



New Mexico Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing

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American Sign Language Classes

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What is American Sign Language?

American Sign Language (ASL) is a complete, complex language that employs signs made with the hands and other movements, including facial expressions and postures of the body. It is the first language of many deaf North Americans, and one of several communication options available to deaf people. ASL is said to be the fourth most commonly used language in the United States.

Where are some American Sign Language Classes in New Mexico?

The New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NMCDHH) has a library with ASL books, dictionaries and videos, but if you would rather learn in a classroom environment there are a few options. Keep in mind there are differences in cost and whether the student wants to learn conversational ASL or go further and study to be an interpreter.

In Albuquerque:

- *University of New Mexico**, Website: <https://ling.unm.edu/signed-language-program/index.html> Phone: 505.277.0928 (v/tty)
- *Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)*, Contact information for CNM can be found at www.cnm.edu/contact/ or email ASL Instructor Julie Mason at jmason15@cnm.edu
- *Albuquerque Sign Language Academy*, Email Carolina Quinones at CarolinaQ@aslacademy.com
- *NMSD Sign Class*, for families and educators of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and students. Contact the Center for Educational Consultation and Training at the New Mexico School for the Deaf 505-476-6400. Classes are free if a child in your family is deaf.

In Santa Fe:

- *Santa Fe Community College*, Website: www.sfcc.edu/programs/american-sign-language-interpreting. Contact Beth Hansen at 505.819.5630 or by email at beth.hansen@sfcc.edu.
- *NMSD Sign Class*, for families and educators of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and students. Contact the Center for Educational Consultation and Training at the New Mexico School for the Deaf 505.476.6400. Classes are free if a child in your family is deaf.

In or near Las Cruces:

- *New Mexico State University*, Website: <https://catalogs.nmsu.edu/> or contact Dr. Kathleen Chinn at 575.635.6542 or kchinn@nmsu.edu.

- *El Paso Community College*^{*}, Website: www.epcc.edu/Academics/SignLanguage. Contact Professor Adriana D. Garcia, MS, Instructional Coordinator by phone at 915.831.3147 or email at agarci44@epcc.edu.
- *UTEP P3 Professional & Public Programs*, Website www.ppp.utep.edu Phone 915.747.5142
- Free classes at *Hillside Elementary School, El Paso*, Monday Nights 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Address is 4500 Clifton Ave., El Paso, TX, Phone 915.236.0100. Taught by Mrs. Isabel Montes, who also speaks Spanish.

* These schools offer a curriculum for students who want to become interpreters, please see “Interpreter Education” and “How to Become a Signed Language Interpreter” fact sheets.

Other Resources:

The best way to learn ASL is in a classroom or one on one with a Deaf person. If that is not possible for you, use caution when using websites or YouTube videos as we have found some to be inaccurate. Here are a few websites you can try:

1. www.lifeprint.com with Dr. Bill Vicars, a Deaf man who is an ASL instructor at California State University in Sacramento.
2. <http://aslnook.com> has fun, family-friendly story telling.
3. www.aslpro.com has lots of vocabulary words.

Another resource is the NMCDHH Library located in our Albuquerque and Las Cruces offices. We have subjects on ASL, idioms, and interpreting, to name a few. To browse titles that we have in our library, go to <https://nmcdhh.librarika.com>. If you wish to become a member and reserve items, contact nmcdhh.info@state.nm.us with your name, address and phone number and we will sign you up!