# LGBTQIA+ Ally Guide

Allies are critically important to the LGBTQIA+ community. As this LGBTQIA+ community is smaller than the heterosexual community, having allies can mean the difference between having safe and equitable experiences, and facing discrimination and harassment.

An ally is a person who will stand up for members of the LGBTQIA+ community and advocate for equal and respectful treatment, even when it is difficult to do so. While allies can be members of the LGBTQIA+ community (e.g. lesbians can be allies to trans or bisexual people), allies who are not LGBTQIA+ have a particularly important opportunity to use their position to make the world safe and inclusive of all.

Below are allyship tips to help you know what to do.

## Lear more about LGBTQIA+ people and their experiences

Even within the LGBTQIA+ community, people will have a vast range of different experiences and challenges. Connecting with a range of people will help you to understand the breadth of these experiences and be better prepared to speak up when you see something that does not sit right.

## Search engines are a great place to start

Rather than asking people to share their experiences, which can bring up bad memories or feelings, try doing some research on your own. There are plenty of podcasts, books, movies, digital creators, and organisations who share information about allyship and the experiences of LGBTQIA+ people. Try to remember, that being LGBTQIA+ is only one aspect of how a person identifies, so try to also listen to stories and information from people who are LGBTQIA+ and live with disability, are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and people from a range of cultures and backgrounds.

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| Chat outline | Invite an expert Seek out, book in, or attend training run by LGBTQIA+ inclusion experts. They will often have tangible tips, be able to answer questions and will have the most up to date information. |
| Megaphone outline | Talk the talk Seek out information on inclusive language and practice things that do not come naturally. |
| Headphones outline | Listen up The most important thing you can do as an ally is listen to understand. Sometimes it might be uncomfortable to hear that someone close to you has been through but believing them and asking what you could do to support them is especially important. |
| Rainbow outline | Wear your safety gear LGBTQIA+ people will not know they are safe until they see or hear something that tells them that they are. Luckily, that is what rainbows are for. Consider wearing a rainbow pin or lanyard, or having a rainbow sticker up in your office, store, or workspace. Sharing your pronouns also tells members of the LGBTQIA+ community that you are an ally, so consider adding them to your signature block, zoom or nametag. |

**You know what they say about assumptions...**

Do not make them. Try not to assume the gender of a person or their partner until they have told you. Try using the word partner until you know if that person has a boyfriend/girlfriend/husband or wife.

**Pronouns matter**

Pronouns are how we describe someone when we are not using their name (i.e. she, he, they). You would not like it if someone got your pronouns wrong, so if anyone ever takes the time to share their pronouns with you, try your best to use them correctly, even if they were not what you assumed they would be. If you make a mistake, quickly apologise, and move on.

**Speak up**

Sometimes LGBTQIA+ people find they need some support in advocating for themselves. That is where allies come in. Get involved in organising LGBTQIA+ events at your workplace, support LGBTQIA+ owned and operated businesses and share information that has helped you to learn and be a better ally to the LGBTQIA+ community.