

# SPARKCHARTS AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE



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## THE BASICS

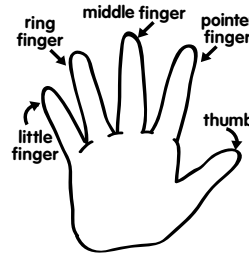
- American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual, gesture-based system of communication used by Deaf individuals in the United States and Canada. It is difficult to estimate the number of people who communicate with ASL as their primary language, but two million is often suggested.
- In 1815, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet went to Europe to study Deaf communications. He met Deaf Frenchman Laurent Clerc, who later became the first Deaf instructor in the United States. For that reason, today's ASL is based on French Sign Language, with many of the words originating from French.
- ASL is not a universal language, as many countries have their own Deaf languages. Even within the United States there are regional variations for certain words and phrases; in such cases, this chart offers the most common method of signing each word or phrase. Although there has been an attempt to internationalize sign language, the effort has met many challenges due to inconsistency of grammatical rules.
- Many schools now recognize American Sign Language as a foreign language.
- For information on plurals, negatives, verb tenses, and other aspects of signing, see More on Signing, other side.

## THE MANUAL ALPHABET

- The manual alphabet is used to spell out words manually—a system known as **fingerspelling**.
- The palm of the signing hand should face the audience at a slight angle. It should not block the mouth, for that prevents simultaneous lip reading. The interpreter should speak (or use silent lip formation when there is another speaker) the words being spelled at the same time. Signs should be held at chest level.
- The handshapes used for the letters and numbers also are used in signing many words, phrases, and concepts.

## HOW TO USE THIS CHART

- For signing purposes, the fingers on the hand are named as follows:



- The directions on this chart use the right hand as the dominant hand. Instructions may be reversed for left-handed interpreters. If reference is not made to a specific hand, the right hand (or dominant signing hand) should be used.
- The instructions for each sign on this chart (aside from the manual alphabet and numbers) follow this format:

[word/concept]	starting handshape
	movement (if any)
	explanation or rationale behind sign (if any)

## NUMBERS

Sign	Handshape	Sign	Handshape
A	closed fist with thumb extended	N	pointer and middle fingers resting on thumb, with ring and little fingers tucked
B	flat palm with thumb touching pointer finger or extended across fingers, sometimes at an angle	O	all fingers forming an O (note: a closed "O" is often used to make concept/word signs and is formed by compressing the fingers together)
C	a letter C with fingers and thumb	P	pointer and middle fingers extended downward (hint: flipped letter K)
D	a letter D with thumb and three fingers with pointer finger extended upward	Q	pointer finger extended downward (hint: flipped letter G)
E	open fist with thumb curled across palm	R	closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended and crossed (hint: railroad crossing)
F	thumb and pointer forming a circle, remaining fingers extended upward (hint: opposite of D)	S	closed fist with thumb curled over fingers
G	closed fist with pointer finger extended to side	T	closed fist with thumb between pointer and middle fingers
H	closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended to side	U	closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended upward and touching
I	closed fist with little finger extended upward	V	closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended upward and separated
J	closed fist with little finger extended upward, sweeping a J shape in the air	W	closed fist with pointer, middle, and ring fingers extended upward and separated
K	pointer and middle fingers extended at angle with thumb at base of angle (hint: extended "arm" and "leg" of the letter K)	X	closed fist with pointer finger extended and curled
L	thumb and pointer finger at a right angle (hint: letter L)	Y	closed fist with thumb and middle fingers extended
M	pointer, middle, and ring fingers resting on thumb, with little finger tucked	Z	closed fist with pointer finger extended, writing a letter Z in the air

Sign	Handshape	Sign	Handshape
0	fingers in O shape	7	tip of thumb to tip of ring finger with remaining fingers extended
1	closed fist with pointer finger extended (note: this sign is often used to make concept/word signs)	8	tip of thumb to tip of middle finger with remaining fingers extended
2	closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended and separated (hint: same as letter V)	9	tip of thumb to tip of pointer finger with remaining fingers extended
3	closed fist with extended and separated pointer and middle fingers and thumb (note: different from letter W)	10	"A" shape with fist closed and thumb extended, shake repeatedly
4	four fingers extended and separated with thumb across palm	11	"S" shape to extended pointer finger (hint: snap pointer finger two times, palm facing in)
5	all five fingers extended and separated (note: this sign is often used to make concept/word signs)	12	"S" shape to extended pointer and middle fingers (hint: snap fingers two times, palm facing in)
6	tip of thumb to tip of little finger with remaining fingers extended	13	"10" shape followed by "3" shape (hint: palm faces in for "10" and then faces out for "3")











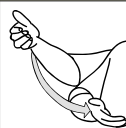
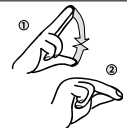
14-19	(see above)	composed like 13: "10" shape followed by shape for single digit
20		closed fist with thumb and pointer finger extended; open and close thumb and pointer finger two times
30		closed fist with thumb and pointer and middle fingers extended; open and close thumb and fingers two times
100		fingers in "C" shape (hint: C is the Roman numeral for 100; can precede the "C" with "1" shape)
1,000		"M" shape with fingertips of right hand resting on palm of left (hint: M is the Roman numeral for 1,000; can precede the "M" with "1" shape)
1,000,000		"M" shape with fingertips of right hand resting on palm of left; strike right hand on left palm two times (hint: 1,000 times 1,000)

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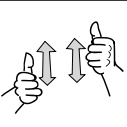
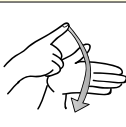
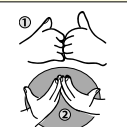



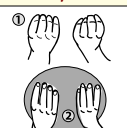
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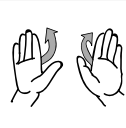




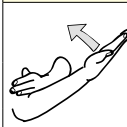

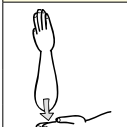

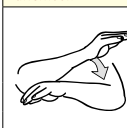
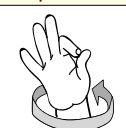
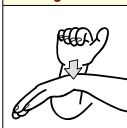
## GREETINGS AND PHRASES

<p><b>hello</b></p>  <p>'B' hand along right side of head deliberate and to the right saluting motion</p>	<p><b>I'm fine</b></p>  <p>'S' hand with thumb touching chest move hand away from chest signing 'fine' only</p>	<p><b>please</b></p>  <p>right hand open on chest repeated circular motion rubbing heart with pleasure</p>	<p><b>excuse me</b></p>  <p>fingertips of right hand across open left palm brushing motion from heel of hand to fingertips brushing away</p>
<p><b>goodbye</b></p>  <p>open hand with fingers extended and pressed together bend fingers up and down waving goodbye</p>	<p><b>what's your name?</b></p>  <p>pointer finger of 'I' hand pointing out to other person point to other person, then tap 'H' hands twice with inquisitive look on face 'you' + 'name'</p>	<p><b>thank you</b></p>  <p>open hand with tips of fingers on mouth move fingers away from mouth —</p>	<p><b>yes</b></p>  <p>'S' hand bent wrist; repeated up-and-down motion simulating head nodding</p>
<p><b>how are you?</b></p>  <p>fingers of both hands at chest, knuckles touching flow hands up and out to palms facing up, then extend primary pointer finger forward 'how' + 'you'</p>	<p><b>my name is . . .</b></p>  <p>pointer finger of 'I' hand touching chest touch chest once, tap 'H' hands twice sign 'my' and 'name' only, followed by fingerspelling of name</p>	<p><b>you're welcome</b></p>  <p>open hand away from and to the side of body sweep hand down toward waist with palm up 'welcome' only</p>	<p><b>no</b></p>  <p>pointer and middle fingers extended, touching thumb two quick open-and-close motions 'N' + 'O' quickly</p>

## QUESTION WORDS

<p><b>question</b></p>  <p>hand in 'I' position write a question mark in the air traces shape of question mark (<b>note</b>: used before or after question)</p>	<p><b>why?</b></p>  <p>open hand with fingertips on forehead to 'Y' hand touch forehead and then move away from head for examination taking thought out and looking at it</p>
<p><b>who?</b></p>  <p>pointer finger of 'I' position at mouth make a small circle around mouth traces shape mouth makes when saying 'who'</p>	<p><b>which?</b></p>  <p>both hands in '10' position at chest hands alternate up and down indicating doubt (weighing options)</p>
<p><b>what?</b></p>  <p>right hand in 'I' position; left hand open with palm angled toward body brush extended finger across open palm —</p>	<p><b>how?</b></p>  <p>fingers in to chest, knuckles touching hands flow up and out to palms facing up as if turning up seems to see inside edges</p>
<p><b>when?</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'I' position right hand circles above left hand, then both pointer fingers touch tracing face of clock and then touching it</p>	<p><b>how much?</b></p>  <p>both hands curved and open fingertips together, then apart showing quantity</p>
<p><b>where?</b></p>  <p>hand in 'I' position with palm out shake finger from side to side simulating head moving from side to side looking for something</p>	<p><b>how many?</b></p>  <p>'S' hand with palm up open hand to 'S' hand with palm up —</p>

## DAYS AND TIME OF DAY





















<p><b>Sunday</b></p>  <p>both hands open in front of shoulders each hand makes a small, repeated circular motion opening church doors</p>	<p><b>Saturday</b></p>  <p>'S' hand in front of right shoulder circular motion with hand around vertical line 'S' for Saturday</p>
<p><b>Monday</b></p>  <p>'M' hand, palm out, in front of right shoulder circular motion with hand around vertical line 'M' for Monday</p>	<p><b>day</b></p>  <p>left arm bent across body, right elbow resting in left hand, and right hand in 'I' position right hand arcs toward left elbow sun moving across sky</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p>  <p>'T' hand in front of right shoulder circular motion with hand around vertical line 'T' for Tuesday</p>	<p><b>morning</b></p>  <p>right arm extended with palm up; left hand in crook of right arm right open palm moves toward face two times sun rising</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p>  <p>'W' hand in front of right shoulder circular motion with hand around vertical line 'W' for Wednesday</p>	<p><b>noon</b></p>  <p>right arm, bent with flat palm inward, extends upward while resting on palm of left hand place elbow on hand two times sun straight above (or hands of clock at 12:00)</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p>  <p>'H' hand in front of right shoulder circular motion with hand around vertical line used to be signed 'T' + 'H'; now 'H' only</p>	<p><b>afternoon</b></p>  <p>right arm, bent and extended with palm down, rests on downturned left hand light bounce of right arm sun setting</p>
<p><b>Friday</b></p>  <p>'F' hand in front of right shoulder circular motion with hand around vertical line 'F' for Friday</p>	<p><b>evening</b></p>  <p>right hand, curved with palm facing down, rests on wrists of flat left hand with palm facing down right wrist taps left wrist two times sun setting below horizon</p>

## GLOSSARY


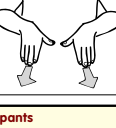
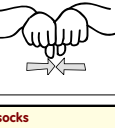





- Fingerspelling:** Communicating one letter at a time using the manual alphabet, in which each handshape corresponds to a letter.
- Gloss:** The translation of a sign from concept to English word(s).
- Iconicity:** The relationship between a sign and what it represents.
- Initialized sign:** A sign in which a handshape from the manual alphabet corresponds to the first letter of the English word represented.
- Manual alphabet:** 26 handshapes that represent the letters of the English alphabet.
- Sign:** A figure, made with one or both hands, that represents a concept.




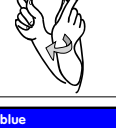





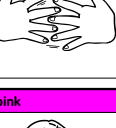

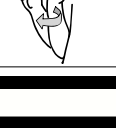


## FAMILY MEMBERS AND PEOPLE

<p><b>family</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'F' position with thumbs touching start with thumbs touching, then circle in outward direction until little fingers meet the family circle</p>	<p><b>son</b></p>  <p>'S' hand with thumb touching forehead right hand moves from male position on head to join left arm in cradle position rocking a male child</p>	<p><b>uncle</b></p>  <p>'U' hand at right side of forehead repeated downward movement on forehead 'U' for uncle at male region of face</p>	<p><b>husband</b></p>  <p>right 'C' hand on right side of forehead; curved left hand in front of body right hand joins left hand in clasp 'man' + 'marry'</p>
<p><b>parents</b></p>  <p>'P' shape on forehead touch forehead and then chin 'P' for parents; first male and then female areas of face</p>	<p><b>daughter</b></p>  <p>'S' hand with thumb touching chin right hand moves from female position at chin to join left arm in cradle position rocking a female child</p>	<p><b> aunt</b></p>  <p>'A' hand at right side of chin repeated downward movement on chin 'A' for aunt at female region of face</p>	<p><b>wife</b></p>  <p>right 'C' hand on right side of chin; curved left hand in front of body right hand joins left hand in clasp 'woman' + 'marry'</p>
<p><b>father</b></p>  <p>'S' hand with thumb touching forehead wiggle fingers (optional) male signs typically made near the forehead</p>	<p><b>baby</b></p>  <p>arms held in cradle position rocking motion rocking an infant</p>	<p><b>cousin</b></p>  <p>'C' hand at forehead (male) or chin (female) forward twist of wrist 'C' for cousin at male or female region of face</p>	<p><b>boy</b></p>  <p>flattened 'C' hand on forehead close fingers and thumb together twice tipping of boy's hat (or grabbing bill on baseball cap)</p>
<p><b>mother</b></p>  <p>'S' hand with thumb touching chin wiggle fingers (optional) female signs typically made near the chin or lower cheek</p>	<p><b>brother</b></p>  <p>right 'A' hand on right side of forehead; left hand resting at waist right hand joins left hand, both in 'T' position 'male' + 'same'</p>	<p><b>grandfather</b></p>  <p>right hand in 'father' position; left hand open near chest both hands make two arcs away from body each arc represents one generation</p>	<p><b>girl</b></p>  <p>'A' hand at top of cheek two short strokes down along cheek indicating location of strings on a bonnet</p>
<p><b>child</b></p>  <p>open hand, palm down short and repeated downward movement near waist patting a child on his/her head</p>	<p><b>sister</b></p>  <p>right 'A' hand on right side of chin; left hand resting at waist right hand joins left hand, both in 'T' position 'female' + 'same'</p>	<p><b>grandmother</b></p>  <p>right hand in 'mother' position; left hand open near chest both hands make two arcs away from body each arc represents one generation</p>	<p><b>friend</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'T' position with hooked pointer fingers linked together hook once, then reverse positions and hook again close relationship</p>

## CLOTHING











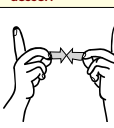
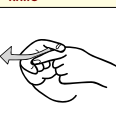








<p><b>clothing</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'S' position touching chest below shoulders brush hands down across chest twice location of clothing</p>	<p><b>skirt</b></p>  <p>both hands open with fingers down at hips move hands down two times location of skirt</p>	<p><b>shoes</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'S' position with thumbs and pointer fingers touching tap hands together twice clicking heels together</p>	<p><b>coat</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'A' position above shoulders arc hands down to waist coat covering upper body</p>
<p><b>shirt</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'F' position at chest, pinching shirt with thumbs and pointer fingers pinch and pull hands away twice indicating shirt</p>	<p><b>pants</b></p>  <p>both hands open with fingers down below hips flick hands up two times location of pockets or pant legs</p>	<p><b>socks</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'T' position angled down in front of body repeatedly slide extended fingers against each other knitting socks</p>	<p><b>hat</b></p>  <p>open hand on top of head pat head twice location of hat</p>

## COLORS

<p><b>red</b></p>  <p>hand in 'T' position at lips two downward strokes on lips, bending finger down each time red lips</p>	<p><b>green</b></p>  <p>'G' hand in front of chest waving motion, bending wrist 'G' for green</p>	<p><b>black</b></p>  <p>relaxed fist, palm down, with extended pointer finger on forehead pull finger from left to right across forehead touching (black) eyebrows</p>	<p><b>tan</b></p>  <p>'T' hand on right cheek double stroke on cheek 'T' for tan</p>
<p><b>orange</b></p>  <p>'C' hand in front of mouth squeezing motion from 'C' to 'S' shapes squeezing an orange (also sign for fruit)</p>	<p><b>blue</b></p>  <p>'B' hand in front of chest waving motion, bending wrist 'B' for blue</p>	<p><b>white</b></p>  <p>'S' hand on chest pull hand forward while closing fingers touching a white shirt</p>	<p><b>gray</b></p>  <p>both hands in 'S' position on chest move hands back and forth through open fingers mixing colors</p>
<p><b>yellow</b></p>  <p>'Y' hand in front of chest waving motion, bending wrist 'Y' for yellow</p>	<p><b>purple</b></p>  <p>'P' hand in front of right shoulder waving motion, bending wrist 'P' for purple</p>	<p><b>brown</b></p>  <p>'B' hand on right cheek double stroke on cheek 'B' for brown</p>	<p><b>pink</b></p>  <p>'P' hand on lips two downward strokes on lips with middle finger, bending finger down each time pink lips</p>


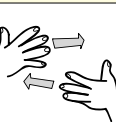




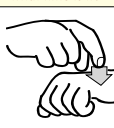

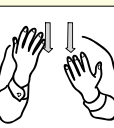










CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE

# FOOD AND MEALS

<b>to eat</b>  flattened 'O' hand bring hand to mouth (note: to sign 'food', repeat movement) bringing food to mouth	<b>restaurant</b>  'R' hand at mouth touch extended fingers first to right side and then to left side of mouth 'R' for restaurant, at mouth	<b>fruit</b>  'F' hand on right cheek double twist of fingers/wrist 'F' for fruit	<b>bread</b>  slightly bent right hand above left hand extended with downward palm slicing motion of right hand across left hand slicing bread
<b>to drink</b>  'C' hand, thumb at mouth tip fingers to nose drinking from a cup	<b>hungry</b>  fingertips of 'C' hand touching chest slide hand down chest digestive tract	<b>vegetable</b>  pointer finger of 'V' shape on right side of chin sweep 'V' across chin, ending with middle finger of 'V' on left side of chin 'V' for vegetable	<b>fork</b>  right hand in 'W' position with left hand open, palms facing each other tap right hand on left palm tines of fork
<b>breakfast</b>  flat 'O' hand at mouth move to extended right arm with palm up, left hand in crook of right arm, then move right open palm toward face twice 'eat' + 'morning'	<b>thirsty</b>  pointer finger of 'T' hand on throat slide finger down throat dry throat	<b>dessert</b>  both hands with fingers touching in 'D' shape in front of chest move hands apart two times 'D' for dessert	<b>knife</b>  both hands in '1' position, palms down slide right extended finger across left extended finger sharpening knife
<b>lunch</b>  flat 'O' hand at mouth move to bent right arm with flat inward palm extending upward while resting on palm of left hand, bounce twice 'eat' + 'noon'	<b>meat</b>  right thumb and pointer finger pinch flesh of open left hand shake hands together twice grasping meaty or fleshy part of skin	<b>water</b>  'W' hand on chin tap chin twice with pointer finger 'W' for water	<b>spoon</b>  right 'H' hand, palm up, and open left hand, palm up small scooping motion of right hand across left palm spooning out of a bowl
<b>dinner</b>  flat 'O' hand at mouth move to curved right hand with palm down resting on wrist of left hand with palm down, making two taps of wrist of right hand on wrist of left hand 'eat' + 'night'	<b>fish</b>  open right hand extended forward at waist level with left fingers touching right elbow right hand waves side to side movement of fish (or fish's tail) in water	<b>milk</b>  'C' hand in front of body open and close to 'S' shape milking a cow	<b>plate</b>  both hands in '1' position, several inches apart, palms in — fingers form sides of plate

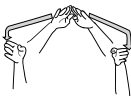
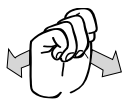
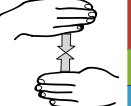



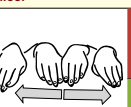
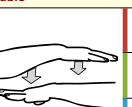


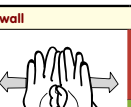
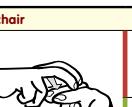

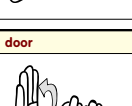


# EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS

# TIME

<b>feeling</b>  middle finger of '5' hand on chest move upward on chest feelings come from the heart	<b>afraid</b>  both hands in '5' position on chest; right hand slightly above left slide hands deliberately toward center of chest protecting body	<b>time</b>  right hand palm down, in '1' position, with extended pointer finger resting on left '5' hand, palm down tap left wrist twice, move both hands to 'C' positions near each side of face 'time' + 'clock'	<b>day</b>  left arm bent across body with right elbow resting in left hand; right hand in '1' position with pointer finger upward right hand arcs toward left elbow sun moving across sky
<b>happy</b>  palm of open hand on chest move hand upward on chest twice feeling 'up'	<b>jealous</b>  'J' hand with little finger at right corner of mouth make small 'J' shape, changing palm from outward to inward 'J' for jealous, with a drool	<b>what time is it?</b>  hand in '1' position tap opposite wrist common gesture for asking about the time	<b>week</b>  right hand in 'D' position with little finger resting on open left palm slide 'D' hand across open palm moving across one week of 'days'
<b>sad</b>  both hands in '5' position with fingers up at sides of face slide hands down feeling 'down'	<b>embarrassed</b>  both hands in '5' position at sides of face make alternating, forward circular movements blush on cheeks	<b>hour</b>  right hand in '1' position, pointer finger resting on open left hand, fingers up; both palms facing in make circle on palm with pointer finger minute hand sweeping through one hour of time on clock face	<b>month</b>  both hands in '1' position: left hand with pointer finger upward, palm facing right; right pointer finger touching left pointer finger toward body slide right finger down left finger moving through one month's time
<b>angry</b>  both hands in claw position with fingers toward each other at lower chest move hands up to shoulders anger 'rising' in body	<b>frustrated</b>  'B' hand forward of mouth with angled palm facing out bring back of hand to mouth meeting obstacle	<b>minute</b>  same as 'hour' short pivot of index finger on palm minute hand moving short distance on clock face	<b>year</b>  both hands in '5' position at waist, with right hand above left (right little finger to left thumb), palms in circle right hand around left, ending in starting position the Earth rotating around the sun
<b>tired</b>  both hands in '10' position, bent fingers on chest drop hands but keep little fingers on chest, thumbs resting on pointer fingers drop in energy	<b>funny</b>  pointer and middle fingers of 'U' hand touching nose slide fingers off of nose twice, bending fingers each time twitching nose	<b>second</b>  same as 'hour' very short pivot of index finger on palm second hand moving very short distance on clock face	



# AROUND THE HOUSE

<b>house</b>  both hands in 'B' positions with fingers touching in front of forehead move hands apart/down at angle to shoulders, then straight down to waist shape of roof and walls	<b>bathroom</b>  'T' hand in front of chest shake 'T' back and forth 'T' for toilet	<b>window</b>  both hands in 'B' position, right above left, touching and palms in lift right hand twice opening a window	<b>bed</b>  right open palm on right cheek lay head on palm head on pillow
<b>home</b>  closed 'O' at lower right cheek touch lower cheek, then upper cheek home is where you eat and sleep, house is a structure	<b>dining room</b>  flattened 'O' hand at mouth touch fingers to lips, then sign 'room' 'eat' + 'room'	<b>floor</b>  both hands in 'B' position with thumbs and pointer fingers touching, palms down, at waist level move hands apart on flat plane surface of floor	<b>table</b>  right forearm floating above left forearm press right arm down to left two times top of table
<b>room</b>  both hands in 'R' position (or 'B' position) at waist level with fingers pointed out about six inches apart move hands from right/left position to front/back position four sides of room	<b>kitchen</b>  right 'K' hand resting on open left palm flip 'K' on palm, then sign 'room' 'cook' + 'room'	<b>wall</b>  both hands in 'B' position with thumbs and pointer fingers touching, palms out, at chest level move hands apart along vertical plane surface of wall	<b>chair</b>  both hands in 'U' shape, with right 'U' curved over extended left 'U', palms down tap right hand twice to left hand legs hanging over chair seat
<b>bedroom</b>  open right hand against right cheek lean head toward hand, then sign 'room' 'sleep' + 'room'	<b>door</b>  both hands in 'B' shape touching in front of chest, palms out swing right hand back while turning left two times opening and closing a door	<b>stairs/steps</b>  both hands in 'B' position, palms down, at waist level alternately move hands upward over one another climbing stairs	<b>telephone</b>  'Y' hand at ear — holding phone to ear

# HEALTH AND THE BODY

<b>body</b>  both hands in open position, palms in and touching the upper chest touch upper chest, then lower chest indicating body	<b>mouth</b>  'T' hand at mouth circle mouth with pointer finger location and shape of mouth	<b>feet</b>  hand in 'T' position with pointer finger down point to one foot, then the other indicating feet	<b>blind</b>  bent 'V' hand at eyes move fingers toward eyes shutting out the eyes
<b>head</b>  closed 'O' position at right temple touch right temple, then right lower cheek indicating head	<b>lips/tongue/teeth/nose/ear</b>  'T' hand at (body part) touch pointer finger to body part indicating (body part)	<b>sick</b>  both hands in 'S' position, right middle finger bent, touching forehead; left middle finger bent, touching lower chest — sick in head and stomach	<b>deaf</b>  pointer finger of right 'T' hand near ear bring right hand down to join left hand in front of body, both in 'B' position with pointer fingers touching —
<b>face</b>  'T' hand at right cheek make circle around face with pointer finger shape of face	<b>arm</b>  curve 'S' hand on opposite upper arm move hand repeatedly over upper arm indicating arm	<b>headache</b>  both hands in 'T' position at forehead with palms down short movements of pointer fingers toward each other twice 'hurt' near head	<b>hearing aid</b>  modified '9' position with thumb and pointer finger pinched together near ear twist hand twice in backward direction putting hearing aid mold in ear
<b>hair</b>  'F' hand holding a few strands of hair with thumb and pointer finger — indicating hair	<b>hands</b>  open hands with palms in at chest level wipe right hand on back of left hand, then reverse indicating hands	<b>cold (illness)</b>  modified '9' hand with pinched pointer finger and thumb on nose double downward movement pinching pointer finger and thumb together each time wiping nose	<b>pregnant</b>  curved 'S' hand held near stomach area move hand away from body indicating size and shape of pregnant belly

## MORE ON SIGNING

### PARTS OF A SIGN

A sign has **four parts**—handshape, palm orientation, movement, and location. A sign may also include nonmanual components, such as movements of the face, eyes, head, and/or body posture.

### SIGNING SPACE AND GENDER NOTATION

- The **signing space** in which signs are made generally extends from above the head to about waist level, between the shoulders. Most signs are made at or near the head, neck, face, and chest regions so that they are visible to the audience.
- To indicate **male** or **female**, some signs can be made in the male region (forehead) or the female region (cheek or chin).

### DOMINANT HAND

ASL uses both hands, but the **dominant hand** is the signer's writing hand. Instructions that are presented for one hand typically use the right hand but can be reversed for left-handed signers.

### PLURALS

The interpreter can denote plural nouns in three main ways:

- Add a quantity sign (e.g., 'four', 'many', etc.) to the noun.
- Make the sign repeatedly.
- Sign the word or concept once, then point with the pointer finger where the objects would be located.

### VERB TENSES

In spoken English, verb tense is indicated by conjugation, e.g., 'I wrote', 'I write', 'I will write'. In ASL, tense is indicated using time words, e.g., 'I write yesterday', 'I write now', 'I write later'.

### NEGATIVES


In ASL, sentences are made negative through the addition of negative signs such as 'nothing' or 'not' (e.g., 'unhappy' = 'not' + 'happy'). Facial cues, such as a side-to-side headshake, can also be used to suggest negativity or negation.

### ASL VS. SIGNED ENGLISH

- Although ASL is the primary language of the Deaf in the United States, it is not the only communication system used.
- ASL uses signs to represent concepts and does not sign the spoken English language word-for-word. ASL:
  - Does not always indicate past, present, and future tenses
  - Does not necessarily present words in the order heard
  - Often drops supporting words (such as 'a' and 'the')
- Many educators now promote the use of **Signed English**, a system in which English is signed verbatim, word-for-word (including verb conjugation and tenses). Many experts believe that Signed English develops English speaking and writing skills better than ASL.
- Pidgin sign** is a middle approach between ASL and Signed English that combines elements of the two approaches.


# MONEY

**money**




right flattened 'O' position with palm flopping up above open left hand, palm up  
tap right hand to left palm twice  
laying money on hand

**5c (nickel)**




'S' position with bent middle finger touching forehead  
two short movements forward  
—

**buy**




back of right hand in flattened 'O' position, resting on open left palm  
move right hand forward in arc  
giving money to another

**10c (dime)**




'I' position at right forehead  
two short movements forward, changing 'I' into a '10' with a wiggle  
—

**pay**




pointer finger of right hand in 'I' position, touching open left palm  
sweep right hand across left palm to beyond fingertips  
paying off what is owed

**25c (quarter)**




'I' position at right forehead  
two short movements forward, changing 'I' into 'S'; pointer and middle fingers bent and wiggling  
—

**price**




both hands in '9' position with thumbs and pointer fingers touching  
tap fingers twice  
—

**\$1 (dollar bill)**




right hand grasping pointer finger side of open left hand, palm in  
slide right hand along left, ending in a '10' position  
—

**coin**




right hand in 'I' position with pointer finger touching open left palm  
draw small circle with pointer finger on palm  
shape of coin held in hand

**\$1 (amount)**




'I' position, palm out  
twist wrist, ending with palm in  
'I' + 'dollar' twist (note: can sign 'number' + twist for amounts up to \$10)

**1c (penny)**



'I' position at right forehead  
two short movements forward  
—

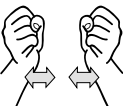
**credit card**



right hand in 'S' position; extended little finger resting on open left palm  
slide right little finger back/forth across palm  
simulating sliding action of machine reading a credit card


# NATURE AND THE WEATHER

**winter**




both hands in 'S' position with palms facing each other at sides of chest  
shake repeatedly  
shivering (same as 'cold')

**snow**




both hands in 'S' position with palms down in front of shoulders  
fluttering of fingers as hands lower to chest level  
falling snowflakes

**spring**




left hand grasping closed 'O' right hand with extended fingers pointing up  
slide right hand upward to form 'S' hand, palm in  
plant sprouting

**wind**



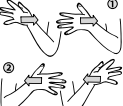
both hands in 'S' position with palms in and fingers up in front of chest  
simultaneous arcs two times  
moving air

**summer**




pointer finger of 'I' hand on forehead with palm down  
slide finger across forehead, changing to an 'X' hand  
wiping sweat off brow

**storm**




both hands in 'S' position with one palm in, one palm out, with fingers pointing in same direction  
wave hands simultaneously from side to side  
quickly moving air

**autumn**




right 'B' hand with palm down at elbow of bent left arm  
double downward movement of right hand  
falling leaves

**cloud**




both hands in 'S' position with palms facing out at face level  
arc hands out, ending with palms facing in, two times  
shape of clouds

**weather**



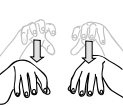
both hands in 'W' position with bent, extended fingers touching in front of chest  
twist wrists twice  
'W' for 'changing' weather

**sun**




'C' hand at eye  
move hand toward forehead two times  
shading eyes

**rain**



hands in claw position with palms down in front of shoulders  
double downward movement of hands  
falling raindrops


**moon**



curved fingers of 'I' hand at eye  
—  
crescent shape of the moon


# OPPOSITES

**good**




hand open, palm in, at mouth  
move hand away from mouth  
offering something that tastes good

**large**




both hands in 'L' position with palms facing in at chest level  
move hands apart with palms facing out at end of movement  
'L' for large; showing large size

**right**




both hands in 'I' position with fingers extended forward and angled inward, right finger above left finger  
tap twice  
—

**hot**




curved 'S' hand with palm toward mouth  
twist hand while moving it away from mouth, ending with palm down  
throwing hot item from mouth

**bad**




hand open, palm in at mouth  
twist hand while moving it away from mouth, ending with palm down  
discarding something that tastes bad

**small**



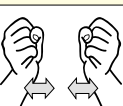
both hands in open position at chest, palms facing in with fingers out, at shoulder width  
move hands toward each other twice  
showing small size

**wrong**




'Y' hand at chin, palm in  
tap twice  
—

**cold**




both hands in 'S' position with palms facing each other at chest level  
shake hands back and forth  
shivering motion

**fast**




both hands in 'I' position with pointer fingers extended forward  
pull hands to chest quickly, forming 'S' hands  
show fast-moving action

**tall**




right hand in 'I' position with pointer finger in front of flat left palm; both hands facing forward  
slide right finger up along left palm  
showing height

**new**




both hands open with palms up at waist level, right above left, with right off-center  
sweep right hand in arc across left hand twice  
—

**same**




both hands in 'I' position, pointer fingers extended out at chest level  
move hands together until pointer fingers touch  
bringing like items together

**slow**




both hands in 'B' position with palms down, right on top of left  
slowly pull fingers of right hand back over fingers of left hand  
show slow-moving action

**short**




bent 'B' hand with palm down at chest height  
single short downward movement  
indicates short height

**old**



'C' hand palm down at chin  
bring hand down to waist, changing to 'S' position  
stroking a beard

**different**



both hands in 'I' position; pointer fingers extended out at angle and crossed at chest level  
swing hands apart  
separating unlike items

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