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The American Sign Language Handshape Starter: A Beginner's Guide



Synopsis

Beginning signers now can improve their recognition of the most commonly used signs with this easy-to-follow handbook. The American Sign Language Handshape Starter illustrates 800 of the most frequently used signs, arranging them by the 40 standard handshapes used in American Sign Language (ASL). Carefully chosen for their common use, the signs also have been organized by day-to-day topics, including food, travel, family, sports, clothing, school terms, time, nature and animals, and many others from everyday conversation. The American Sign Language Handshape Starter begins with a confidence-building introduction to ASL use and structure, and tips on basic signing. It also provides a simple guide to finding signs that are either new or familiar to learn their meanings. With the Handshape Starter, new signers, their teachers, and their parents will find improvement in ASL to be faster and even more enjoyable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought the book off the shelf in a book store based on the cover. The cover shows photos of hand signs leading people to believe that is how all the signs are presented. They are not! The book on the shelf was sealed in plastic, so it wasn't until I got it home that I discovered the all signs are presented in cartoon form. The material itself is easy to understand and use. But if you're buying this book based on the presumption it uses photos to present the signs then this is not the book you want.

I am a beginner and this book works like a dictionary. I selected this book because with each word

there was a picture and a description of proper hand movement. I purchased this book as well as a few other books, and have been successful in learning ASL. I would recommend the seller, as the transaction was prompt and I got what I expected.

The book is organized well. It helps while learning the basics of ASL. The pictures took a while to get used to.

This is an excellent book for the beginning American Sign Language (ASL) student to learn signs and to supplement class learning. The book gives a good explanation of the parameters or components of a sign. It discusses proper handshape, palm orientation, location, movement, and non-manual signals. The book teaches about the difference in signing a noun and a verb (like the noun airplane vs. flying in an airplane) and it presents the American Sign Language Manual Alphabet and how to fingerspell the numbers 1-10. A chart is then presented with common American Sign Language handshapes for each letter (example: L and Bent L; V and Bent V). The book is laid out in twenty major sections so you can easily find words with similar functions (like classroom vocabulary, action words, quantities, prepositions, people, food, animals, sports, clothing, and seasons). Each ASL sign is sketched like a typical sign in an ASL dictionary to show specifics of the sign and each description has additional information so you can accurately use the sign. This additional information includes handshape, palm orientation, proper location of the sign (near head, on chest, below mouth or shoulder, etc.), and any movement or non-manual sign (like a head shake "no") needed for proper execution of the sign. I have taken 8 American Sign Language classes and I still find this an excellent book to review words and understand signs. The index is laid out in a particularly helpful way with the word, the handshape needed, and page number. Sometimes I only need to look at the index to remember the sign. This book is published by Gallaudet University Press, which is why I trusted it enough to buy in the first place. I was not disappointed!

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