

AN AU.D.'S GUIDE TO AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

What is American Sign Language (ASL)?

American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual language that relies on the use of the hands, body, and face to communicate. ASL is not just a system of signs - it is a full, complete language. ASL is an extremely important part of Deaf culture in America, and has a rich history of its development and use.

- ASL and English are NOT the same!
- ASL has its own grammatical features independent from any spoken language (such as spoken English)
- There is no one “universal” sign language
- There is a difference between Deaf and deaf!
 - Deaf - cultural
 - deaf - medical
- Countries may have their own sign languages, and certain regions have their own dialects

What should audiologists know about ASL?

Audiologists work with people with varying hearing differences, and some may use ASL as their primary method of communication.

It's recommended that Au.Ds:

- learn about the history and culture of the Deaf community
- modify test protocols if necessary to ensure equal linguistic access
- provide treatment options carefully and without bias or assumptions
- provide accessible care to help members of the Deaf community feel more comfortable. This may look like:
 - Providing ASL interpreters virtually or in person depending on personal preference
 - Using assistive listening devices (ALDs)

RESOURCES

Deaf vs. deaf



Assessing Au.Ds Working with Deaf Patients



ASL Overview



How to Better Serve the Deaf Community



Integrating Deaf Culture into Audiology



HELLO Lab

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