

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN

Handshapes used in Auslan

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri)








































- Our understanding of the intricacies of the handshapes used in signed languages is really just beginning. The human hand is able to make a vast array of possible shapes. Even so, sign language tends to use only a limited number of handshapes to create the total number of signs used in a given sign language.
- More systematic research is required before the exact number of handshapes needed to describe the signs of Auslan can be specified. This is largely because of the complexity of the productive nature of signs (for example, the “depicting” signs) and the influence of other signed languages and their handshapes.
- At present, there are **sixty-two handshapes** listed in the Signs of Australia dictionary of Auslan (Johnston, 1998). Of these sixty-two handshapes, **thirty-seven are the core handshapes** used and the other twenty-five are seen as non-significant variations of these (the exception to this is with productive signing where small differences can represent a different and precise meaning).
- **Some handshapes in Auslan are used much more often than others.** This is seen in the 1998 edition of the Auslan dictionary where four of the handshapes are used for over 50 percent of all the signs. These four most commonly used handshapes are “pointing”, “flat hand with fingers together”, “flat hand with fingers apart” and “fist”.
- The fifteen most frequent handshapes account for 80 percent of the signs in the 1998 Auslan dictionary. The next twenty-two handshapes account for the remaining 20 percent of signs. (Six of the handshapes occur in only 1 percent of all the Auslan signs in the Auslan dictionary!)
- The most obvious reasons for the differences in how much a handshape is used is that the signs in signed languages need to be clearly seen by other people (perception) and produced easily by the signer (production), allowing communication to occur quickly and efficiently.

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Table of Handshapes used in Auslan

(From "The Survival Guide to AUSLAN" by Johnston and Schembri, 2003)

Animal		Flat okay		One-hand letter-k	
Bad		Flat round		Open spoon	
Bent flat		Flick		Plane	
Bent gun		Good		Point	
Bent two		Gun		Round	
Claw		Hook		Small	
Closed		I-L-Y		Spoon	
Cup		Key		Thick	
Eight		Letter-c		Three	
Eleven		Letter-m		Twelve	
Fist		Middle		Two	
Five		Okay		Wish	
Flat		One-hand letter-d		Write	

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Established and Productive Signs

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri)

Established Signs

- These signs are “frozen” and form the basis of the vocabulary listed in dictionaries of Auslan.
- These signs are frequently used and highly standardized.

Productive Signs

- Productive signs make use of a much larger and more varied selection of locations and movements than established signs.
- These signs are actively created by signers as they put together combinations of meaningful units. This explains why these are called “productive” signs.
- These “meaningful units” can be used to extend or modify the meaning of established signs.
- Examples of meaningful units are: handshape, hand orientation, sign location and movement, nonmanual features, rate, stress, duration and repetition. (See “Structure of Signs in Auslan” Handout).
- Productive signs combine different meaningful units in different combinations as the need arises to produce signs that may have never been signed before but can be understood in a particular context.
- This productive aspect of Auslan is fully integrated into everyday interactions between signers, but most noticeable during creative story-telling. In any given signed conversation there is most probably a significant number of signs which have been created or re-created on the spot as required by the topic or context of the discussion.
- Some productive signs may become standardized over time eg: “MEET” (two individuals approaching one another).
- The number of locations, movements and spatial arrangements of signs is potentially unlimited.

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Fingerspelling

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri)

- Fingerspelling is using your hands to represent the letters of a writing system. In English, this means using 26 different hand configurations to represent the 26 letters of the English alphabet. As such, fingerspelling is not a signed language in and of itself, rather it is a manual code for representing the letters of the English alphabet.
- It appears that fingerspelling was first used by hearing people to represent the written form of spoken language, however fingerspelling is now completely integrated into natural signing.
- When fingerspelling a word, the word is spelled out letter by letter.
- Fingerspelling is generally mixed in with signing and is especially used for spelling nouns (place names, people’s names, objects’ names) or for spelling words that don’t have a sign. The only time fingerspelling might be exclusively used is in an educational setting such as the Rochester Method, or with deaf/blind people (or in very dark lighting conditions) whereby the letters are spelled onto the hand of the deaf/blind person.
- Fingerspelling can also be used even when there is a sign for the word. This is likely to happen when wanting to emphasise a word, to impress someone, or to hide meaning from an onlooker who can’t read fingerspelling (such as a child).
- There is more than one fingerspelling code for the English alphabet used in Australia:
 - By far the most widely known and used is the two-handed alphabet that has its origins in Britain
 - Less widely known is the one-handed (Irish) alphabet that is gradually fading out as the signing population ages (since it’s discontinued use in education during 1875-1950’s).
 - The one-handed American alphabet on the other hand, is increasingly known by deaf Australians, especially younger people or those who travel overseas frequently, because of the prestige of ASL (American Sign Language) around the world.
- In the rapid fingerspelling of native signers of Auslan, not all the letters of a word are fingerspelled and the parts blend together, so it is often only the overall sign shape that is recognised, not the shapes of the individual letter signs themselves.

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INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN

Do's and Don'ts for learning Auslan

DO:

- Relax!
- Have fun!
- Be flexible
- Leave any inhibitions at home (you need to become comfortable with using your body, especially making facial expressions. You will need to touch your body and face for many signs)
- Take risks (you'll probably make a few mistakes but that's okay)
- Make eye contact when communicating
- Get ready to co-ordinate visual, spatial and motor skills
- Aim for fluid movement so your signs will flow
- Copy the teacher (but don't "mirror" them)
- Use your memory to remember signs and where you have located objects in your signing space
- Keep your signs within the "signing space" in front of your body

DON'T:

- Assume
- Be patronising (you are no better than a deaf person just because you can hear)
- Exaggerate lip movements
- Imitate the sounds deaf people make
- Hide your eyes or look away when communicating
- Ask other students when you can't remember a sign (it's better to ask the teacher)
- Disagree with the teacher or correct their signing (you may have learnt a different sign or a variation of a sign from someone else – consider this to be part of the rich diversity of Auslan).

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INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN

Do's and Don'ts for communicating with deaf people

DO:

- get the deaf person's attention first (touch them on the shoulder, flash the lights or stamp on the floor) – if they're not looking at you then they're not "listening" to you.
- ask how they would prefer to communicate (lip-reading, body movements, gesturing, signing, with an interpreter, writing etc)
- position yourself slightly further away than normal speaking distance so all gestures can be seen in the visual field (Note: if the person is hearing impaired rather than deaf, position yourself at a normal speaking distance).
- maintain eye contact
- be at the same eye level if possible
- use visual cues
- use simple language and gestures
- speak clearly, normally and at a normal rate (for the benefit of hard of hearing people you can speak slightly louder than normal)
- check you've been understood
- try rephrasing or communicating in a different way if not understood
- reduce background noise (hard of hearing only)
- have good lighting without light shining into their eyes

DON'T:

- assume
- be patronising (remember our attitude can be their greatest challenge)
- chew, eat or cover your mouth or face while talking
- shout or exaggerate lip movements
- repeat the same thing over and over again
- speak directly into their ear
- hide your eyes with sunglasses

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Fingerspelling Alphabet



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I



J



K



L



M



N



O



P



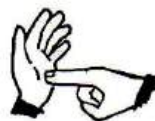
Q



R



S



T



U



V



W



X



Y



Z

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INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Fingerspelling Tips

- The types of words that are fingerspelled are predictable and most commonly will be nouns (names of people, places and things for which there is no sign).
- Context helps to anticipate what word is coming next and can help to anticipate what the word might be.
- After seeing only 2-3 letters of a word our mind starts working out what the word might be. This is made easier by the rules of English spelling which lead us to expect only certain letter combinations.
- Deaf people's signing includes about 10% fingerspelling (average).
- Older deaf people tend to fingerspell more than younger people.
- The most commonly fingerspelled words are: SO, TO, IF, BUT, DO, AT.
- Some signs are based on fingerspelling: FF (father), MM (mother).
- With informal signing, signers often fully fingerspell an English word when they first introduce it into the conversation, but then later simply fingerspell the first letter of the word to refer back to it (especially with names of people and places).
- Some single letter can have a whole word meaning if they are used in the right context with the right lip movement eg: YEAR ("Y"), CENT ("C"), WEEK ("W"), MONTH/METRE/MINUTE ("M")
- Handshapes for a single letter may vary (eg: B and C) depending on the surrounding letters.
- When practising fingerspelling, practise with words you would spell in real life.
- Keep your lip-movements in sync with your fingerspelling.
- Practise! Practise! Practise!

Fingerspelling Production and Reception

- Fingerspelling should be fluent – one letter flowing on to the next.
- The rhythmic cluster of letters in their syllables makes patterns that are much easier for others to read (rather than letter by letter).
- Sometimes in rapid fingerspelling, not all of the letters are spelt. This is fine as long as the overall pattern of the word is maintained.
- Disjointed fingerspelling breaks the pattern of the word (and makes it hard for someone else to read it).

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INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Resources

Dictionaries:

Signs of Australia: a new dictionary of Auslan (the sign language of the Australian deaf community) / edited by Trevor Johnston, illustrations by Peter Wilkin & Trevor Johnston. Parramatta, N.S.W.: North Rocks Press, 1998 Rev. ed. Location: REF/NQ419.0321/2 State Reference Library (not available for inter-library loan)

Signs of Australia / edited by Trevor Johnston. Computer file (Auslan dictionary on CD-Rom) [Sydney, N.S.W.]: Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, c1997. Location: RAV/DISC 10/370 State Reference Library (not available for inter-library loan)

Deaf persons in the Arts and Sciences: a biographical dictionary / Harry G. Lang and Bonnie Meath-Lang Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1995 Location: REF/N920.00871/1 State Reference Library (not available for inter-library loan)

Books on Sign Language Linguistics:

Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics. / Trevor Johnston & Adam Schembri, Cambridge University Press, 2007

Books and Videotapes on Deaf Culture:

The resources listed below are held at the State Library of New South Wales and are available for inter-library loan through your local public library:

Seeing Voices: a journey into the world of the Deaf / Oliver Sacks Berkeley: University of California Press, c1989. Location: 305.908162/2 State Reference Library

When the Mind Hears: a history of the Deaf / Harlan Lane New York: Random House, c1984 1st ed. Location: N362.420973/1 State Reference Library

Deaf Transitions: images and origins of Deaf families, Deaf communities, and Deaf identities / Mairian Corker. London; Bristol, Pa: J. Kingsley Publishers, 1996 Location: N362.42/18 State Reference Library

No Music by Request: a portrait of the Gorman family / [by] June Epstein Sydney: Collins, 1980. Location: E362.420924/G671/1 State Reference Library

A Journey into the Deaf-World / Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister, Ben Bahan San Diego, Calif: DawnSignPress, c1996 Location: DISABILITY/N305.908162/13 State Reference Library

The Mask of Benevolence: disabling the Deaf community / Harlan Lane New York: Knopf, 1992 1st ed. Location: DISABILITY/N305.908162/5 State Reference Library

In a Small Valley / written and directed by Dennis K. Smith [Sydney]: Open Channel and Byzantine Productions: Video Classroom [distributor], c1996 Location: CVID/419/3 State Reference Library (captioned video)

Everyone here spoke sign language: hereditary deafness on Martha's Vineyard / Nora Ellen Groce Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, c1985 Location: N362.4209744/1 State Reference Library

Signs of Life: Australia's Deaf community / directed by Cameron Davie Brisbane: Produced by AV Production Unit, Brisbane College of Advanced Education, Deafness Resources Project, 1989. Location: CVID/305.908162/1 State Reference Library (captioned video)

The Story of Betty Steel: Deaf convict and pioneer / Jan Branson & Don Miller Petersham, N.S.W.: Deafness Resources Australia, 1995 Location: DISABILITY/N994.020092/S813.5/1 State Reference Library

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Resources (continued...)

Books and videos can only be borrowed by going to your local public library and asking them to organise an interlibrary loan. Otherwise you can use the books and videos in the library.

Videotapes on Auslan:

The resources listed below are held at the State Library of New South Wales and are available for interlibrary loan through your local public library.

Fingerspelling in Auslan (Australian Sign Language): student exercises / produced by National Institute for Deaf Studies and Sign Language Research, La Trobe and Monash Universities Bundoora, Vic.: The Institute, 1995
Location: VB9900 State Reference Library (video)

Auslan myths, legends, tales anecdotes, and other stories: beginners [Melbourne]: National Institute for Deaf Studies and Sign Language Research, La Trobe and Monash Universities, c1995 Location: VB9852 State Reference Library (video)

Sign On [Melbourne]: National Institute for Deaf Studies and Sign Language Research, c1996 (Video recording)
Location: VB9899 State Reference Library (video)

Auslan 1 Strathfield, N.S.W.: Adult Education Centre for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired Persons, 1991 (Video recording)
Location: VB9792 State Reference Library (video). Location: VB9791 State Reference Library (video)

Introduction to Auslan Level 1 Bundoora, Vic.: La Trobe University Language Centre, c1992. Location: CVID/371.9127/4 State Reference Library (captioned video)

Introduction to Auslan level 2 / presenter Robert Adam, Jennifer Toms [et al.] Bundoora, Vic.: NID, La Trobe University Language Centre, c1995 Location: VB8727 State Reference Library (video)

Understanding Auslan: Australian Sign Language Melbourne: Fresh Films [production company] : Telecom Australia [distributor], c1992 Location: CVID/371.9127/5 State Reference Library (captioned video)

Websites:

Deaf Australia: www.deafau.org.au

Auslan Signbank: www.auslan.org.au

The Deaf Society: www.deafsocietynsw.org.au

State Library:

The books that you see on the shelves in the library are only a small selection of what is available. Most of the resources are kept in stack (a storage area below the library). To get these other resources you need to use the catalogue, fill in a stack slip and take it to the Requests Desk.

If you've never used the library's catalogue before go straight to the Information Desk and ask the librarian for help.

Opening hours of the State Reference Library:

Monday to Friday 9am to 9pm, Sunday and Saturday 11am to 5pm.

Address: Macquarie Street, Sydney. Phone: (02) 9273 1414

The State Library's catalogue is also available on the Internet at: www.slsw.gov.au/cat/

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AUSLAN VOCABULARY

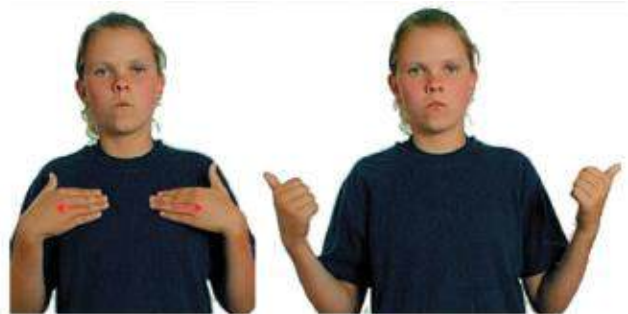
Lesson 1

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Hello



How are you?



Good



Well



Bad



Sick



Fingerspelling

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 1 (continued...)



Voice-off



Who



Auslan

OR



Auslan

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

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INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

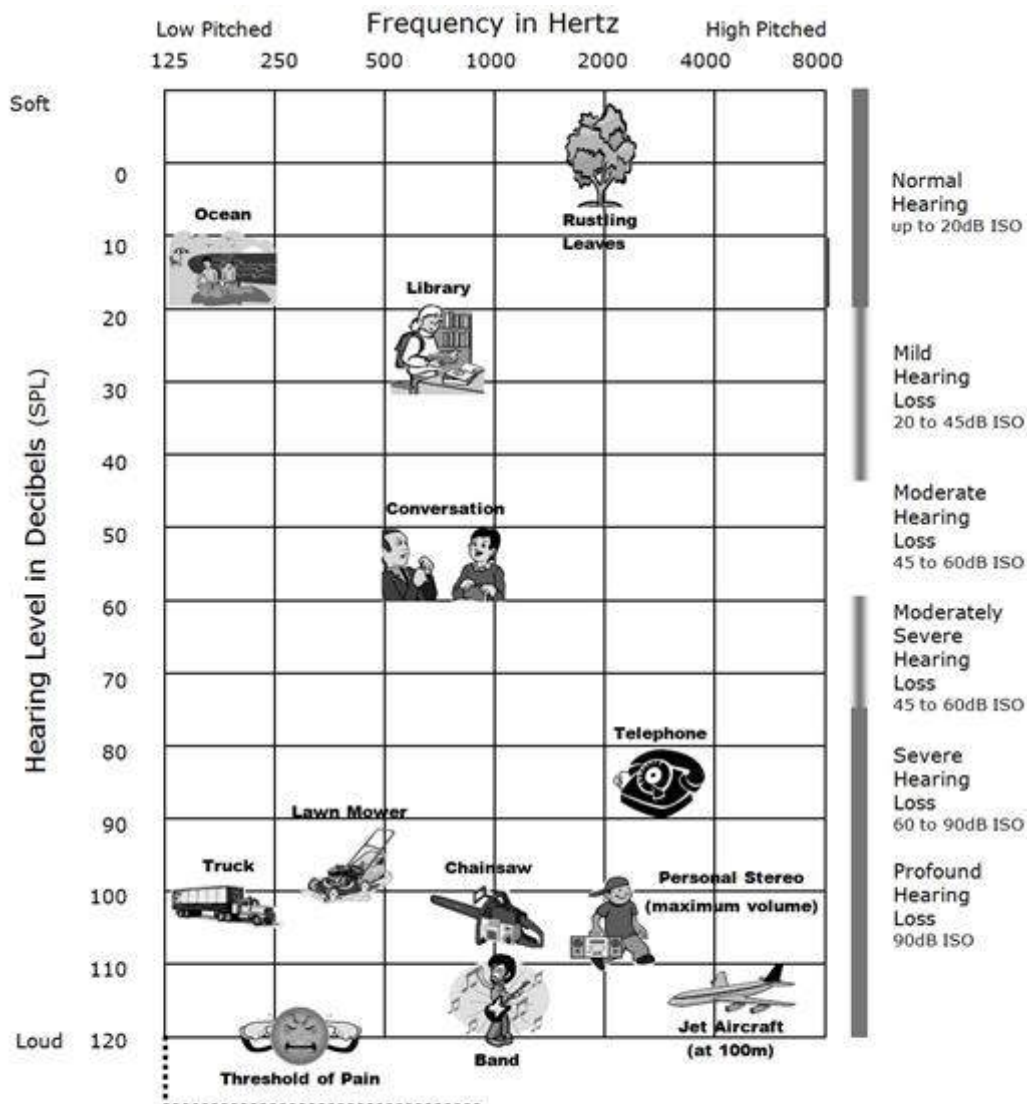
“Deaf” or “Hard of Hearing”

(An interplay of audiogram and attitude)

Audiograms:

An audiogram records someone’s degree of hearing loss. Hearing level is recorded in decibels at specific frequencies. The decibel (dB) is a measure of intensity (volume soft to loud). The frequency (hertz) is a measure of pitch (low to high).

Frequency and Intensity of Familiar Sounds:



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INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Deaf, deaf or hard of hearing

Deaf:

Deaf (with a capital D) is used to describe those people who use Auslan (Australian Sign Language) to communicate, and identify themselves as members of the signing Deaf community. These people may also identify themselves as "Culturally Deaf." They are more likely to have been born deaf or become deaf early in life, are pre-lingually deaf and use sign language as a primary or preferred communication mode.

deaf:

deaf (with a small letter, d) is a general term used to describe people who have a physical condition of hearing loss of varying degrees irrespective of which communication mode they use such as Auslan and lip reading for example.

Hard of hearing:

Hard of hearing is the term used to describe those who have a hearing loss, usually acquired post-lingually and whose communication mode is usually by speech. This term also covers those people who have become deafened later in their life.

Hearing impaired:

A hearing impairment (HI) is a full or partial decrease in the ability to understand sounds. The term "hearing impaired" is often used to refer to those who are deaf but it is viewed negatively by members of the Deaf community who prefer the terms "Deaf" and "hard of hearing". The "hearing impaired" term is incorrectly intended to cover Deaf and hard of hearing individuals under a single category. Deaf and hard of hearing persons in many countries reject this definition because it fails to recognise any distinction between these two groups. Deaf Australia uses the "hard of hearing" term in this case.

(Adapted from the Deaf Australia website, <http://www.deafau.org.au/info/terminology.php>)

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Non-manual features of Auslan

(From Johnston and Schembri, "Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics" p97)

Table 4.7 Non-manual features.

Body part	Action	Body part	Action		
Head	Shaking	Mouth (cont.)	Poking out the tongue		
	Nodding		Protruding the lips		
	Turning to the left		Rounding the lips		
	Turning to the right		Pressing the lips together		
	Tilting to the left		Drawing the lips back		
	Tilting to the right		Stretching the lips		
	Tilting backwards		Turning up the corners of the mouth		
	Tilting forwards		Turning down the corners of the mouth		
	Moving backwards		Pushing the tongue into the cheek		
	Moving forwards		Pushing the tongue down below the lower lip		
	Moving side to side		Biting the lip		
	Eyebrows		Raising		Sucking in air
			Lowering		Blowing out air
Eyes	Closing	Cheeks	Puffing out		
	Opening		Sucking in		
	Blinking	Shoulders	Hunching		
	Widening		Moving forwards		
	Narrowing		Moving backwards		
	Gazing forward and down		Turning to the left		
	Gazing forward and upwards		Turning to the left		
	Gazing to the left		Turning to the right		
Nose	Wrinkling	Body	Leaning forwards		
			Leaning backwards		
Mouth	Opening		Leaning sideways		
	Closing				

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Structure of Signs in Auslan

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri)

- The structure of a sign in Auslan has four main aspects:
 - Handshape: the shape of the hand used in the sign.
 - Orientation: the direction of the palm and fingers.
 - Location: the position of the hand in the signing space.
 - Movement: the way the hand(s) move through space.

- A significant change in one of these aspects may alter the meaning of the sign or result in a completely different sign. (eg: CAR and DRIVE – the only difference being the direction of movement)

- Other significant aspects include:
 - Stress and duration
 - Rate of repetition
 - Non-manual features (facial expression, eye gaze, mouth gestures, mouthing of spoken words, movements of the head and body).

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Auslan: Statistics & Interesting Facts

(From Johnston and Schembri, "Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics")

- The prevalence of severe to profound deafness in developed societies is estimated to be about 0.1% of the population (about 1 in every 1,000 people).
- In Australia this would mean there are approximately 20,000 deaf Auslan users. (As in 2005 there were approximately 20 million people in Australia).
- This is consistent with a 1991 survey by Hyde and Power which suggested Australia has approximately 15,000 signing deaf people (with an additional approximately 15,000 hearing Auslan signers).
- Native Auslan signers are estimated to be approximately 5-10% of the Deaf Community.
- A much larger proportion of the population (approximately 5%) have some hearing loss (mostly mild or moderate and acquired during adulthood – due mainly to disease, ageing or regular exposure to loud noise).
- For most adults in the Deaf Community, Auslan is acquired later in life once they become more
- independent and discover the signing Deaf Community.
- Deaf people value membership of their community and 80-90% of deaf people who get married marry other deaf people.
- Most deaf couples have hearing children (90%).
- Most deaf children have hearing parents(90%).
- The rare deaf children with deaf parents are like royalty in the Deaf Community and are often envied by those deaf people with hearing parents.
- In most cases, Auslan is not passed on from parent to child but often from child to child (peers).
- Auslan was only recognised as being a language in the 1980's.

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INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN

The Deaf Community: Membership

The Deaf Community:

The Deaf Community is a network of people who share a language and culture and a history of common experiences – similar to an ethnic community. The Deaf Community is well organized with national, state and local networks of sporting, recreation, social, special interest and advocacy groups.

Membership of the Deaf Community:

The single most unifying factor of the Deaf Community is the use of Auslan (Australian Sign Language), not how deaf a person is. A common assumption is that only severely or profoundly deaf people use Auslan, however many members of the Deaf Community are only moderately deaf and some members of the Deaf Community are actually hearing people (for example hearing children of Deaf adults, known as CODA's, spouses of Deaf people and interpreters). A hearing person who is an accepted member of the Deaf Community will, without exception, use Auslan.

Most Deaf people are effectively bicultural. They interact with both deaf and hearing communities and cultures. However it is true that many deaf people marry other deaf people and spend a large proportion of their social, sporting and leisure time within the Deaf Community where they are understood and accepted and communication is more comfortable.

How big is the Deaf Community?

There are no definitive statistics for how many people belong to the Deaf Community though at this stage the most reliable study (Hyde and Power, 1991) indicates there were 15,400 deaf users of sign language and possible another 15,000 hearing users. Of these it is estimated that as few as 6,500 are native Auslan users (those who have signed from birth or early childhood).

For more information on this topic see the Deaf Australia (DA) website: www.deafau.org.au

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN

Communication Options used by Deaf People

Auslan (Australian Sign Language):

Auslan is the Language of Australia's Deaf Community. This community of some 15,000 deaf people (with many more hearing family members and friends), use Auslan in their daily lives.

Auslan has its roots in British Sign Language (BSL), and to a lesser extent Irish Sign Language. It is different from American and French Sign Languages. Auslan received formal recognition in Australia's National Language Policy (1987).

Auslan is a visually based language that takes full advantage of the use of space, with its own syntax (rules) and vocabulary and the ability to communicate a rich variety of concepts and subtle meanings. Auslan incorporates signs (established and productive), fingerspelling, body movements, facial expression, mouth and eye movements, mime and gesture. The result is communication that is fluent, easy, sophisticated and often very humorous!

Like other languages, there are sometimes different signs for the same concept. These variations which can be confusing for the learner, are evidence of the impact of the rich variety of historical and regional differences on the development of Auslan. Auslan is not a visual copy of English or any other spoken language. Signs are related to concepts - not spoken words (eg the sign for run is different for: I am running a bath, and I am running in a race, your nose is running).

Lipreading (also called Speechreading):

Most deaf people rely on lipreading to a greater or lesser extent. When the dominant method of communication in the wider culture is by speech, deaf people who have lipreading skills have certain advantages.

Lipreading is an extremely complex art. It requires firstly that the person knows the language the other person is speaking. This means that lipreading (except for the simplest words and phrases) is impossible for the young child born deaf who has not yet learned English. Added to this, many sounds look the same on the lips, (eg baby, pay me, maybe). It is estimated that 70% of sounds look like other sounds on the lips. With no sound, lipreading is largely a guessing exercise.

When lipreading, the deaf person does more than watch the lips. He/she looks at facial expression, body language and anything else that provides information about what is being said. It helps if the deaf person knows the person they are lipreading. It helps if the deaf person has other background information about what is being said. The greatest help is if the person has some small amount of hearing. With the help of a powerful hearing aid, many deaf people get enough speech information to make it possible for them to combine lipreading and listening to understand speech to varying extents.

For important situations lipreading is usually an unreliable and inadequate method of communication.

Visually Coded Spoken English (Signed English, Cued Speech):

One of the main goals of the education of deaf students is the teaching of English. Because it is so difficult for a person to learn something he/she can not perceive (especially something as complex as a spoken language), various systems have been developed to make spoken English more visible.

Sign Language 1

Signed English:

Signed English is a system whereby the speaker speaks English, while at the same time signing everything that is said. In this system there is a sign for each English word, and fingerspelling is used to give word endings (eg: ...ing, ...ed, ...s). Signed English has been constructed by educators of the deaf who used signs taken from Auslan as well as making their own signs.

Signed English was commonly used in NSW schools (there is a yellow dictionary of Australasian Signed English), but through time Signed English is slowly phasing out in favour of Auslan. The Talking Hands video programs were made to teach signed English to parents and teachers of deaf children.

Cued Speech:

Because so many sounds look the same on the lips, Cued Speech is a system designed to make sounds more visible on the lips by using handshapes near the face to help identify which sound is being said. There are eight handshapes and four positions in cued speech. It is in no way related to Sign Language.

Cued speech was designed as a learning aid in schools, to teach English, lipreading and speech. It was not intended as a communication system to be used beyond school days. It is not widely used in N.S.W. and if now to be found at all might be amongst the middle aged or older generation of Deaf people within the community.

Contact signing (formerly known as Pidgin Signed English or PSE):

Contact signing is a language system that results from a mixture of the features of Auslan and Signed English and is the communication system often used when members of the Deaf Community communicate in sign with hearing people. Contact signing can also be used between two Deaf people who perhaps have different levels of Auslan fluency.

Contact signing varies depending on the setting, the purpose of the conversation, cultural factors, each person's experience and abilities etc. It is interesting to note the possibility that most deaf signers could be more comfortable and familiar with the mixed signing system of Contact Signing, than a "pure" form of a natural sign language (p41 Johnston and Schembri (2007) "Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics").

Fingerspelling:

Fingerspelling is a code for representing letters of the English alphabet. With a handshape for each letter of the alphabet. It is possible to fingerspell any English word. Fingerspelling is not a sign language.

Fingerspelling is used in Auslan to spell names and words that have no sign and is sometimes used for emphasis. It is used in Signed English to spell word endings as well as names and words that have no sign.

Manual Communication:

Manual Communication means communicating by hand, using signs and fingerspelling. It is not a good way to describe sign language which uses much more than just the hands.

Total Communication:

Total Communication is an educational philosophy that promotes the use of all channels of communication, signing and speech.

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 2

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Number



Where



Hearing



Deaf



No



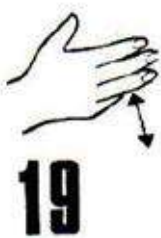
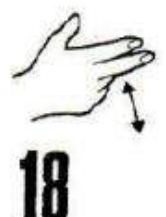
Yes

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Numbers



Taken from: *The Dictionary of Australasian Signs*, Victorian School for Deaf children, Melbourne, 1982

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Perspectives on deafness

Cultural Perspective on deafness:

- Deafness is accepted
- Deafness is seen as a positive part of a person's identity
- Focuses on what deaf people can do
- Visual communication and sign language are encouraged and seen as a valid way of communicating
- English is accepted as a second language
- Deaf people are just as intelligent as hearing people
- Recognise the existence of a Deaf Community

Medical Perspective on Deafness.

- Deafness is seen as a problem to be "cured"
- Emphasis placed on what deaf people can't do (deafness is a deficit which limits ability)
- Sign language is not promoted – emphasis is placed on the development of verbal skills (speech is seen as superior and the most valid method of communication)
- English is forced upon deaf people as their first language
- Deaf people are slow learners with inferior intelligence
- Denies the existence of the Deaf Community (deaf people should be integrated into the hearing world)

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Strategies for Success!

What the Teacher will do:

- Explain what you need to do in a way you will understand.
- Communicate at your level.
- Let you know when it is your turn to sign. (usually by pointing at you)
- Use:
 - TM OHT's
 - TM the whiteboard
 - TM lesson outlines
- Let you know when it is your turn to sign. (usually by pointing at you)

What the students will do:

- Leave any inhibitions at home – take risks!
- NO VOICE (you will learn more and relate better with the teacher if there is no speaking during lessons)
- Put your hand up to indicate you would like to sign something or ask a question.
- Stop what you are doing straight away when the teacher tries to get your attention. (they may do this by flashing the lights or waving their hands or stamping their feet)
- Be patient and help each other. (but no students should be interpreting for the others – remember NO VOICE!)
- If you need to, you can fingerspell.
- Communicate a clear “YES” when you understand. (nod and smile)
- Be assertive when you don't understand and ask for clarification.
- Remember to use “AGAIN”, “PLEASE” and “THANK YOU”.

RELAX! AND HAVE FUN!!!

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Becoming an Auslan Interpreter

(from: http://www.deafsocietynsw.org.au/interpreting/employment_opportunities.html)

So you want to be an Auslan interpreter?



What is NAATI?

The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) is a public company. NAATI is responsible for accrediting interpreters of the majority Australian community languages, including Auslan.

There are various levels of accreditation, from Paraprofessional (formerly Level 2) up to Conference Interpreter Senior (formerly Level 5). Currently, NAATI tests in Auslan only to Professional level (formerly Level 3). However, it is expected that in future, testing for Auslan interpreters will be available at higher levels.

How do I become an interpreter?

To become an interpreter, you must possess accreditation from NAATI. There are two ways to gain Paraprofessional accreditation:

1. Pass an examination with NAATI
2. Successfully complete an accredited course by NAATI

ASLIA (NSW) Inc. believes that interpreters should be trained professionals, and therefore strongly recommends the completion of a NAATI-accredited course.

Developing your skills

You must be fluent in both English and Auslan. Your fluency in Auslan must be at least equivalent to Diploma of Auslan (see below). If your Auslan skills are not at a fluent level, various courses are available, including the following.

- Auslan classes, which provide an introduction to the language and basic conversational skills, are provided by the Deaf Education Network (DEN) at certain evening colleges throughout NSW. Classes are one day/evening per week for 2 hours, for seven weeks. Two levels are offered.

Becoming an Auslan Interpreter (continued...)

Sign Language 1

- The Deaf Society's Education and Training, also provides nationally accredited courses including: Certificate II in Auslan, Certificate III in Auslan, Certificate IV in Auslan and the Diploma of Auslan each under one year. These courses require more time and commitment. Contact DEN for further information.

Polishing your language skills:

Some students may find that, having completed the accredited Auslan courses, they require some further training before they are ready to apply for the Diploma of Interpreting (Auslan).

Other skills required

- Good general education (eventually all professional interpreters will be required to have a university degree in interpreting or another field)
- Broad general knowledge, including current affairs
- Good interpersonal skills
- Ability to maintain confidentiality, and behave in a professional manner
- Good powers of concentration and high memory retention

The accredited pathway

NAATI level	Path to level	Work appropriate to Accreditation Level
Prior to acquiring an interpreting accreditation (Unaccredited)	• Auslan language courses	ASLIA recommends that unaccredited individuals do not accept interpreting work
Paraprofessional Interpreter (formerly known as Level 2)	• Diploma of Interpreting, or • Preparation course, then NAATI paraprofessional exam	Educational, medical, financial, employment-related, special occasions, small meetings
Professional Interpreter (formerly known as Level 3). Note that in many spoken languages this is the minimum accreditation requirement	• Postgraduate Diploma or MA at Macquarie University, or • NAATI Interpreting level exam	As above, plus conferences, legal work, police work
Conference Interpreter (formerly known as Level 4)	• NAATI exam (currently not available for Auslan)	As above, plus large conferences, international standard

Interpreters at all levels of accreditation are encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge by attending interpreting related courses, workshops and conferences. However any background knowledge, skill or qualification can be useful in supplementing your interpreting skills.

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 3

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Have

Don't have



Mine



Yours



His / hers



Me



You



He / she

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 3 (continued...)



What



Please



Thank you



Again



Slow

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Deaf Culture

For more information on this topic see the Deaf Australia (DA) website: www.deafau.org.au

Culture is about the way we do things and the beliefs and values we hold. Deaf Communities have many distinctive cultural characteristics, some of which are shared across different countries.

Characteristics of Deaf culture include:

Language:

Sign language is at the centre of Deaf culture. Anyone who does not value sign language is unlikely to feel comfortable within Deaf culture or to be accepted by it. If a person can show they understand and respect the value of sign language, Deaf people will help them to learn it. Without this respectful attitude they are unlikely to receive a warm welcome.

Values:

- **Deaf is normal:** for culturally Deaf people, to be deaf is a natural and accepted state of being, part of their life and identity.
- **Deaf babies are highly valued**

Behaviour (Features of behaviour that differ from typical “hearing” behaviour):

- **Eye Contact** is more important and to look away can be rude.
- **Touch** is more acceptable as it is needed to get attention.
- **Physical proximity** is further apart so as to see the whole “signing space”.
- **Directness** Deaf people are more blunt and abrupt than hearing people.
- **Thumping on tables/floors** to gain each other’s attention
- **Noisy!** Deaf people are not aware how much noise they’re making.

Customs:

- **Who are you?** More personal details are provided at a first meeting to give information about their family or community connections, especially if they come from a family with generations of Deaf people
 - Such families are at the core of the Deaf Community.
- **The long goodbye** when leaving a gathering the custom is to seek out one’s friends and in the process of saying goodbye, discuss when they next expect to meet (whether plans are vague or concrete).
- **Technology** to make living as a deaf person in a predominantly hearing culture more comfortable and convenient eg: flashing lights (for door, phone and crying baby), vibrating alarm clocks, TTY’s etc (as distinct from “hearing technology” such as hearing aids, cochlear implants etc).
- **Preferred environments** open-plan houses with good sight lines are preferable as are round tables and strong even lighting (eg: kitchens).
- **Humour** is quite different to hearing peoples’ and is very visually based.

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO AUSLAN AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Productive Signs: Classifiers

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri, 2007)

Classifiers are one of the meaningful units that make up a “productive” sign.

Strictly speaking **the term “classifier” refers only to the handshape in productive signs**. Despite this, many people in the Deaf Community (especially signing teachers) have come to use the term “classifier” to refer to productive signs in general. (The fact that the terminology for describing Auslan is still in a formative stage indicates just how new this area of research is).

There are three different types of handshape classifiers that have been suggested by sign language researchers:

- **Entity handshapes:** represent the location and movement of people, animals or objects. They often resemble the shape of the person/animal/object. Two entity handshapes can be used simultaneously to describe the relative locations and movements in space of two (or more) separate things. For example, the pointing index finger may represent a human being and the flat handshape may represent a vehicle. These handshapes may show the movement or location of these objects in space indicating the path and manner in which they are moving. For example:

“Sam (pointed finger) is standing in front of the car (flat hand)”

- **Handling handshapes:** imitate the hands interacting with an object. There are three types:
 - ™ holding (eg: sewing with a needle and thread)
 - ™ touch (eg: wiggling fingers typing)
 - ™ instrumental (eg: fingers representing cutting with scissors)
- **SASS (Size And Shape Specifiers) handshapes:** outline an object’s shape and size. There are three types:
 - ™ surface (eg: a flat hand describing an undulating road)
 - ™ depth and width (eg: two cupped hands showing the size of a pole or tree-trunk)
 - ™ perimeter-shape (eg: pointing fingers tracing an outline of the external shape of an object such as a picture frame)

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 4 - Family

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Family



Woman



Husband/wife



Man



Mother



Parents



Father

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 4 - Family (continued...)



Girl



Baby



Boy



Daughter



Son



Sister



Brother



Children

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Sign Names

- Names of people or places are fingerspelled if there is no sign for them. People and places that are frequently referred to, often develop a sign to replace the fingerspelling. This saves time and is much easier, especially as many names have unusual spelling which can be very challenging.
- Signs that replace fingerspelled names are aptly referred to as “Sign Names”.
- Sign Names are specific to individuals and places and are usually based on the most distinctive feature of that person or place at the point in time the Sign Name is created. (Such as the sign “HARBOUR BRIDGE” for Sydney). In this way, Sign Names are like a “snap shot” of the person or place at that time. Once a person has a Sign Name, it will generally stay with them for the rest of their life – even if they try to change it, or the distinctive feature that the Sign Name is based on changes!
- Two people with the same name will have different sign names because they will have differing distinctive features.

Sign Names for people can be based on:

- TMPhysical appearance (eg: hair style, body piercing etc)
 - TMBehaviour (eg: friendliness, impatience or a distinctive habit)
 - TMThe person’s name (eg: “BROWN” for someone with the surname Brown)
 - TMThe person’s initials (eg: “CC”)
 - TMPlay on words (eg: “DOG” for Doug)
 - Something strongly associated with the person (eg: an activity, interest, hobby, sport or career). These Sign Names take the sign for the activity associated with the person and use it as their Sign Name. (eg: An artist whose Sign Name is “ART” signed with the American “A” handshape because their actual name starts with “A”)
- Often the American single-handed alphabet handshape representing the first letter of the person’s name is used in their Sign Name.
 - Generally you cannot give yourself a Sign Name (even though some people have tried!). Your Sign Name will naturally and spontaneously be created for you by those Deaf people around you who know you well. **The feature a Sign Name is based on may not be what the person would choose for themselves!** (For example: tantrum, runny nose, guilty).
- Sign names are never used to “call” someone. They are only used to talk about someone, (eg: “Have you seen ‘Sign Name’?”). This means it can be some time before a person knows their own Sign Name

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Auslan Variations

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri)

Is Auslan always the same? Have you ever noticed that the English language changes in different contexts (for example formal or informal settings) and when used by different people (for example older or more educated people). The same thing happens with Auslan.

Key social factors that produce variations in Auslan include: family of origin, regional origin, age, cross-cultural influences and education (see over).

Family:

Signers who have acquired Auslan as a first language from deaf parents tend to use a grammatically richer type of signed language and have a much wider sign vocabulary than signers who learned it at school or even later.

Region:

There are two main regional varieties of Auslan – a northern dialect (NSW and Qld) and a southern dialect (all the other states). Most noticeably, these two dialects differ on the basis of signs for numbers, colours and certain other concepts.

Within the Deaf Community, signers are usually familiar with most of the common signs from other states because the dialect variation does not account for a very large percentage of the vocabulary of Auslan as a whole.

Age:

Signers from a similar age group or generation tend to share the same kind of signs, especially if they went to school together. This can clearly be seen with **technological changes** whereby one generation’s sign for something is quite different from the next generation’s sign. For example, TELEPHONE.

Cross-cultural influences:

The American one-handed alphabet is increasingly commonly known by deaf Australians, especially younger people or those who travel overseas frequently, because of the prestige of American Sign Language (ASL) and the use of similar alphabets in a number of deaf communities around the world.

Sign Language 1

Auslan Variations: Education

(Adapted by Anne Horton from "Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics" by Johnston and Schembri)

Educational changes can cause one generation's signing to differ from another's. In Australia this can be seen as follows over the last century:

During the 1930's (and earlier) the method of educating deaf children involved the exclusive use of **fingerspelling** as a means of instruction (The Rochester Method). As a result, fingerspelling is used more extensively by older members of the deaf community in Australia.

Broadly speaking, until the 1970's, each state (but not the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory) had a large public **residential school for the deaf**. These schools used Auslan (their signs were originally based on British Sign Language (BSL) and the British two-handed manual alphabet). The signs used by the children of the largest school in a city were naturally also the signs of the Deaf Community in that city – both by force of numbers and through peer transmission.

Since the 1970's **Signed English** has been in widespread educational use. As a result, in Australia, younger members of the Deaf Community are likely to use a larger percentage of the so-called "new signs", mostly based on Signed English signs.

By the 1980's, deaf children were increasingly **integrated** into classes with hearing children or attended classes in small units attached to regular schools. The use of signed language came to be seen only as a last resort for those who failed to acquire spoken English. **Oralism** (relying on residual hearing, lip-reading and learning to speak) was often the preferred means of instruction.

By the late 1980's sign-based school programs were re-introduced mainly using Signed English, however a number of small **bilingual programs** (with **Auslan** as one of the languages of instruction) were established.

Despite the many changes in approaches to the education of deaf children in the last 145 years, it seems that varieties of Auslan have remained the primary or preferred language of the deaf community throughout much of that time. There can be little doubt, however, that the various educational philosophies which dominated deaf education over the last century have had considerable impact on the signed language of the Deaf Community.

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 5 - More Family

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Aunt



Uncle



Niece



Nephew



Grandmother



Grandfather

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 5 - More Family (continued...)



Granddaughter



Grandson



Cousin

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

NSW Deaf Community Interest Groups

Services:

- Australian Theatre of the Deaf (ATOD)
- Australian Caption Centre
- Australian Communication Exchange (ACE)
- Australian Hearing Services
- Deaf Society/Deaf Education Network (DEN)
- National Relay Service (NRS)
- Parent Council for Deaf Education (PCDE)
- Print-a-call
- Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC)
- Special Needs Service, State Library of NSW
- TAFE (Consultants for the Deaf)

Clubs / Associations:

- Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association (ASLIA)
- Central Coast Deaf Club
- Deaf and Hearing Impaired Access Centre, Lismore
- Deaf Gay and Lesbian Association (NSW)
- Deaf Australia (NSW)
- Newcastle Deaf Club
- Many Deaf "Clubs" (group gatherings)

Churches:

- CADHIPA - Catholic Association of Deaf and Hearing Impaired People of Australia
- Christian City Deaf Church, Ryde
- Christian Services for Hearing Impaired People
- Deaf Christian Fellowship
- Ephpheta Centre (for Catholic Deaf people)
- Hills Christian Life Centre
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Merroo Christian Fellowship Deaf Ministries
- Christian Life Centre Liverpool – Deaf Church

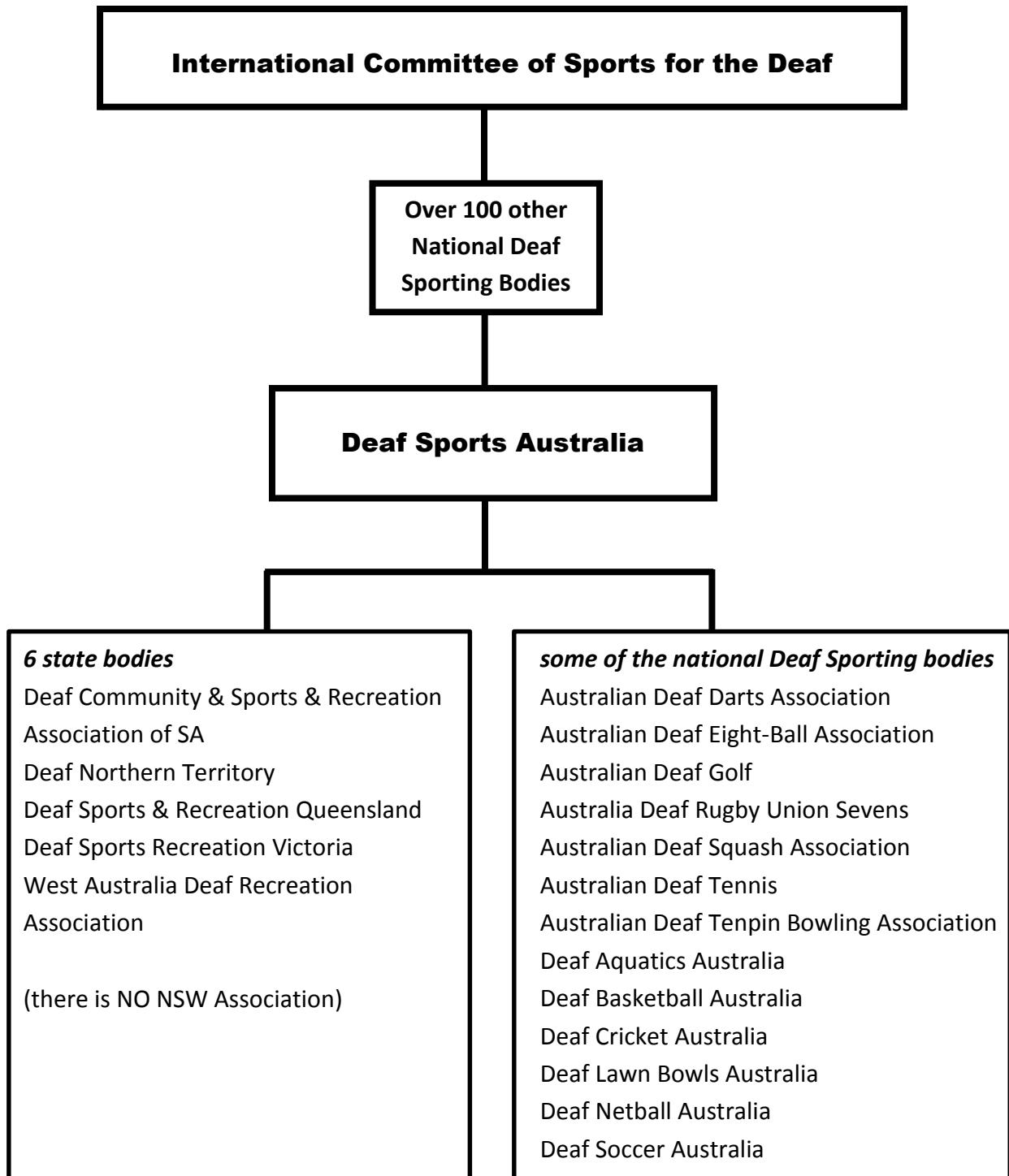
Organisations for Hard of Hearing People:

- Better Hearing Australia
- SHHH (Self Help for Hard of Hearing People)

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

The International Deaf Sports Network



(Adapted from Deaf Sports Australia www.deafsports.org.au)

Sign Language 1

NSW DEAF HERALD

NSW Deaf herald is a free bulletin produced every three months by The Deaf Society of NSW. It incorporates Deaf Australia's Silent Messenger.

If you would like receive NSW Deaf Herald you need to SUBSCRIBE.

When you subscribe you will be asked if you would like to receive:

- information about special news and events, Deaf Community surveys, and job opportunities at the Deaf Society of NSW (by EMAIL only)
- NSW Deaf Herald (by EMAIL or POST) – remember, getting the bulletin by email saves trees!

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Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 6 - Colours

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Colour



White



Black



Red



Yellow



Blue



(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 6 – Colours (continued...)



Silver



Gold



Green



Orange



Grey



Purple



Brown

OR



Brown



Pink

OR



Pink



Light



Dark



Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 6 - Food

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Eat/Food



Hungry



Fruit



Strawberry



Orange



Apple



Pineapple



Banana



Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 6 – Food (continued...)



Watermelon



Tomato



Salad



Sandwich



Fish



Meat / Steak



Pork



Chicken

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 6 - Drink

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Drink



Thirsty



Water



Soft Drink



Tea



Coffee



Milk



Sugar

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

Signing Space

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri, 2007)

In Auslan as with other signed languages, there is a strong tendency towards locating all signs within a restricted signing space.

- The **signing space** is an area which from top to bottom extends from approximately just above the head to the waist and from left to right extends from elbow to elbow when the arms are held loosely bent. In this area the hands and arms can move and make contact with the body and each other easily and naturally.
- Our eyes tend to focus on objects that are in the centre of our field of vision, even though we can see a lot with our peripheral vision. **Signers usually look at the each other’s faces when they sign and maintain lots of eye contact**, rather than looking at the hands (except sometimes when reading an unfamiliar word that is being fingerspelled).
- Inside the signing space there are three locations:
 - **Neutral Space:** the sign has no contact with the body and the hands do not touch each other.
 - **Primary Location:** The sign has contact with the body.
 - **Secondary Location:** The hands contact each other only.
- Signers use a range of different locations on the body (head, face, neck, chest, shoulders, arms). **Not all locations are used to the same degree.** An examination of the primary signs recorded in Signs of Australia dictionary, shows that over 76 percent of these signs are made in the head/face/neck area where signer’s visual acuity is the greatest and the diversity of distinguishable parts (lips, chin, mouth, nose, jaw, temple, eye etc) provides a greater number of distinctive locations available for sign formation.
- **Signs located on the body** are more likely to be double-handed (eg: hungry, accept) than one-handed. **Signs located on the head**, face and neck (eg: think, people) are more likely to be one-handed than double-handed. This is no doubt influenced by how easy the signs are to see when maintaining eye contact with the person who is signing.
- Time related signs are organized around three “**time-lines**” in the signing space: from back to front, left to right and diagonally across the space in front of the signer.

Sign Language 1

INSIGHTS INTO THE DEAF COMMUNITY

The Truth about Sign Language

(Adapted by Anne Horton from “Australian Sign Language: An introduction to sign language linguistics” by Johnston and Schembri, 2007)

Sign language is not universal:

There are many different sign languages around the world and many of these have developed independently of each other.

Sign languages around the world vary in:

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- The set of handshapes used.
- The meaning of certain non-manual features (such as head movements).

However:

- Studies have shown that different sign languages may have a proportion of similar or even identical signs.
- The grammar of signed languages are similar in many ways (making similar use of locations, orientations in space, direction, quality and speed of movements, facial expressions and sign orders).
- There are “families” of sign languages (where the sign languages are related and more similar to each other, such as the “BSL (British Sign Language) family which includes Auslan and other sign languages belonging to deaf communities that have historical connections with Britain.
- The term International Sign Language (also called Gestuno), was introduced in 1975 to encourage the use of a standard vocabulary at international meetings of deaf people. International Sign Language is drawn from a mix of American and various European sign languages and makes maximum use of common grammatical features to make it as visual as possible. When *International Sign Language* is used however, a much simpler message is conveyed.
- Because ASL (American Sign Language) is the most widely seen and used sign language in the world, there has been a trend towards ASL signs becoming “internationalized” in both formal and informal situations.

OTHER INTERESTING POINTS:

- Sign language is not based on speech & was not invented by hearing people.
- Sign languages are not simply pantomime or gesture, they are real languages.
- Signs are not always “pictures” of what they represent, some signs are arbitrary.
- Sign languages have the same expressive capacity as spoken languages.
- Signed and spoken languages are processed by the brain in similar ways.
- Sign language can be written down using systems mainly used by researchers.
- Absence of speech does not indicate less intelligence.

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 7 – Dates and Time

Please note:

- You can change most signs with facial expression, etc. to add extra meaning.
- There is almost never one Auslan sign for each English word, or one English word for each Auslan sign.



Pleased to meet you



Introduce



Calendar



Appointment



Future



Tomorrow



In 2 days time

Sign Language 1

AUSLAN VOCABULARY

Lesson 7 – Dates and Time (continued...)



Next week



In 2 weeks time



Past (Time)



Yesterday



2 days ago



Last week



2 weeks ago

(Some photos were adapted from "Dictionary of Auslan Images" CD by Deaf Children Australia, 2004)



Equity for deaf people

Sign Language 1



Equity for deaf people

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