

Culture Close-Up

THAT DEAF GUY



BY MATT & KAY DAIGLE

Round Table

- Deaf people prefer round tables or sitting in circles. This configuration facilitates communication, comfort, and visual awareness, as it allows for good sight-lines, so all signed conversations are able to be seen simultaneously. At a round table, no matter where one sits, all others can be seen. Because Auslan is a visual language, this is extremely important for the ease of effective communication.
- Deaf people will also remove or push to the side, all drink bottles, centrepieces, and objects on the table above a certain height, as these things can block the line of sight and thereby hinder communication.

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Kitchen/Lighting

- Deaf people are notorious for meeting in the kitchen. Historically, this was one of the most well-lit rooms in the house. This tradition has carried through despite the changes in configurations of modern homes.
- Auslan is a visual language, so the Deaf will always choose strong, even lighting rather than soft lamps, candles, or flickering lights. A dim setting might be romantic for those that don't depend on their vision for communication, but for those of us that communicate primarily through signing or speechreading, good lighting, an unobstructed vision, and a non-distracting, non-glare background are essential environmental conditions for successful and comfortable visual-based communication.



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Noisy

Deaf people are often very noisy! Walking, talking, eating, and everyday activities can all be quite noisy if someone is unable to ascertain and therefore regulate their volume in conducting these activities.



NOTE TO PESMONP: DRAGGING A METAL CHAIR ACROSS A TILE FLOOR IS VERY LOUD!