

NZSL FACTS



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How to get a Deaf person's attention



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There are a few ways to get a Deaf person's attention.

TAP SHOULDER:

If their back is turned or is reading, writing or watching something - tap gently on the shoulder or upper arm at least 2 times with a flat palm.



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WAVING HAND:

If you're near a Deaf person but can't quite reach, you can wave your hand (palm facing down) gently in their visual field. If far away, bigger waves is OK.

Be mindful if the person is DeafBlind or has limited peripheral vision, you may need to wave further into their visual field.



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VIBRATION:

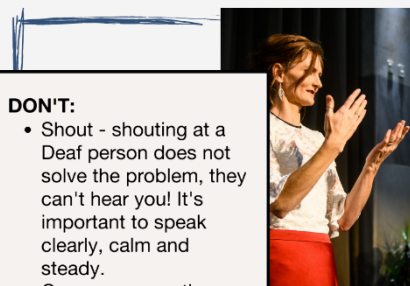
If possible and necessary, you can stomp on the floor or tap on the table.

TURN LIGHTS OFF & ON:

If you need to get the attention of many Deaf people at once, you can flicker the lights off and on a couple of times.



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DON'T:

- Shout - shouting at a Deaf person does not solve the problem, they can't hear you! It's important to speak clearly, calm and steady.
- Cover your mouth or look down - this makes it hard to read your whole face and work out what you're saying.



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DON'T:

- Look away in the middle of the conversation - looking away means the end of the conversation.
- Kick or punch - this will startle the Deaf person.
- Touch elsewhere on the body - e.g head, face, stomach etc to get attention.



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SOURCES

TeachSign - NZSL Level 1 - Unit 1 Handout - Getting Attention

Do's & Don'ts - Getting Attention in the Deaf Community - signgenius.com

Deaf 101 - Hearing, Speech & Deaf Center - hsd.org

Deaf Aotearoa's Deaf Awareness course

