

# What gender is your voice?

There are several aspects of a person's voice that give us clues as to the gender of the speaker or singer. Many voices show traits from all along the voice and communication gender spectrum.



## Masculine

Low pitch

Dark resonance

Monotone

Percussive

Back articulation

Emphasis with volume

## Feminine

High pitch

Bright resonance

Melodic inflection

Smooth

Forward articulation

Emphasis with pitch

How do you express your gender with your voice?  
How do your students express their gender with their voices?

## I-ify and and ʌ-ify

Gender perception in voice can be influenced by using brighter or darker vowels. Use bright vowels like /i/ to influence a listener to hear a brighter, more feminine sound by bringing the tongue high and forward. Use dark vowels like /ʌ/ to influence a listener to hear a darker, more masculine sound by bringing the tongue low and back.

Try singing the first phrase of “Caro Mio Ben” with all the vowels replaced by /i/ or /ʌ/.

# Terminology for trainers of transgender voices

It may seem that the terminology among queer and transgender communities is always changing and hard to keep up with, but in fact, the terminology to describe trans identities and trans experiences is simply becoming more accurate and complete.

Transgender (adj): describes a person for whom gender identity is different than the sex they were assigned at birth. (Abbrev: trans)

*Problematic: Transgendered, Transgenders, Transgendering, Tranny, Transvestite, Transsexual*

Cisgender (adj): describes a person for whom gender identity is congruent with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth. (Abbrev: cis)

Gender dysphoria: the feeling that one's personal emotional and psychological gender experience is not congruent with their assigned sex.

Gender identity: the gender(s) someone knows themselves to be. This could be male, female, both, neither, fluid, or something in between.

Gender expression: the outward expression of someone's gender through clothing, appearance, voice, gestures, or behavior. This could be masculine, feminine, androgynous, gender nonconforming, etc.

Gender perception: the way someone is perceived through gender by the rest of the world.

Trans Woman or Trans Feminine Person (noun): someone who is transgender and identifies as woman or a feminine person.

*Problematic: Male-To-Female, MtF*

Trans Man or Trans Masculine Person (noun): someone who is transgender and identifies as a man or a masculine person.

*Problematic: Female-To-Male, FtM*

Non-Binary (adj): describes a person who does not identify as only a man or only a woman. (Abbrev: NB or Enby)

Trans or trans/gnc: abbreviation for umbrella terms to describe people who are not cisgender.



## The Singing Teacher's Guide to Transgender Voices

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[facebook.com/The-Singing-Teachers-Guide-to-Transgender-Voices](https://www.facebook.com/The-Singing-Teachers-Guide-to-Transgender-Voices)