful conversion practices.

There is nothing wrong with exploring your gender identity and/or sexuality. However, if you or someone you know is being made to change or suppress your identity, or if you are being told that it would be better to not be trans, then you may be at risk of conversion practices. All major healthcare organisations condemn conversion practices, and all research suggests that those who have had it experience high levels of mental health issues and distress.

If you or someone you know has been subject to conversion therapy, or may be at risk, there are places you can turn for help. [Galop](#) has a designated helpline for anyone who is affected by conversion practices and can provide advice and support should you need it. [LGBT Switchboard](#) can also offer support and advice. The backtracking on a trans-inclusive conversion therapy ban is a huge loss for trans rights in the UK, and we will continue to fight conversion therapy in all its forms.



Non-binary Legal Recognition

Non-binary is currently not recognised as a legal gender in the UK. This has implications for how non-binary people are able to access legal rights, and have their gender officially recognised on ID documents. For detailed explanation of the legal rights of non-binary people, access the full government report [here](#). Legal recognition of non-binary people remains an ongoing 'issue' and (at the time of writing) has just gone to debate for the third time in Parliament, in response to a petition with over 10,000 signatures.

In practice, non-binary people not having legal recognition means they can't change their gender marker or legal gender to anything other than 'male' or 'female'. It also can make it harder to claim protection under The Equality Act. However, as explained above, a recent case involving a genderfluid person has increased scope for the inclusion of non-binary people under the protected characteristic of 'gender reassignment'. Not having non-binary as a legally recognised gender also makes it harder to measure how many non-binary people there are in the UK, which in turn makes it harder to advocate for the needs of this community.

Voter ID Laws

In 2021, the government introduced an Elections Bill which would require voters to present voter ID to vote in general elections. Stonewall has produced [research](#) which suggests this would disproportionately impact LGBTQ+ people, in particular trans and non-binary people who are much more likely to not

have a useable photo ID. Multiple other social bodies have additionally pointed out that the Bill is likely to especially impact people of colour and working class people (see, for example [this article](#)). We can infer that working class and trans people of colour will be most acutely affected by the Bill.

Trans Joy

So often the media can be filled with misinformation and negative perceptions about what it means to be trans or non-binary. Whilst life can be harder for trans people, it can also be full of excitement and joy. Below are contributions from the GI community on moments of trans joy in their lives.

Q: What has been a moment of trans joy in your life?

Georgie, Administrator

For me, the most important aspect of being trans has been in meeting other likeminded people and being free to talk about things like bodies, identity relations, sexuality and so on without any presumed 'cis-normative' perspectives. Being trans opened that door for me, when I had hitherto only been able to speak with cis people about them. Where I had felt weird or out-of-place before, I now felt understood and seen.

Lee, GI Trainer

I remember vividly the first time that someone used the right pronouns for me. It was over 20 years ago now, but it's such a small but important thing that I still remember the smell of the place, the notice board on the wall and the feeling of someone just using the right language for me. It was done without fuss or comment and it felt so euphoric. Sometimes it's what seems like really small things that can have such a huge positive impact.

Molly, GI Trainer

I came out to my parents during lockdown. I told them I'm non-binary and at first my Mum was quite dismissive and defensive. But a few weeks later they sent me a mug in the post that said 'Be You' with hearts in the colours of the non-binary flag all over it.

They still struggle and it can be hard - but whenever I use that mug it makes me laugh and feel joyful. It was like a very strange, very sweet symbol of their acceptance regardless of whether they understood or not.

They also bought me a rainbow door mat years before when I came out as bi, so I should have seen the cheesy 'coming out' memento coming.

Finn, Director of Youth & Communities

Going on GI camp with 40 young trans & NB people, plus trans & NB colleagues and spending 4 days together without cisnormative expectations or the 'Cis gaze'!

Lucian, Intern and Volunteer at GI

The first time I had been in an all-trans people space was at a training course for GI, and it was overwhelmingly warm to finally be in a space where I felt that my gender wasn't an issue. It was a powerful emotion, not just because I wasn't confusing to anyone, (as everyone was well versed in the complexities of gender) but because I felt fully understood and seen on a cultural level beyond gender identity. I specifically remember on the final night of our training residential when the stars had come out, we sat around a campfire and listened to the crackles of the flames whilst going around the group and sharing a reflection from the weekend, talking about how far each of us had come in finding ways to care for ourselves and each other despite living in a world that isn't always safe for us. That mutual support and communal love we shared around the fire circle moved my heart and changed something at my core, and left me with a "determination to always hope for a better society that works for trans people" which I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Isa, Senior Youth Work Practitioner

As a trans youth worker I get to experience different moments of trans joy on a daily basis. Sometimes it's the happiness of walking back home from the youth centre with glitter all over my face, other times it's about the silliness of trying to figure out together how a badge-maker works. But it's also about seeing someone who used to find it really difficult to be around other people to slowly build in confidence, and have them laugh and enjoy our youth spaces that brings me so much trans joy. For me trans joy is all the young trans people I get to work with.

Hag, Administrator

When I finally came out to my dad as non-binary his response was a wholehearted "I'm in your corner" and he's been true to his word since, always challenging transphobia from other family members and being open to learning, changing and growing with me. He doesn't always 'get' it but he knows he doesn't need to in order to love and support me.

Clare, Learning Development and Wellbeing Coordinator

For me, trans joy is all about creating community and alternative structures of family and care with my friends. Cutting each other's hair during lockdown. Organising clothes swaps. Dancing around the kitchen to queer and trans anthems.

Benjamin, Administrator

After my friend had recovered from top surgery we had a 5 person videocall in which all of us had our shirts off. It was the most normal feeling in the world, and that meant so much.

Robin, Senior Youth Work Practitioner

My dad taking me to the barbers with him for the first time.

Simon, Director of Professional and Educational Services

Proposing to my partner with a 5ft high papier mache diamond ring with my GRC pinned to it - I was so lucky to meet and fall in love with her early in life and we've been together over 32 years now, married for 15.

Finn, Director of Youth & Communities

Marching in Brighton with 80+ young trans people and some of their families members, covered in trans flags, non-binary colours and glitter... fists in the air, smiles across our faces, embodying TRANS PRIDE!

Anonymous GI Community member

Everytime my friends use they/them pronouns when referring to me, that time I went to a hairdresser and having my hair shaved for the first time felt like freedom.

Anonymous GI Community member

Dancing in rooms full of trans people. Free to move how we want. No need for talking, just shaking out any cis het tension and feeling free.

Jake, Head of Youth and Families

When I was first using my new name and just 'coming out' as a guy, I had my 17th birthday. One of my friend's mum made a cake and it had "Happy Birthday Jake" written in icing across the top. It was the one of the first things I ever received from someone else, with my chosen name on. And it meant so much to know my friend respected me enough to ask for that from his mum. It's half my life ago, but I still remember how much joy it brought me.



gendered intelligence

increasing understandings of gender diversity

Gendered Intelligence (GI), established in 2008, is a registered charity that works to increase understandings of gender diversity and improve the lives of trans people.

We offer a broad spectrum of services both to trans people, especially young trans people, and to organisations and individuals wishing to develop their trans inclusivity. We also engage with the general public, government and the media.

We are a trans-led and trans-involving grassroots organisation with a wealth of lived experience, community connections, and a depth and breadth of trans community knowledge that is second to none, combined with diverse skills, qualifications and expertise.

We believe everyone can be intelligent about gender!



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