

Spokane
American Sign Language
Study Guide 1 – Beginner to Low-Intermediate
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1.0 Overview

The purpose of this document is to provide an approximate guideline for the weekly ASL study group. THIS IS NOT WRITTEN IN STONE, MERELY A GUIDELINE. It can easily be changed, modified, tweaked, or disregarded as desired. This varies heavily based on who actually shows up to a session. Sometimes if everyone is more advanced, the more rudimentary parts can be skipped, whereas if there are more novice signers, it is encouraged to cover the basics, and who among the non-natively-signing couldn't use some improvement in reading/receiving finger spelling?

Any parts can be used as much or as little as desired. It also encouraged to add to this document over time. It is planned to post this document as both a PDF and as a wiki page on the website, so that everyone (registered at <http://www.spokaneasl.com>) can add, and modify this document over time. Please feel free to do so!

Currently the following reference materials are regularly being used as guides (please feel free to others):

- <http://www.aslpro.com>
- <http://lifeprint.com>
- <http://handspeak.com>
- A Basic Course In American Sign Language 2nd Edition by T.J. Publishers
- A Basic Course In American Sign Language Student Study Guide by T.J. Publishers
- Learning American Sign Language 2nd Edition Levels I & II by Pearson Education
- Learn American Sign Language – Everything You Need to Start Signing – Complete Beginner's Guide – 800+ Signs, by James W. Guido
- Barron's 500 Flash Cards of American Sign Language by Geoffrey S. Poor.

- Additional resources:
- <http://spokanehope.org/services/>
- <https://www.ewu.edu/chsph/programs/communication-sciences-and-disorders/clinic>

1.1 Study Group Schedule

First hour is generally for beginners to intermediates.

Second hour is generally for intermediates and up.

All times are just approximations, it varies greatly on who shows up (and their skill levels).

The schedule is given as a guideline for those who wish to show up for specific areas, though it is always best to try to participate for the full 2 hours. The first hour is mostly review/practice, the second hour is usually more social in interaction.

First Hour (All signing levels, beginners and above)

Activity	Duration	Time
Meet and greet. Introduce each other and chat as people arrive.	5 minutes	4:00 – 4:05
Warm up with finger spelling alphabet and numbers.	5 minutes	4:00 – 4:10
Important Phrases & basic vocabulary	20 minutes	4:10 – 4:30
Additional vocabulary	20 minutes	4:30 – 4:50
Sentences / grammar	10 minutes	4:50 – 5:00

2 Warm up

For those who are not signing on a regular, daily basis, warm up helps not only from the physical aspect of stretching out, but also getting mentally into the mode of signing, this is also a great chance for less experienced signers to ramp up quickly and not feel left in the dark as much during the more “advanced” stages, especially the social hour.

Please note it is usually easier to sign with everyone sitting in a circle or roughly square, rather than a rectangle or scattered around the place. It is even better without tables between participants.

2.1 The Alphabet & Finger Spelling

Unless signing on a regular daily basis, most people struggle with finger spelling, especially reading someone else's finger spelling at higher speeds.

- Start out with finger spelling the alphabet.
- First begin very slowly especially if any beginners or ASL I level participants.
- Run through alphabet 5 times, each time a little faster. The fifth time is as fast as each person can handle.

It is extremely important that each participant be WATCHING someone ELSE signing rather than themselves or looking off “into space”. We recommend looking at a different person each time through the alphabet to get practice reading different the finger spelling of a variety of people.

3 Most Frequently Used Vocabulary

If beginners are in attendance, perform the sign, then finger spell the sign, then verbalize the word, and finally perform the sign one more time. For intermediate and higher participants, for each vocabulary word, perform the sign, then finger spell the word, and then perform the sign a second time. If someone does not know the sign, repeat the sign and finger spelling until the everyone understands, do not verbalize.

This section provides a list of the more commonly used vocabulary. It is not by any means an exhaustive list of ASL signs, just the most frequently encountered.

3.1 Basic Survival Stuff

Words to start with:

me	sign (street)	not / don't	hearing
you	yes	and	hard of hearing
sign (ASL)	no	but	true
language	maybe	deaf	false

Most important phrases:

- Fingerspell their name (with no bounce)
- My name is ____
- Nice to meet you
- (Say that) Again please
- Slow down Please
- Fingerspell what?
- I don't understand.
- I don't know.

Interrogatives:

for

where

when

why

how

who

what (3 variants)

how much

School:

school

college

Paper

test

write

math

science

number

add

subtract

class

teacher

- <sign> means what?
- Thank you.
- Where is ____?
- What is your name?
- What are you doing?
- How are you?
- How was your week?
- I'm running late

Places:

toilet / restroom

hospital

work

library

bakery

apartment

house

home

address

church

bank

far

near

open

closed

People:

Gender placement

male: nose to crown

female: chin to nose

people

person

friend
 family
 mother
 father
 sister
 brother
 police
 doctor
 teacher
 interpreter
 lawyer
 nurse
 president
 vice president
 waiter/waitress

Time:

clock
 watch
 time
 hour / hourly
 half-hour
 minute
 second
 stop
 late
 not yet
 wait
 calendar/schedule
 month

day
 night
 daily
 week (last week / next week)
 weekly
 year (years before/after)
 yearly
 before / past
 after
 recently
 late / not yet
 later
 yesterday
 today
 tomorrow
 birthday
 new
 old
 older
 years-old (e.g. 5 yrs old)
 young
 younger

Months

January
 February
 March
 April
 May
 June

July
August
September
October
November
December
Weather

sun
rain
snow
wind
clouds/cloudy
hail

Self care:

comb/brush hair
poop
constipation
diarrhea
pee
bath
shower
towel
pillow
socks
soap
tissue
bathroom/toilet
sick
vomit

pain
clothes
sit
chair
bed
sleep/sleepy
shoes

Food/Drink:

eat
breakfast
lunch
dinner
cheese
butter
salt
coffee
milk
water
food
candy
cookie
orange
apple
cake
chocolate
food
drink
soda pop
tea

beer
wine
bread
cookie

Emotions/feelings:

fine
afraid
sad
depressed
stressed
happy
excited
mad
angry
agree
hope
love
like
frustrated
relieved
upset

Colors:

color
red
blue
green
yellow
purple

black
white
gray
pink
orange
brown
tan
dark
light (shade)

Verbs

clean (small item / lg item)
care
love
show (show me/show you)
play
read
walk
run
jump
dance
drive
search
surprise
sleep
awake
wake up
exercise
swim
stop

copy
miss (person)
miss (bus/comment)
go
go-to
move
move to
move from
pay
require

Adjectives

hot
cold
right (correct)
wrong / oops
tall
short (structure/person)
short (brief)
big
small
a little bit
fat
thin
ugly
beautiful
strict

Imperatives

must
should / need

want
don't want
order (command)
order (sequence)
require
start
stop
finish
come one (come over here)
watch out!

Important other:

penny
money
dollar
cost
expensive
like
key
TV
show
YouTube
Facebook
car
phone
book
light
slow
again
more

help	100,053
sign	965,876
fire	1,521,325
name	189,428,210
work	1,687,943,121
ASL	998,876,543,321
Starbucks	

3.2 Numbers

Practice numbers from 1 through 30. Then in "Tens" from 30 to 100. Demonstrate both versions of representing hundreds ("C" versus "hooking"). 100 through 300. Then 1,000 (Thousand), 1,000,000 (Million) 1,000,000,000 (Billion). Below are some sample numbers to run through after counting to the hundreds, you can of course make up any you want: **Sample Numbers**

67
86
98
99
31
25
56
79
81
97
100
1,024
9,121

Fractions

fraction [9 hand above hand and below hand]

1 / 2

1 / 3

1 / 4

Percent [zero hand, draw fraction]

Ordinals

First (thumb, alternative: twist number)

Second

Third

Fourth

Fifth

Sixth

Seventh

Last

3.3 Pronouns

I

me

you

it

that ("Y" horizontal to object)
 that one ("Y" – pinky to object)
 this (finger to palm)
 he (to person / placed in space)
 she (to person / placed in space)
 we (initialized/not initialized)
 us (initialized)
 we all ("L" from shoulder to shoulder)
 everyone (each one)
 2 of us (2 of you)
 3 of us / 4 of us

Possessives

my
 your
 his (to person / placed in space)
 hers (to person / placed in space)
 its
 ours
 theirs
 myself
 yourself
 himself
 herself
 ourselves
 themselves

3.4 Relationships

man
 woman

gentleman
 lady
 boy
 girl
 baby
 child
 children
 kids / brats
 dating
 girlfriend
 boyfriend
 sweetheart
 wed / wedding
 marriage/married
 husband
 wife
 separated (1 finger/whole hands)
 divorced (reversed "meet")
 parents
 grandparents
 grandmother
 grandfather
 daughter
 son
 grandchild / grandchildren
 grandson
 granddaughter

aunt
uncle
niece
nephew
cousin (female/male)

law
brother-in-law
sister-in-law
false / step / foster
stepfather
stepmother
step-monster
half (some)
half-brother
half-sister
adopted (3 variants)

3.5 More on Time

day
morning
noon
afternoon
night
midnight
all day
all night
day before
day after
during

since
sometimes
never
forever
history
future

Seasons

spring
summer
winter
fall / autumn

Holidays

New Year's Eve
Valentine's day
St. Patrick's Day
April Fool's day
Easter
Memorial Day
4th of July
Labor Day
Veterans' day
Columbus Day
Halloween
Thanksgiving
Chanukah
Christmas
Anniversary (wedding celebration)
Birthday

3.6 Additional Vocabulary

a little (2 variants)

access

add

agree

airplane

airport

allergies / allergic

allow

amount

ask (favor)

ask (question)

autism

badge

bakery

baseball

basketball

because

between

blind

boat

boring

born

brain

bus

business

busy

celebrate

certificate

character

chat

cigarettes

city

coffee

comfortable

communicate

community

competition-

computer

cool

dark

deaf

desire

diet

dirty

divide

don't want

drive

easy

emergency

enough

equal

exactly

exciting

excuse me

expect

expensive

fancy

fast

favorite	insurance
feel pain	internet
flirt	join
fish	joke / tease
football (American)	kidnap
force	kill
forgive / pardon	kind / type
forklift	language
frustrating	laptop
fun	laugh
funny	lazy
game	learn
garbage	level
glasses	library
grammar	list
grew up	loser
hard of hearing	lovey-dovey
have	lying
hear	make
heart	marijuana
help	mask
historical	money
history	movie
hope	multiply
hungry	never
ice	notice
idea	order / command
important	page
impressed	Pah! (success)
information	paper

patient	street / road
pay attention	stress
perfect	student
picture	subtract
pig	sucks
prefer	swim
problem	sympathy
raccoon	Target
receive (sign language)	tonight
right now	town
rocket	train
role-playing	ugly
roommate	video
run	visit
salmon	voice
same	vomit
scold	walk
see	Walmart
shock	want
short	watch
shower	weird
sick	welcome / hire
snobby / snooty	whatever
soap	wheelchair
soccer	witch
socks	with
sorry	without
specialist	worse
stars	wow (2 variants)
store	yell

Let each person in the group sign a few words from the book, then pass the book around to the next person, and so on, until everyone in the group has had a turn to sign from the book, and all the vocabulary from that section of the book has been covered.

4 Sentences

Try to use the same or correlative chapter related to the same vocabulary used in the previous section (3), using example sentences from that book to build on the vocabulary just covered.

Have each person sign one sentence from the book, then pass it to the next person. Keep doing this until all the sentences from the book have been covered. Remember to FINGERSPELL the answers to unknown signs, not speak the answers.

5 Story time

Now each person takes a turn telling a brief story (in ASL) about their day, their week, their past month, or any other story they would like to tell. If there are more people attending, the stories should be kept shorter so everyone has a turn, if there are fewer people attending, then more time can be spent on each story. The stories can be very basic (depending on the person's signing ability), such as:

MY CAR LAST WEEK NEED FIX.

I TAKE CAR TO SHOP.

MONEY IT COST EXPENSIVE.

CAR NOW DRIVE OK.

Of course, feel free to provide more elaborate stories as well.

6 Social time

Now that everyone has had some time to get into the “mode” of signing, it is a free form social chat time for as long as anyone wishes. Everyone can continue taking turns chatting with the group, or break off into separate conversations. However, please do still try to remain in a circle/square so that others can jump in on conversations. For the less advanced/experienced signers, they will likely be a bit overwhelmed by the more advanced signers, but it is still VERY IMPORTANT for them to “eavesdrop” on the conversations to get used to watching faster signing.

The beginner-to-low-intermediate-study-group ends after 1 hour, and the intermediate-and-above-study-group lasts for the second hour. When finished, if the location is still open, you can certainly run over as long as anyone wants to stick around and continue signing.

For any questions, sending updates, corrections, or other comments, please feel free to email me: spokaneasl@gmail.com.

Happy Signing!

-Hawke

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