



Asexual & Aromantic Spectrum Etiquette and Inclusion

Asexuality & Aromantism

Thank you for taking the time to learn about ace (asexual spectrum) and aromantic spectrum etiquette and inclusion. Ace and aro erasure and invisibility are unfortunately still more common than inclusion and support, but we are working to change that, and these are some actions you can take to show your support.



Asexuality is defined as not experiencing sexual attraction and/or not desiring sexual contact. There is considerable diversity within the asexual community; each asexual person experiences arousal, attraction, and relationships differently, and it is impossible to draw conclusions about a person's behavior or physiology based on their identity along the asexual spectrum. The asexual spectrum includes many additional identities, the most prevalent being gray-asexuality and demisexuality. Gray-asexuality is defined as the gray area between sexual and asexual, which may include, but is not limited to, low or infrequent sexual attraction, sexual attraction but a low sex drive, sexual attraction and drive but not enough to want to act on them, and many more. Demisexual people do not experience sexual attraction before making a strong emotional connection. For example, after forming a romantic or queerplatonic relationship, demisexual people might experience sexual attraction.

Aromantic people do not experience romantic attraction. Romantic attraction is a distinct dimension from sexual attraction, and while they are often the same for any one individual (for example, someone can be bisexual and bi-romantic, or asexual and aromantic), it is also possible for them to differ (for example, for one person to be asexual and pan romantic, or homosexual and aromantic, or asexual and gray-romantic).



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Dos & Don'ts for Supporting Ace Communities

Please Do:

- Acknowledge that asexuality and aromanticism exist, and that they are often erased or challenged as legitimate identities
- Include asexuality when talking about sexual orientations
- Question negative stereotypes of asexual and aromantic people
- Recognize that asexual and aromantic identities often overlap with other queer identities
- Respect both asexual and aromantic people's ways of doing intimacy and their relationship structures as valid and important, even if they do not include sex and/or romance

Please Do Not:

- Confuse asexuality with celibacy: asexuality is a sexual orientation while celibacy is a behavior
- Question whether asexuality or aromanticism are real orientations
- Assume that someone who is asexual is straight
- Ask an asexual person if they masturbate (the answer is about 50/50 yes/no, and none of your business)
- Ask an asexual person about their sexual activity or sexual history in ways you would not ask other people
- Ask if we have "just not met the right person yet," or are in the closet about being LGBTQ.

According to the Asexual Census*, about 31% of all ace respondents self-identified transgender/ gender non-conforming / non-binary / agender / genderqueer in some way.

The most common romantic orientation for an asexual person is either bi- or pan-romantic. According to the Asexual Census*, the number of asexual people who identify as bi- or pan-romantic (36%) is greater than those who identify as aromantic (25%), hetero-romantic (24%), homo-romantic (5.5%). (Other asexual people do not identify with any romantic orientation or identify with rarer romantic labels.) Please read "A Guide to Bisexual / Pansexual / Fluid Etiquette."

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