



to Sign Language Services

What is American Sign Language (ASL)?

ASL is a visual language comprised of specific gestures (signs), hand shapes and facial expressions. ASL has its own unique grammatical rules and sentence structure. It is the official language of the Deaf community in Canada and the United States. Deaf People have their own culture, and sign language is one element of that culture.

What is Signing Naturally?

Signing Naturally is the sign language curriculum used by The Canadian Hearing Society. In the past, no **one course** taught both ASL and Deaf culture. Created and developed at Vista Community College in Berkeley, California, this new approach teaches culture as well as sign language and is based on the language's communicative use and focuses on natural and interpersonal communication needs.

What can I expect?

Signing Naturally brings ASL to you via classroom instruction, videotext and a workbook. Enrolment is limited to a maximum of 16 students per class, in order to ensure student participation and individual attention

from the instructor. Role-play is one of the teaching methods used in class. The videotext and workbook supplement and reinforce classroom instruction. They provide a way to review, practise, and retain what was learned in class. A "no-voice" style is used; this reinforces the learning experience.



What do I learn?

In addition to learning ASL, you will also be taught the behaviours and norms of Deaf culture. The curriculum has three levels.

Level one is designed to introduce students to ASL. Concepts discussed relate to people, places and things within the immediate environment. Students learn to handle basic, everyday communication such as exchanging information, identifying/describing others, and asking for clarification.

Level two emphasizes language in context: locating things around the house, learning numeracy, making requests with inflection, talking about life events and family histories, describing objects and having social conversation.

Level three focuses on building narrative skills, moving from an informal to a more formal presentation and on developing conversational skills used in everyday discussion.

How long does it take to learn?

Learning any language takes a great deal of time, energy and commitment. To be able to sign is only part of the process. You must also be able to understand ASL signed by a native user. People learn at different rates. Therefore, it is difficult to place a definite time frame on the length of time to learn ASL.

Classes

Level 1 courses are ASL 101, 102 and 103. Classes are held for three hours, once a week, for 10 consecutive weeks in the spring, fall and winter sessions.

Level 2 courses are ASL 201, 202 and 203. Classes are held for three hours, once a week, for 11 consecutive weeks in the spring, fall and winter sessions.

Level 3 courses are ASL 301, 302, 303, 304 and 305. Classes are held for three hours, once a week, for 12 consecutive weeks in the spring, fall and winter sessions.

- In the spring, fall and winter sessions, classes are offered primarily in the evenings, Monday through Thursday. Afternoon classes are occasionally scheduled.
- In the summer session, classes are set up as one-week immersion courses. There are no part-time courses in the summer.

Courses Fees

For more information about the cost of courses and material, please contact us at sls@toronto.chs.ca

Eligibility

The classes are open to anyone 16 years of age or older with a minimum grade 9 level of education. If you have no previous knowledge of ASL, you begin with ASL 101. If you have some ASL experience, please contact Sign Language Services to discuss a placement test.

Special Contracts

A growing number of organizations are interested in having their staff learn sign language to improve communication with Deaf and hard of hearing employees in the workplace. Special classes, tailored to meet the organization's needs, can be arranged at the work location. For more information, contact the Sign Language Services Program of The Canadian Hearing Society.

Refund Policy

Course fees can be refunded or deferred to a course in the next semester.

Letters requesting that course fees be refunded or deferred to a course in the next semester must be sent to Sign Language Services (via post, e-mail or fax) prior to the 3rd class of the current semester. The amount that can be refunded or deferred is determined by the number of classes attended at the time of refund or deferral and is subject to an administration fee. Requests for refund or deferral to the next semester received after the 3rd class of the current semester will not be accepted.

Cost of materials are non-refundable.

THE CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE L'OUÏE



Head Office

For more information please contact:
The Canadian Hearing Society
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Canadian Hearing Society provides services that enhance the independence of deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people, and that encourage prevention of hearing loss.