

# freak in sign language

**freak in sign language** is a phrase that can have various meanings depending on context, ranging from describing someone who is exceptionally enthusiastic about something to being used as a slang term for unusual behavior. Understanding how to communicate this concept through American Sign Language (ASL) or other sign languages requires knowledge of specific signs, facial expressions, and cultural nuances. This article aims to provide a comprehensive guide on how to express the term "freak" in sign language, including the literal and figurative meanings, variations in different sign languages, and important considerations for respectful and accurate communication. Whether for educational purposes, interpreting, or personal knowledge, mastering how to sign "freak" enhances vocabulary and fluency in sign language. The discussion will cover definitions, sign descriptions, contextual usage, and common mistakes to avoid, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of this term in the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities.

- Understanding the Meaning of "Freak"
- How to Sign "Freak" in American Sign Language (ASL)
- Variations of "Freak" in Different Sign Languages
- Contextual Usage and Cultural Sensitivity
- Common Mistakes and Tips for Accurate Signing

## Understanding the Meaning of "Freak"

The word "freak" can carry multiple meanings depending on how it is used in conversation. It can refer to someone who is highly enthusiastic or obsessed with a particular hobby or interest, such as a "fitness freak" or "computer freak." Conversely, it can mean a person exhibiting unusual or eccentric behavior or appearance. In some contexts, it may be used derogatorily, while in others, it might be embraced as a form of self-expression or identity. Recognizing these variations is essential when translating or expressing the word in sign language to convey the intended meaning accurately.

## Literal and Figurative Meanings

The literal meaning of "freak" often describes something or someone that is abnormal or irregular. Figuratively, it can denote passion or obsession toward a subject. These distinctions influence the choice of signs, facial expressions, and body language when communicating the term. For example, signing "freak" to mean an enthusiast will differ from signing it to describe someone as strange or unusual.

## Synonyms and Related Terms

In spoken language, synonyms for "freak" include terms like "enthusiast," "fanatic," "weirdo," or "odddity." Understanding these related words helps in selecting the appropriate signs and expressions in sign language, as some signs may overlap or vary depending on the synonym used.

# How to Sign "Freak" in American Sign Language (ASL)

In American Sign Language, there is no single universal sign that directly translates to the English word "freak" in all its meanings. Instead, signers often use descriptive signs or a combination of signs to convey the concept based on context. This approach ensures clarity and avoids misinterpretation.

## Signing "Freak" as an Enthusiast or Fanatic

To express "freak" in the sense of someone who is obsessed or passionate about something, ASL users typically sign the specific interest followed by signs that denote obsession or enthusiasm. For example, to say "fitness freak," one might sign "FITNESS" followed by a sign for "OBSESS" or use facial expressions to emphasize strong interest.

## Signing "Freak" as Someone Strange or Unusual

When referring to someone as a "freak" in the sense of being strange or different, ASL signers might use signs like "WEIRD," "STRANGE," or "ODD" combined with facial expressions that convey the nuance of abnormality. These signs are part of the core ASL vocabulary and are widely understood in the deaf community.

## Finger Spelling and Clarification

In cases where the concept of "freak" does not have a precise sign or when clarification is needed, finger spelling the word F-R-E-A-K is common. This is often followed by contextual explanation or additional signs to ensure the meaning is clear, especially since "freak" can be sensitive or ambiguous.

## Variations of "Freak" in Different Sign Languages

Sign languages vary significantly across regions and cultures, so the way "freak" is signed can differ outside of American Sign Language. Understanding these differences is vital for effective communication in international or multicultural contexts.

### British Sign Language (BSL)

In British Sign Language, "freak" may be signed with a unique gesture that captures either the notion of obsession or oddness, depending on context. BSL often uses different handshapes and movements compared to ASL, so direct translation is not always possible.

### International Sign

International Sign, used in global deaf events, tends to simplify complex or culturally specific signs. For "freak," signers might rely on descriptive gestures or finger spelling, combined with facial expressions, to communicate the idea effectively across different language backgrounds.

### Other Regional Sign Languages

Various sign languages, such as Auslan (Australian Sign Language), Langue des Signes Française (LSF), and others, each have their unique signs and conventions for expressing concepts like "freak."

Regional variation underscores the importance of learning and respecting local sign language norms.

## **Contextual Usage and Cultural Sensitivity**

Using the word "freak" in any language, including sign language, requires awareness of tone, intent, and cultural sensitivity. What might be acceptable in one community could be offensive in another. This is especially relevant in the deaf community, where respect and clarity are paramount.

## **Appropriate Contexts for Using "Freak"**

When using "freak" to describe enthusiasm or passion, it is generally positive and accepted. However, using the term to label someone as strange or abnormal can be hurtful. Signers should consider the relationship between communicators and the social setting before using signs that convey potentially negative connotations.

## **Facial Expressions and Body Language**

In sign language, non-manual signals such as facial expressions, head tilts, and body posture are crucial for conveying meaning and tone. For example, signing "freak" as a negative term requires a different facial expression than signing it as an enthusiastic descriptor. Misuse of these cues can result in misunderstanding.

## **Respectful Communication Practices**

Respect for individuals' identities and feelings should guide the use of language. When in doubt, opting for neutral or descriptive signs instead of potentially derogatory terms is advisable. This approach fosters inclusive and effective communication within the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities.

## **Common Mistakes and Tips for Accurate Signing**

Learning to sign "freak" correctly involves avoiding common pitfalls related to sign choice, facial expressions, and cultural awareness. Proper practice and feedback from native signers enhance accuracy and appropriateness.

## **Avoiding Misinterpretation**

One frequent mistake is using a sign that is too vague or unrelated, leading to confusion. For example, signing only "strange" without context might not capture the intended meaning of "freak" as an enthusiast. Combining signs and using appropriate facial expressions helps prevent this issue.

## **Overgeneralizing Signs**

Another common error is assuming a single sign fits all meanings of "freak." Since the word has multiple nuances, signers must tailor their signing to the specific context. Learning synonyms and related signs broadens expressive capability.

## Tips for Effective Learning

- Practice with fluent signers or instructors to receive corrective feedback.
- Observe contextual cues and non-manual signals used by native signers.
- Expand vocabulary to include related terms like "enthusiast," "weird," and "obsessed."
- Use finger spelling when precise signs are unavailable or unclear.
- Respect cultural differences and preferences in sign language use.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What does the sign for 'freak' look like in American Sign Language (ASL)?

In ASL, there isn't a direct sign for 'freak' as in the slang sense; instead, people often fingerspell the word or use descriptive signs depending on the context.

### How can I express the idea of 'freak out' in sign language?

To sign 'freak out' in ASL, you can demonstrate a startled or shocked facial expression combined with rapid, exaggerated movements of the hands near the head to show surprise or panic.

### Is 'freak' considered offensive in sign language?

The sign or fingerspelling of 'freak' itself is neutral, but the word can be offensive depending on context. It's important to be mindful of tone and intent when using any potentially sensitive words in sign language.

### Can 'freak' be signed differently in various sign languages?

Yes, different sign languages around the world may have their own unique signs or methods to convey the concept of 'freak' or related expressions. Always consider the specific sign language and cultural context.

### How do I fingerspell the word 'freak' in ASL?

To fingerspell 'freak' in ASL, use the handshapes for each letter: F - R - E - A - K, in sequence.

### Are there alternative signs to describe someone acting like a

## 'freak' in ASL?

Yes, ASL users might use signs like 'weird,' 'crazy,' or 'strange' combined with facial expressions to convey the idea of someone acting like a 'freak.' These signs better capture behavior rather than the slang term itself.

## Where can I learn more about slang terms like 'freak' in sign language?

You can learn more about slang and informal signs by watching ASL tutorials on platforms like YouTube, joining deaf community groups, or using resources such as ASL dictionaries and apps that include slang terms and their usage.

## Additional Resources

### 1. *Freaks and Sign: Understanding Uniqueness in American Sign Language*

This book explores the concept of "freak" as a term for uniqueness and difference within the Deaf community. It delves into how American Sign Language (ASL) expresses individuality and nonconformity through specific signs and cultural references. Readers gain insight into the intersection of language, identity, and societal perceptions.

### 2. *Signed Expressions: Embracing the Freak Within*

A heartfelt exploration of self-acceptance and identity through ASL, this book uses the concept of "freak" as a metaphor for embracing one's differences. It combines personal stories, sign descriptions, and cultural commentary to encourage readers to celebrate their unique traits. The book serves as a bridge between Deaf culture and broader discussions about diversity.

### 3. *ASL and the Language of the Unconventional: Decoding "Freak"*

This academic work investigates how ASL encapsulates terms related to non-normativity, including the sign for "freak." It examines linguistic structures, regional variations, and the sociolinguistic context of such signs. Readers interested in language evolution and Deaf studies will find this book particularly insightful.

### 4. *Freak Signs: The Power of Nonconformity in Sign Language*

Highlighting the empowering aspects of the sign for "freak," this book discusses how Deaf individuals use language to reclaim and redefine stigmatized terms. It includes interviews with Deaf artists and activists who use ASL creatively to express identities that challenge mainstream norms. The narrative emphasizes resilience and empowerment.

### 5. *Deaf Culture and the Sign for Freak: A Visual Journey*

Through vivid illustrations and photographs, this book presents the sign for "freak" and related expressions within Deaf culture. It provides context about how visual language reflects cultural values and social attitudes. The book is an excellent resource for learners and educators interested in visual linguistics.

### 6. *Breaking Boundaries: Freak, Identity, and Expression in ASL*

This book focuses on how the concept of "freak" intersects with identity politics in the Deaf community. It discusses how ASL users challenge stereotypes through language and performance art. Readers will find discussions on intersectionality, self-expression, and the transformative power of

sign language.

#### 7. *From Freak to Fabulous: Transformations in Sign Language Identity*

A narrative-driven work that traces personal journeys of Deaf individuals who have redefined the term "freak" into a symbol of pride. The book combines memoir-style storytelling with linguistic analysis of the signs used to convey change and empowerment. It inspires readers to rethink labels and embrace self-identity.

#### 8. *Sign Language and the Language of Difference: Exploring Freak in ASL*

This scholarly book examines how difference and otherness are linguistically represented in ASL, focusing on the sign for "freak." It includes comparative studies with other sign languages and investigates cultural implications. The text is suited for linguists, anthropologists, and students of Deaf culture.

#### 9. *Express Yourself: The Art of Signing Freak in Deaf Communities*

A vibrant collection of essays and visual art that celebrates creativity around the sign for "freak" in various Deaf communities. It showcases how language, art, and identity intersect to create powerful expressions of individuality. The book encourages readers to appreciate the diversity and richness of ASL culture.

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**freak in sign language: Theologizing en Espanglish** Carmen Nanko-Fernandez , 2014-07-30

**freak in sign language: Handbook of Latina/o Theologies** Edwin David Aponte, Miguel A. De La Torre, 2006-05-01 Handbook of Latino/a Theologies explores the varied theological, ecclesiastical, spiritual, and cultural expressions associated with the term 'Latino/a or Hispanic theology.' There is no single definition of Hispanic/Latino theology, but rather a multiplicity of perspectives within the diverse Latino/a communities that articulate a distinctive and relevant Hispanic viewpoint. This collection of thirty-four essays surveys how Latinos/as understand and do theology within those varied contexts. It gives attention to the history, nature, sources, and development of Latinos/as theological expressions within the U.S. and their contribution to the overall theological discourse and to the individual groups that gave rise to them. Part I of the handbook presents essays on many traditional topics in Christian theology representative both of the individual authors and various beliefs found in Latino/a communities. Part II focuses on trends and contextual issues within the overall Hispanic/Latino theological conversation.

**freak in sign language: Blink & Caution** Tim Wynne-Jones, 2011-03-08 Two teenagers who are living on the streets and barely getting by become involved in a complicated criminal plot, and make an unexpected connection with each other.

**freak in sign language: Sign Language Research Sixty Years Later: Current and Future Perspectives** Valentina Cuccio, Erin Wilkinson, Brigitte Garcia, Adam Schembri, Erin Moriarty, Sabina Fontana, 2022-11-14

**freak in sign language: *Seeing Voices*** Anabel Maler, 2024 *Seeing Voices* explores the

phenomenon of music created in a signed language and argues that music can exist beyond sound and the sense of hearing, instead involving all of our senses, including vision and touch. Using a blend of tools from music theory, cognitive science, musicology, and ethnography, author Anabel Maler presents the history of music in Deaf culture from the early nineteenth century, contextualizes contemporary Deaf music through ethnographic interviews with Deaf musicians, and provides detailed analyses of a wide variety of genres of sign language music.

**freak in sign language: The Oxford Handbook of Disability History** Michael A. Rembis, Catherine Jean Kudlick, Kim E. Nielsen, 2018 The Oxford Handbook of Disability History features twenty-seven articles that span the diverse, global history of the disabled--from antiquity to today.

**freak in sign language: Colonising Disability** Esme Cleall, 2022-08-04 Colonising Disability explores the construction and treatment of disability across Britain and its empire from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Drawing on a wide range of sources, Esme Cleall explores how disability increasingly became associated with 'difference' and argues that it did so through intersecting with other categories of otherness such as race. Philanthropic, legal, literary, religious, medical, educational, eugenistic and parliamentary texts are examined to unpick representations of disability that, overtime, became pervasive with significant ramifications for disabled people. Cleall also uses multiple examples to show how disabled people navigated a wide range of experiences from 'freak shows' in Britain, to missions in India, to immigration systems in Australia, including exploring how they mobilised to resist discrimination and constitute their own identities. By assessing the intersection between disability and race, Dr Cleall opens up questions about 'normalcy' and the making of the imperial self.

**freak in sign language: Different Bodies** Marja Evelyn Mogk, 2013-09-27 This collection of 19 new essays by 21 authors from the United States, the UK, Canada, Australia and India focuses on contemporary film and television (1989 to the present) from those countries as well as from China, Korea, Thailand and France. The essays are divided into two parts. The first includes critical readings of narrative film and television. The second includes contributions on documentaries, biopics and autobiographically-informed films. The book as a whole is designed to be accessible to readers new to disability studies while also contributing significantly to the field. An introduction gives background on disability studies and appendices provide a filmography and a list of suggested reading.

**freak in sign language: Encyclopedia of Disability** Gary L Albrecht, 2006 Presents current knowledge of and experience with disability across a wide variety of places, conditions, and cultures to both the general reader and the specialist.

**freak in sign language: John Leguizamo** Amy Allison, 2013 A biography of the multi-talented entertainer, John Leguizamo, known for his acting, his writing, and his work as a comedian.

**freak in sign language: Studying Disability Arts and Culture** Petra Kuppers, 2017-09-16 In this accessible introduction to the study of Disability Arts and Culture, Petra Kuppers foregrounds themes, artists and theoretical concepts in this diverse field. Complete with case studies, exercises and questions for further study, the book introduces students to the work of disabled artists and their allies, and explores artful responses to living with physical, cognitive, emotional or sensory difference. Engaging readers as cultural producers, Kuppers provides useful frameworks for critical analysis and encourages students to explore their own positioning within the frames of gender, race, sexuality, class and disability. Comprehensive and accessible, this is an essential handbook for undergraduate students or anyone interested in disabled bodies and minds in theatre, performance, creative writing, art and dance.

**freak in sign language: A Guide to High School Success for Students with Disabilities** Cynthia Ann Bowman, Paul T. Jaeger, 2004-10-30 Written for young people with disabilities and the people who care for and educate them, this unique resource offers both inspiration and advice to help disabled teenagers successfully meet the special social and academic challenges of high school and to find their paths into the future. Compiling a wealth of expertise on a range of issues in high school and all the accompanying major life events, this edited volume offers guidance, support, experience,

and encouragement, providing everything from explanation of legal rights to guidance on effective study habits. Through the voices of disabled students and their teachers and family members, the book provides insights into the internal dilemmas that students face as well as problems they may encounter in the classroom, at home, and in society. This book is written to offer tools that empower students with disabilities face their challenges while providing educators, family members and friends insights into issues these students may encounter during their high school years. Every high school teacher, administrator, counselor, and librarian should familiarize themselves with the issues explored on these pages. The book is divided into five topical sections that each addresses a set of related issues. Section I provides a history of disabilities across different times and cultures and a discussion of the legal rights of students with disabilities. Section II discusses the cultural and social issues disabled teens face in modern society and looks at representations in film and literature. Section III is devoted to the many interactions and relationships faced in high school, including dating, socialization, and extracurricular activities. Section IV addresses issues related to academic success and the concluding chapter offers tools for advocacy and empowerment. Appendices complete this multi-faceted volume with lists of additional readings and on-line resources for students with disabilities.

**freak in sign language:** *Transgressive Bodies* Niall Richardson, 2016-02-17 In recent years the body has become one of the most popular areas of study in the arts, social sciences and humanities. *Transgressive Bodies* offers an examination of a variety of non-normative bodies and how they are represented in film, media and popular culture. Examining the non-normative body in a cultural studies context, this book reconsiders the concept of the transgressive body, establishing its status as a culturally mutable term, arguing that popular cultural representations create the transgressive or freak body and then proceed to either contain its threat or (s)exploit it. Through studies of extreme bodybuilding, obesity, disability and transsexed bodies, it examines the implications of such transgressive bodies for gender politics and sexuality. *Transgressive Bodies* engages with contemporary cultural debates, always relating these to concrete studies of media and cultural representations. This book will therefore appeal to scholars across a range of disciplines, including media and film studies, cultural studies, gender studies, sociology, sports studies and cultural theory.

**freak in sign language:** *The Small Tigers of Shergarh* Ranjit Lal, 2006-07-01 Orphaned in a car accident, fourteen-year-old Shikha and five-year-old Sunny reach Shergarh House, on the edge of the Shergarh Tiger Reserve, to live with their uncle Binoy, an eccentric painter. In the company of Aslambhai (a retired forest guard) and his mischievous grandson Ali, the children enter a new world; that of the sights and sounds of the jungle. Encouraged by Field Director Mr Rana's daughter, Dipti, and watched over by her family, the children begin to enjoy their forays into the reserve and get inexorably drawn into the lives of the reserve's magnificent tigers; macho 'doofus' shahenshah, ferocious Sheba and even terrifying Shaitan. But then, Veena aunty, a.k.a. 'Snail Snot', turns up, a 'social worker' who is set to inveigle herself into Binoy chacha's life and who wants to discredit the reserve in whatever way she can as part of her 'Good Work'. Accompanied by her unpleasant cousin, the slimeball Randhir, and his equally dubious friends, she is determined to send the children to separate boarding schools by whatever means possible. As the two hatch their diabolical plans, the children's lives seem ready to fall apart, again. But will the doughty Shikha allow that to happen? Will Sunny, struck dumb by the shock of the car crash, stop clinging to his sister and speak again? Will the two children, who run away into the reserve pursued by Veena, Randhir and his cronies, survive the perils of the forest? Can 'the small tigers of Shergarh' turn the tables on the villains and live up to their name?

**freak in sign language:** *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Disability Studies* Blake Howe, Stephanie Jensen-Moulton, Neil William Lerner, Joseph Nathan Straus, 2016 Like race, gender, and sexuality, disability is a social and cultural construction. Music, musicians, and music-making simultaneously embody and shape representations and narratives of disability. Disability -- culturally stigmatized minds and bodies -- is one of the things that music in all times and places can be said to

be about.

**freak in sign language: A Cultural History of Disability in the Long Nineteenth Century**

Joyce L. Huff, Martha Stoddard Holmes, 2023-05-17 The long 19th century-stretching from the start of the American Revolution in 1776 to the end of World War I in 1918-was a pivotal period in the history of disability for the Western world and the cultures under its imperial sway. Industrialization was a major factor in the changing landscape of disability, providing new adaptive technologies and means of access while simultaneously contributing to the creation of a mass-produced environment hostile to bodies and minds that did not adhere to emerging norms. In defining disability, medical views, which framed disabilities as problems to be solved, competed with discourses from such diverse realms as religion, entertainment, education, and literature. Disabled writers and activists generated important counternarratives, made increasingly available through the spread of print culture. An essential resource for researchers, scholars and students of history, literature, culture and education, *A Cultural History of Disability in the Long Nineteenth Century* includes chapters on atypical bodies, mobility impairment, chronic pain and illness, blindness, deafness, speech dysfluencies, learning difficulties, and mental health, with 37 illustrations drawn from period sources.

**freak in sign language: Disability** Tom Shakespeare, 2017-08-14

*Disability: The Basics* is an engaging and accessible introduction to disability which explores the broad historical, social, environmental, economic and legal factors which affect the experiences of those living with an impairment or illness in contemporary society. The book explores key introductory topics including: the diversity of the disability experience; disability rights and advocacy; ways in which disabled people have been treated throughout history and in different parts of the world; the daily realities of living with an impairment or illness; health, education, employment and other services that exist to support and include disabled people; ethical issues at the beginning and end of life. *Disability: The Basics* aims to provide readers with an understanding of the lived experiences of disabled people and highlight the continuing gaps and barriers in social responses to the challenge of disability. This book is suitable for lay people, students of disability studies as well as students taking a disability module as part of a wider course within social work, health care, sociology, nursing, policy and media studies.

**freak in sign language: How Deaf Children Learn** Marc Marschark, Peter C. Hauser,

2011-11-22 In this book, renowned authorities Marschark and Hauser explain how empirical research conducted over the last several years directly informs educational practices at home and in the classroom, and offer strategies that parents and teachers can use to promote optimal learning in their deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

**freak in sign language: The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood** Kirsten T. Saxton,

Rebecca P. Bocchicchio, 2000 The most prolific woman writer of the eighteenth century, Eliza Haywood (1693-1756?) was a key player in the history of the English novel. Along with her contemporary Defoe, she did more than any other writer to create a market for fiction prior to the emergence of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett. Also one of Augustan England's most popular authors, Haywood came to fame in 1719 with the publication of her first novel, *Love in Excess*. In addition to writing fiction, she was a playwright, translator, bookseller, actress, theater critic, and editor of *The Female Spectator*, the first English periodical written by women for women. Though tremendously popular, her novels and plays from the 1720s and 30s scandalized the reading public with explicit portrayals of female sexuality and led others to call her the Great Arbitress of Passion. Essays in this collection explore themes such as the connections between Haywood's early and late work, her experiments with the form of the novel, her involvement in party politics, her use of myth and plot devices, and her intense interest in the imbalance of power between men and women. Distinguished scholars such as Paula Backscheider, Felicity Nussbaum, and John Richetti approach Haywood from a number of theoretical and topical positions, leading the way in a crucial reexamination of her work. *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood* examines the formal and ideological complexities of her prose and demonstrates how Haywood's texts deft traditional

schematization.

**freak in sign language:** *Evolution of the Fallen* M. J. Goodnow, 2011-05 Four mentally challenged Teenagers are placed into a group home. Tragedy and pain occur in instances of abuse and medication over usage, with attending staff. Beth, the house mother finds, quite literally, a plan. What happens next may shake the word stigma to the core.

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