

fingerspelling



dac·ty·lol·o·gy [dak-tuh-lol-uh-jee]

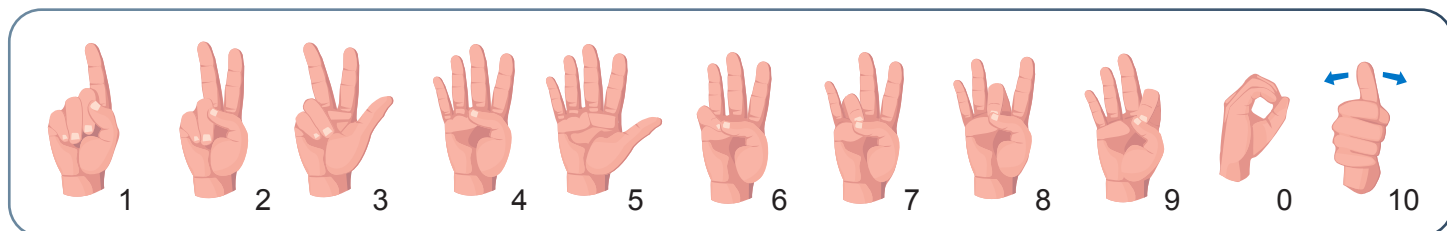
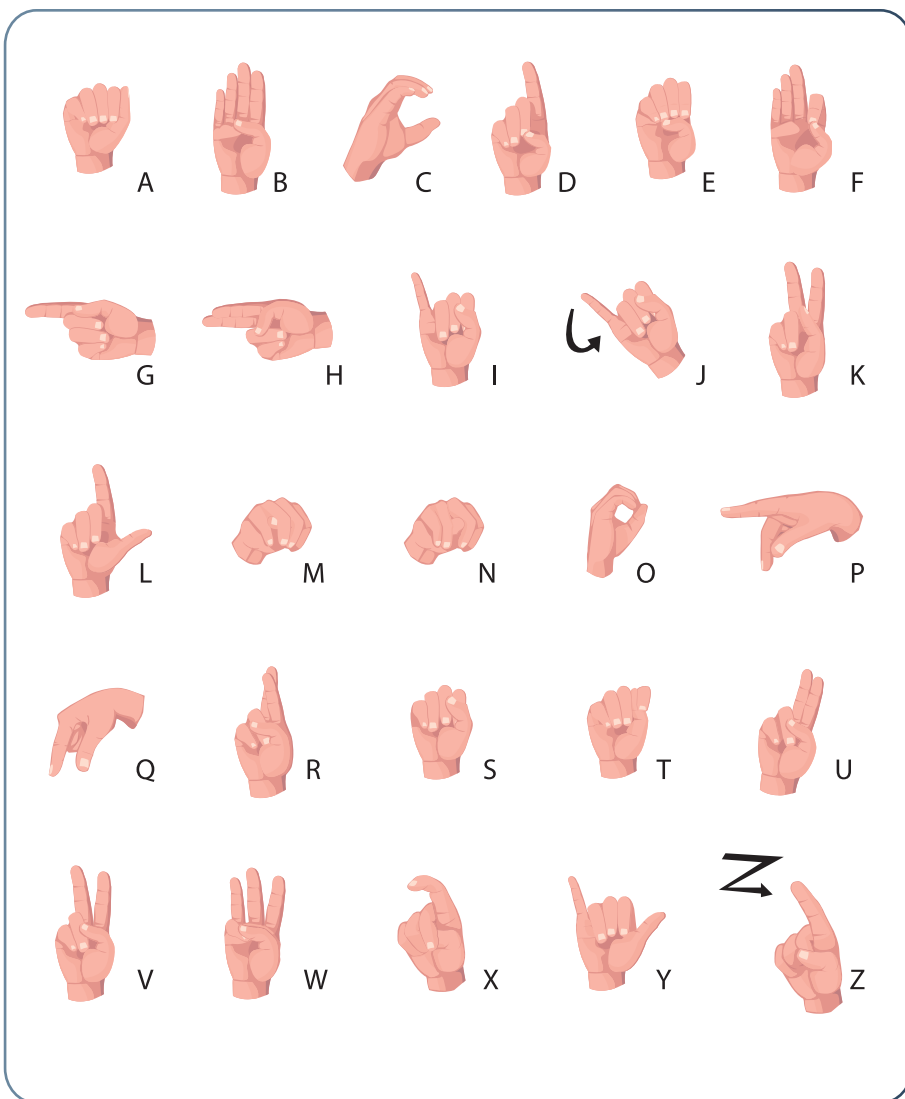
noun, plural dac·ty·lol·o·gies. the technique of communicating by signs made with the fingers, especially in the manual alphabets used by the deaf.

what is it?

Fingerspelling is the manual alphabet used in American Sign Language and is performed using a variety of hand gestures. It is mainly used for spelling out names, people, places and things that don't have their own unique sign. It also is commonly used for spelling out titles of books and movies, as well as signing the brand name of various items.

how do I do it?

Letters are signed with the dominant hand and generally with the palm facing the viewer. When fingerspelling, the hand should be at shoulder height. Letters are signed at a constant speed with a pause functioning as a word divider. To indicate the same letter twice in a row the signer will bounce the signed letter. The first letter may be held for the length of an extra letter as a cue that the signer is about to start fingerspelling.



fun facts

Fingerspelling makes up

8.7%

of casual signing in ASL!

Americans actually utilize fingerspelling in their manual communication more than any other country.

American fingerspelling is composed of

22

one-hand gestures to represent 26 letters.

British fingerspelling uses

BOTH HANDS

to form each letter.



Japan has the most extensive fingerspelling with

46

different gestures to cover the 46 hiragana characters.



The expression

I LOVE YOU

also can be communicated with one hand.

Juan Pablo Bonet published the first sign alphabet in

1620

