

ASL Handshapes

Vocabulary Building with handshapes



Every sign has 4 aspects that are unique to that sign...Hand-shape is one.



Learn the proper handshapes in American Sign Language. This workshop will demonstrate the handshapes by having the participants learn 400 vocabulary words that use 40 basic handshapes.

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Sherry Padgett's Bio

Sherry has been involved in Deaf Ministry in her local church since 1981 as a church interpreter. She began attending the National Deaf Conferences in 2000. In 2006 - 2013, she was the National Media Coordinator for UPCI Deaf Evangelism. Sherry began community interpreting in 2007, and has become a Licensed Interpreter for the state of Missouri in 2009. She holds a Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing BASIC Certification with a RCED (General) PSE Endorsement. She was employed as a public school educational interpreter, K-12 for 2 years. Sherry's passion in Deaf ministry is to provide resources for interpreters to use to reach the Deaf with the gospel. She also has created several websites to make resources easy and accessible:

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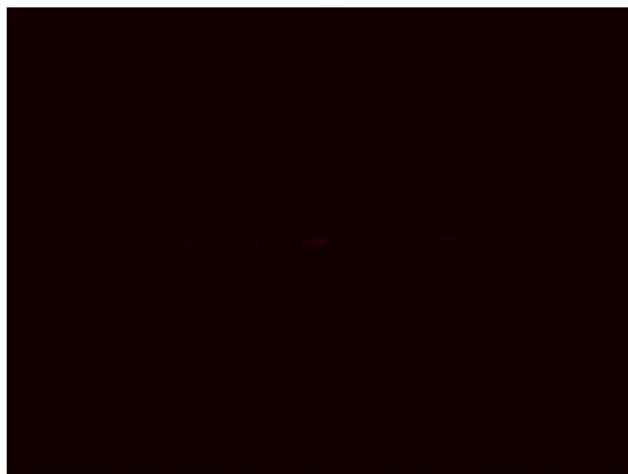


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4 Parts of Every Sign



4 Parts of Every Sign

1. Handshape
2. Movement
3. Location
4. Orientation



Lesson 01

Signs Using:

A / A-open / B-open / B-flat / B-bent / C / C-claw / D or 1 / E

Five Fundamental Building Blocks of a Sign

1. **Handshape** – literally the shape (or shapes) in which we form our hand during the production of a sign.
2. **Movement** - signs are composed of sequences of movements and holds.
3. **Location** - In general the areas in which signs are made are within the parameters between the head and slightly below the waist and slightly beyond the width of both shoulders. Fingerspelling takes place within the neck/jaw to shoulder height/width area.
4. **Orientation** – Palm orientation: Down, Forward, In, Up
5. **Non-manual markers** - "Non-manual signals" are the facial expressions that accompany certain signs. Many signs in ASL require a non-manual signal in order to be produced correctly.



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Those five parameters are the *basic* categories. The fact that you can divide "non-manual markers" or other factors up into several smaller categories is jolly but there are still five *main* parameters/categories. (Non-manual markers include those aspects of body language that do not involve the hands such as shoulder movements, head tilts, and facial expressions.) When comparing one sign against

another, "it is the difference in one parameter that is responsible for the difference in meaning"

Handshapes are one of the five fundamental building blocks or parameters of a sign: **Handshape, movement, location, orientation, and non-manual markers**. I know there are those who will point out that some signs have more than five parameters but notice I used the word "fundamental?" Those five parameters are the *basic* categories. The fact that you can divide "non-manual markers" or other parameters up into several smaller categories is jolly but there are still five *main* parameters. (Non-manual markers include those aspects of body language that do not involve the hands such as shoulder movements, head tilts, and facial expressions.) "Signs can share one or more of the same parameters.

The handshape of a sign is literally the shape (or shapes) in which we form our hand during the production of a sign.

All signs have a handshape.

Now don't go arguing about how "shaking your head" can mean "no" or a body shift can mean "or."

I'm not talking about non-manual behaviors here -- I'm talking about *signs*. Is nodding your head "yes" a sign? No. It is a *non-manual marker*.

Classifiers are signs that use handshapes that are associated with specific categories (classes) of size, shape, or usage.

Over time certain handshapes have been used so often to show certain types of things, shapes, amounts, or sizes, that when you hold up or use one of those handshapes people (who know the language) automatically think of a particular category (or class) of:

Things (objects, people, animals, vehicles, etc.)

Shapes (including outlines, perimeters, surfaces, configurations, gradients, etc.)

Sizes (amount, largeness, smallness, relative size, volume, etc.)

Usage (movement paths, speed, interactions, etc.)

The commonly recognized handshapes that are typically used to show different **classes** of things, shapes, and sizes are called "**classifiers**."

The movement and placement of a classifier handshape can be used to convey information about the movement, type, size, shape, location or extent of the thing to which you are referring. (A **referent** is that which you are talking about or that to

which you are referring.)

Handshape With Related Signs



Handshape With Related Signs

- 1) A – sorry
- 2) A – (open) girl
- 3) B – brown
- 4) B – (open) please
- 5) B - (bent) tall
- 6) C – sun
- 7) D – dinner
- 8) E – east
- 9) F – cat, whiskers
- 10) F – (open f) skunk
- 11) G – thanksgiving
- 12) H – uncle
- 13) I – idea
- 14) K – king
- 15) L – lunch
- 16) L – (bent L) moon
- 17) M – Monday
- 18) N – north
- 25) T – tan
- 26) V – see
- 27) V - (bent V) strict
- 28) W - water
- 29) X – apple
- 30) Y – phone
- 31) L&I together – ILY
- 32) 1&I together – kid
- 33) 1 – red
- 34) 3 – bug
- 35) 3 (bent 3) – ticket
- 36) 4 – talk
- 37) 5 – father
- 38) 5 (bent) – yell
- 39) 8 – light
- 40) 8 (open) – lucky, pity, feeling

- 19) N – (open n) duck
- 20) O – none
- 21) O – (baby O) bill of a cap
- 22) O – (flat O) flower (deaf nod yes)
- 23) R – right
- 24) S – Saturday

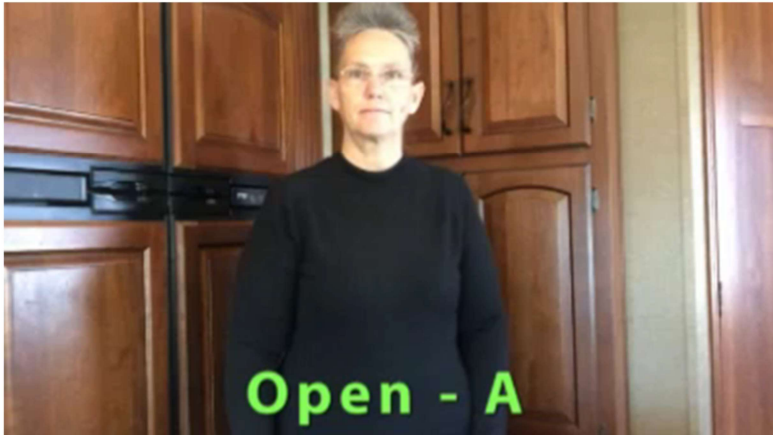
Signs Using Hand Shape: A



A Handshape

Abraham
Act / Drama
Attitude
@ (email address)
Baptist
Brush (hair)
Crash (asleep)
Danger
Dumb
Menstruation
Practice
Sorry
With / Together

Signs Using Hand Shape: A-open

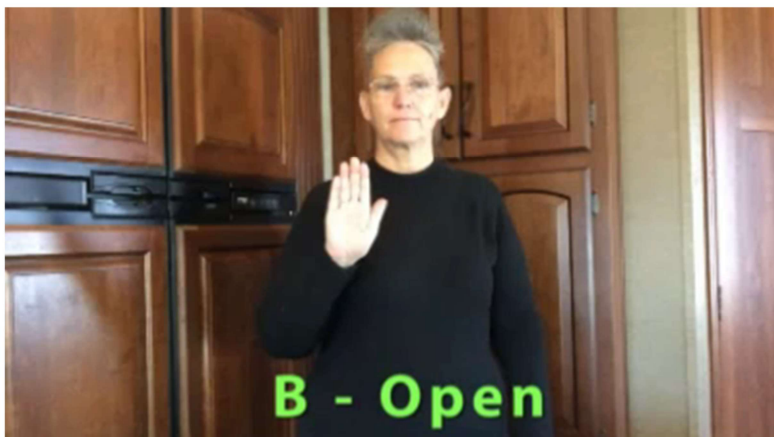


A – Open

Amen
Accident / Challenge / Game
Any
Anoint
Apostles / Apostolic
Aunt
Authority
Boast / Brag
Continue
Drunk
Depreciate
Each / Every
Fellowship / Socialize / Interact
Follow / Chase
Girl
Help
Myself
Not

Other
Page
Pride
Promote
Remember
Sauce
Set up / Establish
Shape / Statue
Science
Tomorrow
Tumbes up / down
Yesterday

Signs Using Hand Shape: B-open

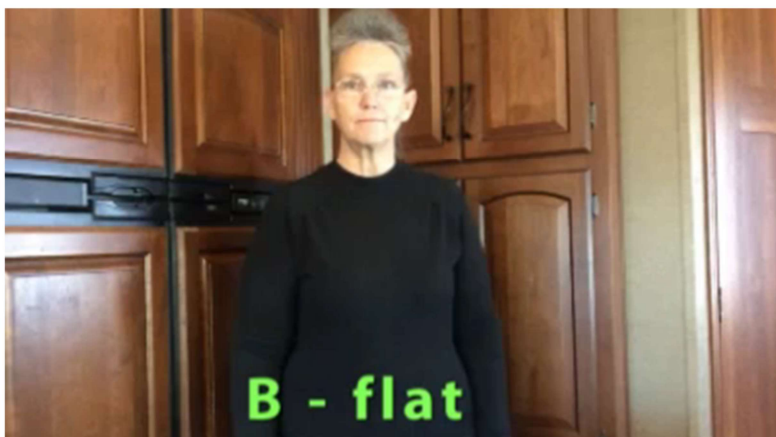


B – Open

Broke
Child
Clean / Nice
Cook
Convenience
Die
Don't Know
Easy
Enthusiastic
Good
Forgot
Feature
Happy
Here
Lecture
Nothing / Gone
Night
Plan

Please
Pray / Ask
Paper / School
Run
Satisfied / Content
Solute
Stop
Talk to the hand
Take off
Welcome / Invite
Will
Warn

Sings Using Hand Shape: B-flat

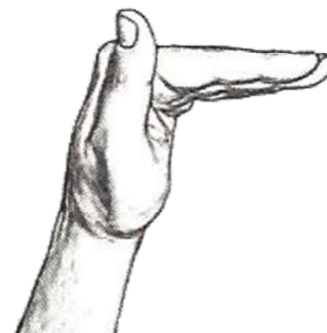
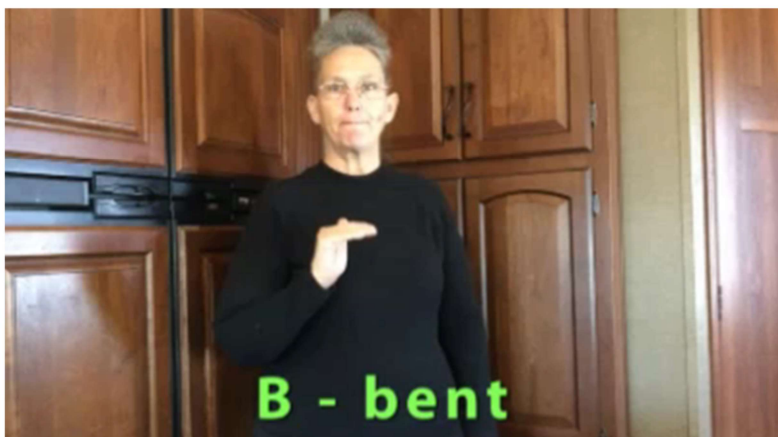


B-flat Handshape

Beer
Brown
Bake / Cook
Breakfast
Blunt
Blue
Basket
Below
Busy
Hello
Invent
Defend / Block
File
Frustrated
Open / Close
Push Aside
Satisfy

Trouble
Mittens

Signs Using Hand Shape: B-bent



B – bent

Adultery
Above
Advance
Equal
Forgive / Excuse
Gut
Progress / Process
Less
New
Tall
Stubborn
Young / Youth

Sings Using Hand Shape: C



C Handshape

Activity
Caffeine
Church
Chicago
Colorado
Concept
Communicate
Chocolate
Christ
Cup
Class
Character
Cousin
Client
Customer
Certification
Chance

Force
Genius
Giraffe
Group
Radio
Picture
Search
Strange
Sun

Signs Using Hand Shape: C-claw



C – claw

Angry
Awesome
Believe
Boiling
Bear
Balloon
Mad
Complain
Fire
Dizzy
Comb
Don't want
Hamburger
Heavy
Husband
Mess up
Salad

Signs Using Hand Shape: D or 1



D or 1 Handshape

Answer

Admonish

Always

Announce

Correct / Regular

Disappoint

Day

False

Face

Famous

For / For For

Goal

Hush

Happen / Event

Clock / Hour / Minute

Mouse

One
Only
Pay
Person
Point
Real / True
Red
Show
Socks
Stars
Success
Tremble

Signs Using Hand Shape: E



E Handshape

Easter
Emergency
Energy
Environment
Evidence
Evangelism
Evil
Eve

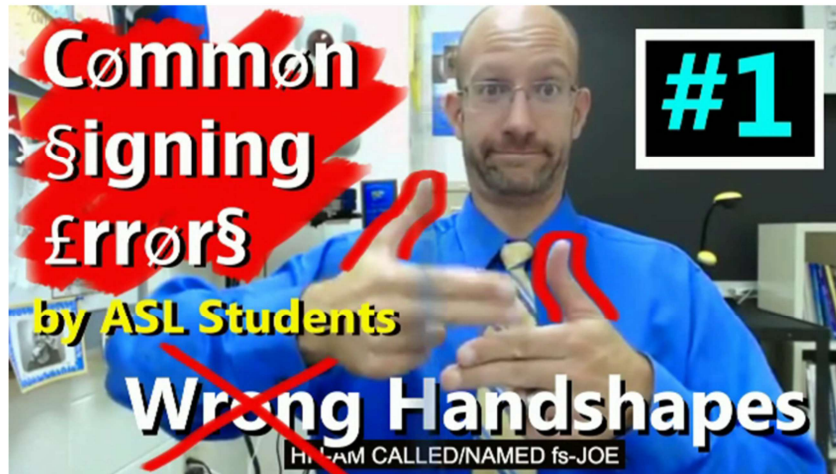


Lesson 2

Signs Using:

F-open / G / H / I / K / L / O / O-flat / R

Common Signing Errors



One of the most common signing errors made by ASL students is using the wrong handshape. ASL students typically make that mistake by having their thumb out when signing I/ME and NAME.

Signs Using Hand Shape: F-open



F – Open

Cat / Kitten / Whiskers

Coin

Curious

Decide

Family

Feed Back

Fruit

Faith / Faithful

Fast

Flesh (meat)

Indian

Interpret

Profit / Benefit

Soon

Simple

Spirit

Wrist Watch

Worth

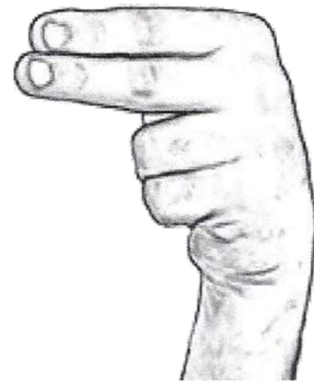
Signs Using Hand Shape: G



G Handshape

God
Gossip / Rumor
Gospel
Group
Green
Guilt
Pea Brain
Thin
Zoom

Signs Using Hand Shape: H



H Handshape

Belt
Bacon
Butter
Cute
Egg
Fun
Hospital
Name
Label
Pound / Weight
Sit
Short Time / Temporary
Rabbit
Train
University
Usher

Signs Using Hand Shape: I



I Handshape

Idol
Imagine / idea
If
Is
Israel
Finally / Last
Jealous
Skinny
Spaghetti

Signs Using Hand Shape: K



K Handshape

Borrow

Me & You / Two of Us

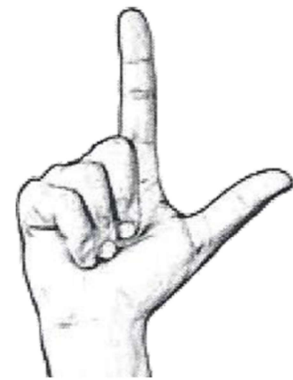
Kind / Type

King

Kingdom

Keep

Signs Using Hand Shape: L



L Handshape

Because
Law
Life / Live
License
Lord
Lutheran
Then
Twenty

Signs Using Hand Shape: O



O Handshape

Advice / Influence

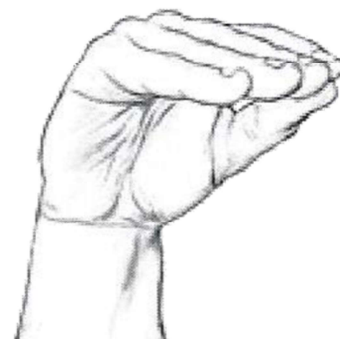
Eat

None

Office

Old

Signs Using Hand Shape: O-flat



O – flat

Boy / Ball Cap
Bright / Light
Buy
Include / Involve
Invest
Flower
Deaf nod yes
Give
Grow
Money
Move / Pass
More
Pack
Number
Repair
Sell / Store
Shopping

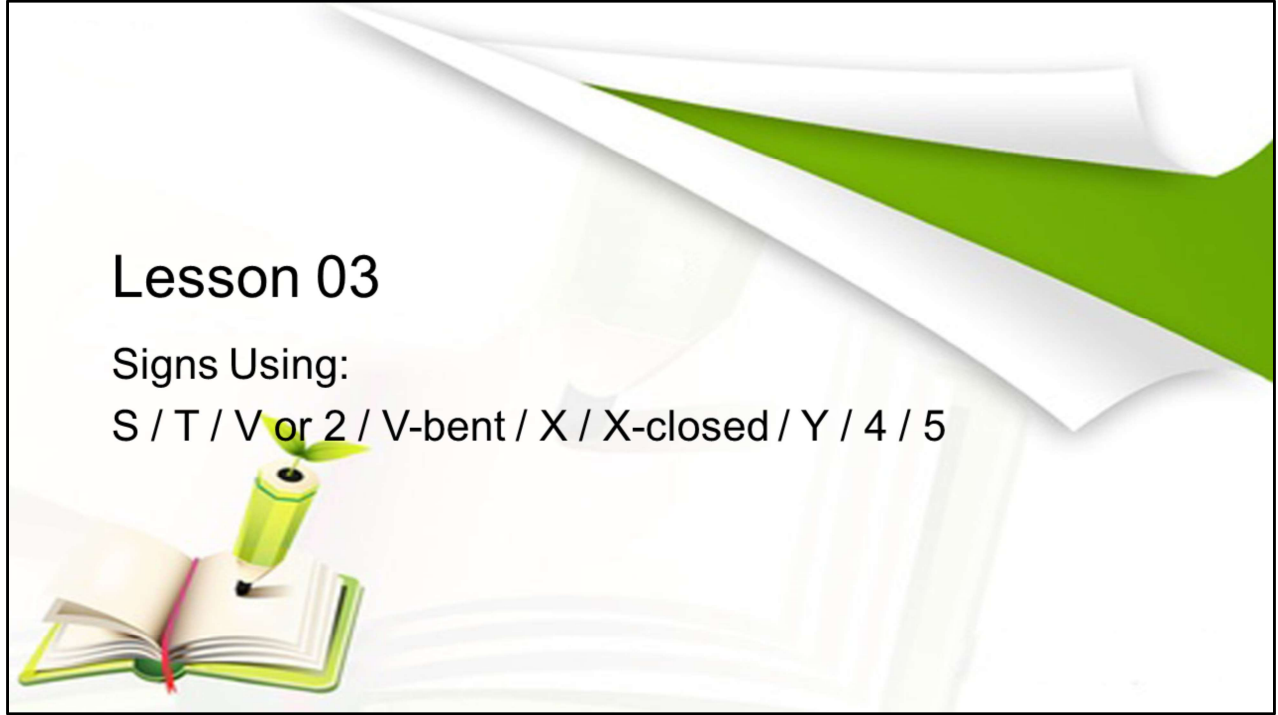
Receive / Accept
Teach

Signs Using Hand Shape: R



R Handshape

Cigar
Curls
Redeemer
Religion
Repent
Restaurant
Respect
Roman

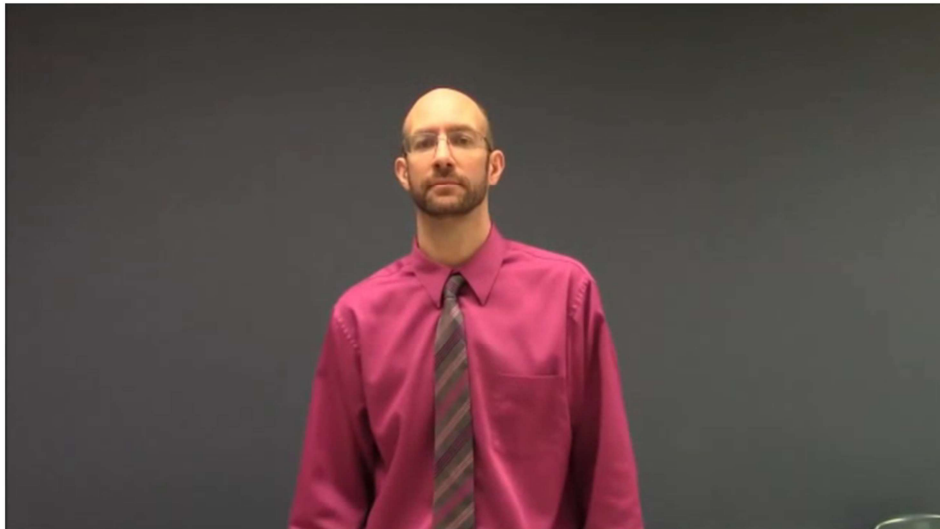


Lesson 03

Signs Using:

S / T / V or 2 / V-bent / X / X-closed / Y / 4 / 5

Relationships



Relationships:

8 handshape: Like

5 handshape: Flirt

1 handshape: Date

S handshape: Together

Bent – B: Close (relationship)

Bent – B: Get-Along

D or 1: Argue

Flat O to Open 5: Verbal Fight

2 or V: Couple

Flat-O to X: Boyfriend

Open – A to X: Girlfriend

Open – A: Sweetheart

Honey

Baby

D to Close-B: Fall-in-love

S handshape: Love

X handshape: Good friend

R handshape: Best friend

Signs Using Hand Shape: S



S Handshape

Appointment

Bold

Fight

Make

Melon

Orange

Resist

Saint

Salvation

Saturday

Slave

Support

Signs Using Hand Shape: T



T Handshape

Delete / Erase / Omit

Restroom

Toy

Time

Testify

Testament

Temple

Theology

Tribulation

Signs Using Hand Shape: V or 2



V or 2 Handshape

Define / Mean
Funeral
Jam / Stuck
Misunderstand
Read
Look back
See
Victory

Signs Using Hand Shape: V-bent



Another use of this classifier is to bend the fingers; this is known as the crooked or bent V-CL. It can be used to represent a chair, or the movement of animal legs or a snake.

V – bent

Analyze
Chair
Problem
Journey / Travel
Skate
Squirrel
Snake
Strict
Vampire

Signs Using Hand Shape: X



X Handshape

Anniversary / Celebrate

Bones

Change / Switch

Cost

Exam

Have to / Must / Need

Ingrained

Lately / Recent

Mental

Nosy

Puzzled

Question

Run

Suspend / Hold

Sex / Gender

Texas

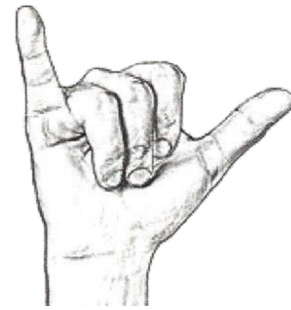
Signs Using Hand Shape: X-closed



X – closed

Apple
Cool / Neat
Write / Pen
Rip / Tear
Onion

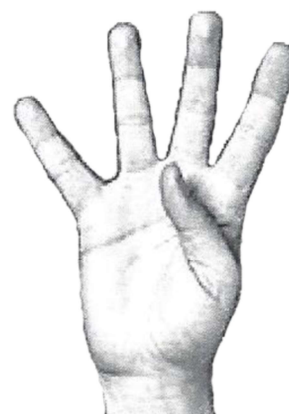
Signs Using Hand Shape: Y



Y Handshape

Bull
Cow
Error / Mistake
Hippopotamus
Impossible
Like / Same
Measure
New York
Subway
Phone
Play / Party
Why
Wrong
Yellow

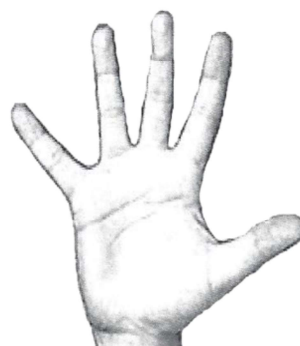
Signs Using Hand Shape: 4



4 Handshape

Drool
Invent
Talk / Speak
Whispering
Running water
Schedule
Stripes
Prison

Signs Using Hand Shape: 5



5 Handshape

Admit / Confess

Afraid / Fear

Air

Cheese

Lady

Father

Finish

Germany

Sound

Top / Ultimate / Champion

Learn from MY mistake! Watch this 2 ½ min video clip as I interpret a Sunday message around Christmas and make a **HUGE handshape error 8 times**, causing the Deaf to miss the point.

- What is the “best gift” that could ever be given?
- That’s the “ultimate gift”.

In an effort to sign “top” and “ultimate” or “best” – the **WRONG** handshape was use. I used the “5” and the “3” handshapes instead of “B – open” and the “d or 1” handshapes.



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ABC's Handshape Story "The Artist"

