

Gender specific vocabulary**Warmer**

Tell your partner about your weekend or the weekend of someone you know without saying who you are speaking about, e.g. "They went to a craft fair". They will try to guess the gender of the person you are talking about.

Are any of the things you mentioned more common with one gender or the other? Are any exclusive to one or the other?

How do you think your weekend might have been different if you had been a woman/ if you had been a man?

Vocabulary

Before and/or after the activities below, work together with someone and try to write words or expressions which are specific to just one gender like "hostess" in the boxes below

Words and expressions only used to talk about men	Words and expressions only used to talk about women

Gender specific language

Which words or expressions below are used to talk just or mainly about men (M) and which are used just or mainly to talk about women (W)?

1. bikini/ swimming trunks
2. purse/ wallet
3. boobs / moobs
4. cleavage/ hairy chest
5. stepfather/ stepmother
6. father in law/ mother in law
7. master/ mistress
8. trophy wife/ toy boy
9. fiancé/ fiancée
10. her indoors – my trouble and strife/ my old man
11. widow/ widower
12. a player – a womaniser - a ladykiller – playboy/ a slapper – loose – easy
13. bachelor/ spinster – bachelorette
14. butler/ chambermaid
15. witch / wizard
16. Mr / Mrs
17. Madam / Sir
18. male chauvinist/ man hater
19. gentlemanly/ ladylike
20. a hen night/ a stag night
21. butch/ macho
22. effeminate – camp/ feminine
23. lad – laddish/ lass – ladette

Which one of the phrases below can be used to talk about both men and women (B)? Is the other used just or mainly to talk about men (M) or about women (W)?

1. bra/ vest
2. a dress/ clothes
3. blouse/ shirt
4. high heels/ Cuban heels
5. kilt/ skirt
6. shorts/ showing some leg – hot pants
7. nightdress/ pyjamas
8. knickers/ pants
9. leggings/ tights – stockings
10. lingerie / underwear
11. suit/ trouser suit
12. low cut top/ V necked top
13. accessories/ jewellery
14. handbag/ shoulder bag
15. chain/ necklace
16. bunches/ ponytail
17. a (dizzy) blonde/ fair haired
18. lipstick/ lip salve

19. beer belly/ chubby
20. pear shaped/ spare tyre
21. pecs/ chest
22. bare-chested/ topless
23. *facial hair/ moustache*
24. curvy/ muscular
25. *ugly/ unglamorous*
26. elegant/ glamorous
27. *good looking/ stunning*
28. chiselled good looks/ pretty
29. *ordinary looking/ plain – mousy*
30. *gold digger/ social climber*
31. spouse/ wife
32. husband/ partner
33. brothers/ siblings
34. *blue collar / pink collar*
35. homemaker / housewife
36. actor/ actress
37. air stewardess/ flight attendant
38. *maid/ servant*
39. police officer/ WPC
40. *host/ hostess*
41. *male nurse/ nurse*
42. *manager/ manageress*
43. *governor/ governess*
44. headmistress/ head teacher
45. server/ waitress
46. *a Filipina/ Filipino*
47. a guy – chap – fella/ guys
48. a tomboy/ girly
49. *chicks/ guys*
50. he/ (s)he
51. hero/ heroine
52. lesbian/ LGBT
53. mankind/ men
54. *moody/ PMT*
55. *menopausal/ late middle-aged*
56. cologne/ perfume
57. aftershave/ deodorant

Discussion

- Do the differences above reflect any differences in society?
- Are any of the words negative? Does that show anything about attitudes to gender?
- The words in italics have different connotations. Pick a few and discuss the differences in connotation until you can make general points about men and women in society.
- Are there any similar gender distinctions in your language to any of the above? What does that tell us about the position of men and women in your country?

Suggested answers

1. bikini – women/ swimming trunks – men
2. purse – women/ wallet – men
3. boobs – women/ moobs - men
4. *cleavage – women/ hairy chest – men*
5. *stepfather – men/ stepmother – women*
6. *father in law – men/ mother in law – women*
7. *master – men/ mistress – women*
8. *trophy wife/ toy boy – men*
9. fiancé - men/ fiancée – women
10. *her indoors – my trouble and strife – women/ my old man - men*
11. widow – women/ widower – men
12. *a player – a womaniser – a ladykiller – playboy – men/ a slapper – loose – easy – women*
13. *bachelor – men/ spinster – bachelorette – women*
14. *butler – men/ chambermaid – women*
15. *witch – women/ wizard – men*
16. *Mr - men/ Mrs – women*
17. *Madam – women/ Sir – men*
18. male chauvinist - men/ man hater – women
19. *gentlemanly – men/ ladylike – women*
20. a hen night – women/ a stag night – men
21. *butch – women/ macho – men*
22. effeminate – camp – men/ feminine – women
23. *lad – laddish – men/ lass – ladette – women*

1. bra – women/ vest – both
2. a dress – women/ clothes – both
3. blouse – women/ shirt – both
4. high heels – women/ Cuban heels – both
5. kilt – both/ skirt – women
6. *shorts – both/ showing some leg – hot pants – women*
7. nightdress – women/ pyjamas – both
8. knickers – women/ pants – both
9. leggings – both/ tights – stockings – women
10. *lingerie – women/ underwear – both*
11. suit – both/ trouser suit – women
12. *low cut top – women/ V necked top – men*
13. accessories – women/ jewellery – both
14. handbag – women/ shoulder bag – both
15. chain – both/ necklace – women
16. bunches – women/ ponytail – both
17. a (dizzy) blonde – women/ fair haired – both
18. lipstick – women/ lip salve – both
19. beer belly – men/ chubby – both
20. pear shaped – women/ spare tyre – both
21. pecs – men/ chest – both

22. bare chested – both/ topless - women
23. *facial hair* – both/ *moustache* – men
24. curvy - women/ muscular – both
25. *ugly* – both/ *unglamorous* – women
26. elegant – both/ glamorous – women
27. *good looking* – both/ *stunning* - women
28. chiselled good looks – men/ pretty – both
29. *ordinary looking* – both/ *plain* – *mousy* – women
30. *gold digger* - women/ *social climber* – both
31. spouse – both/ wife – women
32. husband – men/ partner – both
33. brothers – men/ siblings - both
34. *blue collar* -both/ *pink collar* – women
35. homemaker – both/ housewife – women
36. actor – both/ actress – women
37. air stewardess – women/ flight attendant – both
38. *maid* – women/ *servant* – both
39. police officer – both/ WPC – women
40. *host* – both/ *hostess* – women
41. *male nurse* – men/ *nurse* – both
42. *manager* – both/ *manageress* -- women
43. *governor* – both/ *governess* – women
44. headmistress – women/ head teacher – men
45. server – both/ waitress – women
46. *a Filipina* - women/ *Filipino* – both
47. a guy – chap – fella – men/ guys – both
48. a tomboy – women/ girly – both
49. *chicks* - women/ *guys* – both
50. he - men/ (s)he - both
51. hero – both/ heroine – women
52. lesbian – women/ LGBT – both
53. mankind – both/ men – men
54. *moody* – both/ *PMT* – women
55. *menopausal* - women/ *late middle-aged* – both
56. cologne – both/ perfume – women
57. aftershave - men/ deodorant – both