



A.S.V.GAY

# FAKP

## First Aid Kit for Pronouns



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## Welcome to the FAKP

New at A.S.V.Gay and/or do you want to learn something new? In front of you lies A.S.V.Gays FAKP: First Aid Kit for Pronouns. Pronouns are very important in life: you see them everywhere and probably use them all day long. But do you know what they are? How you use them? Or how matters along gender and pronouns are dealt with within A.S.V.Gay? This guide can provide all those answers and more.

Should you have questions after reading the FAKP, or do you have remarks about its content, don't hesitate to contact us!



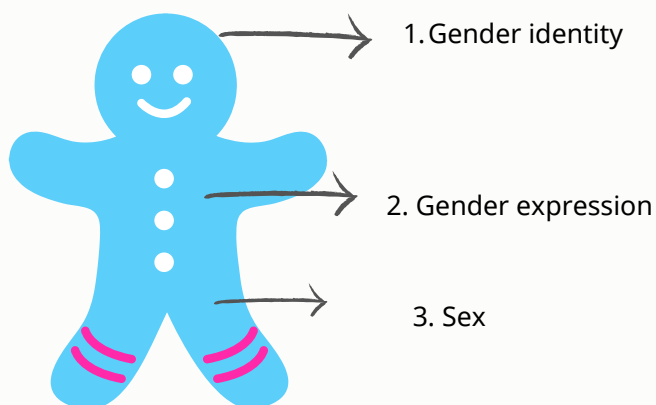
# Background knowledge: gender

## WHAT IS GENDER IDENTITY?

Before you can properly understand what pronouns are, it is useful to know something about gender identity. Your gender identity is how you feel. For example, you can feel, or with an expensive word, identify, as male, female, non-binary, or as something else that does not fall within these three categories. Non-binary means that you do not feel completely at home as a man or a woman, but that you have different feelings about your gender.

Your gender identity is not the same as your physical characteristics: this is your sex. If your gender identity and your sex correspond, this is called cisgender. However, it can also be the case that they do not match: people can then identify as transgender.

Finally, there is also your gender expression: this is how you express yourself.



# What are pronouns?

## MANY DIFFERENT FORMS

Pronouns are words that refer to 'living beings'. These are words such as "he", "her", "them" and "those".

Which pronouns to use depends on the person.

Pronouns are often linked to gender identity, but they do not always have a one-to-one relationship! For example, some people identify as non-binary, but use he or she pronouns. That is why it is important to ask the person which pronouns they want to use: you cannot tell from the outside, so just ask!

Many different pronouns are possible, and some people like combinations of them. A few examples are:

- He/him/his
- She/her/her
- They/them/their
- Xe/xem/xirs
- Ze/hir/hirs
- Other new forms, e.g.

They is traditionally seen as a plural form, but can be used for a singular person. An example would then be: 'they are getting their drink', 'they went to the store.' 'It was their coat.' 'Can you ask them whether they are coming tonight?'

Fun fact: some people seem to think that this use of 'they' is a new phenomena, but it dates back ages! Shakespeare for example used it in Hamlet!

Every language has their own set of pronouns. Sweden for example introduced a new pronoun in 2012: hen (they) is new, next to hon (she) and han (he). Other language have had genderneutral pronouns for far longer. Hungary and Finland don't have a gender for example. In Hungarian, Ő is used for all people.

# In practice

## HOW TO USE PRONOUNS

### What if you don't know which pronouns someone uses?

You can always ask, as long as you make sure it's a convenient time for the other person as well. "Which pronouns do you want me to use?" is one way to do it. Also pay attention to people's Instagram bios/whatsapp statuses/zoom names. You can often find the pronouns there. You can also always start with your own pronouns first, so that there is already a conversation going on.

It is also possible that someone doesn't know it himself. It is never compulsory for someone to answer, that is also okay. Then try to deal with it in another creative way.

### What if you get stuck?

First of all, it is okay to make mistakes. Correct yourself, say sorry, continue the conversation: don't make a big thing out of it. Secondly, sometimes if you're lost or stuck, you can also say the person's name, or another title: 'Does Marley/your friend know that the TV programme starts at nine o'clock?'

### Keep practising

The most important thing you can do is to keep practising. Making mistakes and having to learn things is not weird, as long as you try. It becomes easier if you do it more often.

# Other gender neutral use of language

## KEEP IT NEUTRAL

Many words in our language have a gender. You can pay attention to this in order to make it more neutral.

- When we address a group of people, it is often done with a binary division: 'dear ladies and gentlemen'.

Fortunately, for most words you can find a neutral alternative. For example: 'dear ladies and gentlemen' = 'dear persons', persons can then be further defined to 'residents', 'travellers', 'participants', etc, etc.

- Use plural form: the employer must be... = employers must use their...

- Jobs and professional names can be complicated. It is often a good idea to ask how people want to be addressed, for example actor or actress, etc.

# What can you do?

(DEFINITELY ALSO WHEN YOU'RE CIS)

- 1) Respect someone's pronouns, always.
- 2) Ask if you don't know something for sure.
- 3) Speak to people when they address someone incorrectly.
- 4) Put your own pronouns in your bio/status/zoom name, so thinking consciously about pronouns is normalised.

## Everyone has pronouns

### WHAT ARE YOURS?

Everyone has pronouns, including you. So think about which pronouns you want to use, how you want to be addressed, how you want to be called, etc. This makes it easier for everyone. This makes it easier for everyone.

# What if you have doubts about which pronouns you want to use?

## DO WHAT FEELS RIGHT FOR YOU

Having doubts about which pronouns you want to use can be very nerve-wrecking. Especially if you don't know what you want, or if you don't know whether you want to change your pronouns at all. The most important thing is that you do what you feel comfortable with.

- You don't have to change your pronouns for everyone all at once. It is okay to try it out with a small group first.
- Equally, you don't have to choose a label, or a name, or do things that other people may already be doing. Keep to your own pace, do what feels right for you.
- Contrary to what was said earlier in this guide, it is never compulsory to record your pronouns anywhere. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, do not do it.



# A.S.V.Gay and gender

## BEING ABLE TO BE YOURSELF IS MOST IMPORTANT

At A.S.V.Gay it is important that you can be yourself.

- Previously, we asked for your gender when registering.

At first there were only three options

(man/woman/other). In 2021 this has been changed to an open question, where you can fill in how you identify yourself. If you feel that there is still something in the administration that you would like to change, please send an email to [secretaris@asvgay.nl](mailto:secretaris@asvgay.nl).

- Do you like to chill with other people who are trans, non-binary, gender-questioning or gender non-conforming? Then we have the group Trans+! They organise fun activities throughout the year. You can become a member twice a year. For more information visit [asvgay.nl](http://asvgay.nl).

- Do you want to talk to someone? Our confidants are ready for you! They offer a listening ear. Everything you tell them stays between you. You can reach them via [vertrouwenspersoon@asvgay.nl](mailto:vertrouwenspersoon@asvgay.nl). However, they are not professional counsellors. You can find more information about professional assistance on the right.

# Want to know more?

## INTERESTING WEBSITES

- [Transgenderinfo.nl](http://Transgenderinfo.nl): a website with a lot of information about being trans.
- [Transgendersamsterdam.nl](http://Transgendersamsterdam.nl): a platform which organises fun activities in Amsterdam.
- [Transamsterdam.nl](http://Transamsterdam.nl): A trans organisation in Amsterdam, focused on art, culture and lifestyle.
- Transvisie: interest representation.
- [Transmagazine.nl](http://Transmagazine.nl): an online magazine.
- Transunited: netwerk focused on emancipation, mostly BPOC.
- [Mindkorrelatie.nl/0900 1450](http://Mindkorrelatie.nl/09001450): for anonymous, professional help for mental health.
- [113.nl/0800 0113](http://113.nl/08000113): are you at a loss? Call them for professional help.

# Example sentences

## IN PRACTICE

Practice is always good. Try to complete the following sentences with neutral words: they/them. The last two sentences show that other neutral words are also needed to indicate people. The answers are below.

1. Ezra will be here in a minute. ... forgot ... coat.
2. I will ask Casey if .... are coming.
3. Robin still needs to pick up ... package.
4. If Marley joins for dinner, would you ask ... what ... favourite dish is?
5. Dante is the .... of their mother.
6. Because this is our six month anniversary, I bought a gift for my ....

1. They/their
2. they
3. their
4. them/their
5. child
6. partner