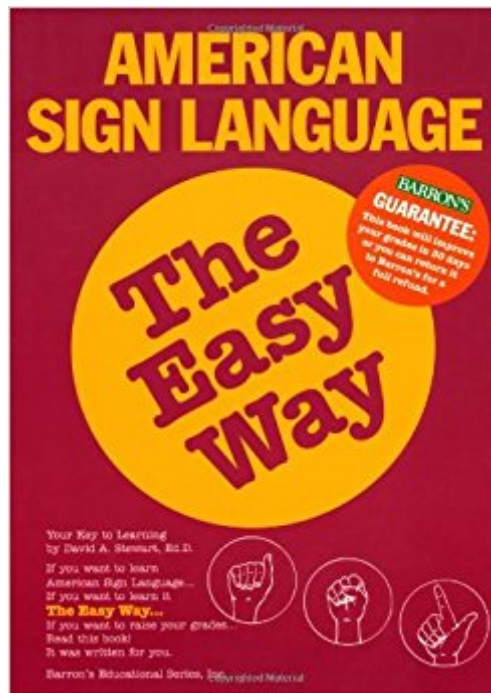




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American Sign Language The Easy Way



Synopsis

Current estimates have more than one million people using American Sign Language (ASL) in the United States, including approximately 450,000 deaf people. As growing numbers of deaf students are integrated into standard schools, the need for ASL interpreters continues to increase. Today, many public education systems offer an ASL course as a language elective in their curriculum, and this book--which can be used to teach both interpreters and the deaf--is an ideal text for such courses. Following a general introduction to American Sign Language and Deaf Culture, the author explains the use of "facial grammar" as a preliminary step to learning and understanding manual signing. Two succeeding chapters present the first eleven key grammatical rules of ASL. The 36 lessons that follow are divided into four groups that put these rules into practice and introduce additional rules. All lessons conclude with a practice session that reviews the lesson's material and progressively develops the student's proficiency in communicating in ASL. Following each of the four groups of nine lessons is a brief chapter dealing with Deaf Culture. The book's many line drawings illustrate approximately 720 ASL signs and their multiple meanings. The author has focused the text to make learning American Sign Language as easy as it is useful, both for instructors and students.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

American Sign Language The Easy Way is an explorative introduction to deaf language and culture. This book combines basic ASL grammar and language rules with conversational signs. Whether one is in a classroom or at home, ASL The Easy Way is a reliable sourcebook. It appeals to both

students and teachers. As a beginner ASL student, I have found this book to be very useful. There are many misconceptions about ASL and this book provided an excellent introductory summary to erase these thoughts. For example, David Stewart discusses the physical and cultural dimensions of ASL. Stewart strongly states that "Learning ASL is not simply about learning another language. It is about access...ASL gives us access to Deaf culture"(p.5). Both chapter three and seven are essential to the understanding of ASL. Although short, Chapter 3: The Deaf Community, describes the complexity of deaf culture. Stewart distinguishes between nondeaf and deaf communities. He describes the "five important differences as: American Sign Language; Socialization; Organizations and Clubs; Schools for the deaf; and Deaf pride."(p101-102). As a speaking person learning ASL, these are five differences I did not think of until reading this book. In Chapter seven, Stewart discusses technology and adaptations to a speaking world. He focuses on tele- communication technology, alerting devices and sign language interpreting. Living with a deaf mother, I am well aware of the TTY, close captioning and interpreters. However, I was surprised at the alerting devices, such as lights flashing or vibration. I am embarrassed to say that my mother lives in a hearing home, one that does not have alert devices.

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