

# ASL Misconceptions vs. Facts

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This sheet helps clarify common misconceptions about ASL and Deaf culture.

Misconception	Fact
Misconception: ASL is just English with hand signs.	Fact: ASL is a distinct language with its own grammar, syntax, and structure.
Misconception: All Deaf people can read lips.	Fact: Lipreading is difficult and only provides about 30% of the spoken message.
Misconception: All Deaf people know and use ASL.	Fact: Not all Deaf individuals use ASL. Some use other sign languages or communication methods.
Misconception: Sign language is universal.	Fact: There are hundreds of different sign languages worldwide, such as ASL, BSL, and LSF.
Misconception: Deaf people can't drive.	Fact: Deaf individuals can legally and safely drive using visual awareness and alert systems.
Misconception: ASL is just gestures or miming.	Fact: ASL is a rich, complex language with rules, grammar, and cultural nuance.
Misconception: Cochlear implants 'fix' deafness.	Fact: Cochlear implants are tools, not cures. Many Deaf people still identify as culturally Deaf.
Misconception: Speaking is better than signing.	Fact: ASL is equally valid and respected in the Deaf community. Communication success is key.
Misconception: Deaf people are not as intelligent because they can't hear.	Fact: Intelligence is not linked to hearing ability. Deaf people thrive in all academic and professional fields.
Misconception: Interpreters are always available and easy to get.	Fact: Many places still lack accessible services, and interpreter shortages are common.