

Glossary of Activism Words

Here is a list of words that you might hear when learning about activism.

Some of these terms can have complex meanings and can mean different things in different situations and to different people, but we've added simple explanations to help you start your journey into learning about activism.

This is only a short list to get you started. Try downloading our version and adding your own words to the table at the bottom of the guide

Word	Meaning
Ableism	When people are treated poorly, excluded, and/or denied goods, services, and resources because they have disabilities.
Activism	Activism can take a wide range of forms from writing letters to newspapers or politicians, political *campaigning, *rallies, street *marches, *strikes, sit-ins, and hunger strikes.
Ally	Being an ally means to be an active supporter of a group of people (that you don't belong to yourself) who are experiencing *inequality. Being an active supporter means learning about their history and *cause, stepping aside and giving space for their voice to be heard or speaking out when you notice prejudiced opinions or behaviour against that group.
Ageism	When people are *discriminated against because of their age
Banner	A long strip of material with a message written on it.
Campaign	Working in an organised and active way towards a particular goal - usually a political or social goal.
Cause	A particular goal, such as a big political issue, that someone is committed to and prepared to defend.
Chant	A repeated rhythmic phrase, typically one shouted or sung in unison by a crowd.
Democracy	A form of government in which the people choose who governs them by voting in an *election. Democracy requires freedom of speech, inclusiveness and equality.

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Demonstration	Action taken by a large group or collection of groups of people for a political or other type of *cause; it often involves walking in a mass *march and either begins or ends by gathering to *rally or to hear speakers.
Discrimination	The unequal or unfair treatment of a person based upon some personal characteristic - such as gender, race or disability.
Diversity	Having a range of people with various racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience, and interests together in the same place.
Election	We hold a General Election in Britain to decide, by voting, which political party will govern the country and a Local Election to decide which *MP will represent our local area.
Environmentalism	Concern about and action aimed at protecting the environment.
Feminism	Movements toward full social, political, economic equality of all human beings. There are many different types of Feminism.
Homophobia	This word covers a range of negative attitudes and feelings toward homosexuality or people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian, gay, bisexual.
Inequality	Social inequality is when different groups of people in society are not given equal chances in life - they do not get the same opportunities, punishments and rewards just because of who they happen to be (their race, gender or if they are differently abled for example).
March	Walk along public roads in an organised procession as a form of *protest.
Megaphone	Portable cone-shaped instrument that amplifies sound.
MP	Member of Parliament. Every place in the UK has a MP that works for the people who live in that area. They work for you and even if you're too young to vote you can still email, or write to them.
Nonviolent civil disobedience	A way of *protesting or *demonstrating by not obeying the law but without being violent - for example, blocking a road and stopping traffic; or going on a particular *march that has been banned by government.
Oppression	A situation in which people are governed in an unfair and cruel way and prevented from having opportunities and freedom.
Placards	A message written on a rectangular piece of cardboard, and attached to a stick.
Privilege	Advantages and power awarded to specific groups of people over others.

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Protest	To publicly state your disagreement with something important and serious that is effecting people's lives
Racism	When a group of people are treated unfairly because of their race - the word "race" is used to describe people based on their physical appearance, often using the color of their skin to identify them.
Rally	Another word used to describe a form of *protest - it means a group of people coming together in support of a political *campaign.
Sexism	When people are *discriminated against because of their sex
Strike	When a group of employees refuse to work as a form of *protest, typically in an attempt to make changes to their working conditions.
Take to the Streets	To gather together in the public streets of a town or city - usually to *protest.
Transphobia	The fear, hatred, disbelief, or mistrust of people who are transgender, thought to be transgender, or whose gender expression doesn't conform to traditional gender roles.

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Additional words that you have found

Word	Meaning