# American Sign Language

## 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 1807, 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 *finger spelling*.
- 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.

### Signs vs. Handshapes
- **Signs** indicate word meanings and are used for nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, etc.
- **Handshapes** are not used in the same way as signs. They are used for verbs (tense and aspect), numbers, punctuation, and fillers which are not signed words.

### How to Use This Chart
- For signing purposes, the fingers on the hand are named as follows:
  - Ring finger
  - Middle finger
  - Pointer finger
  - Little finger
  - Thumb
- 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:
  - **Sign**
  - **Handshapes**
  - **Purpose**

### Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Handshapes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>closed fist with thumb extended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>pointer and middle fingers extended, forming &quot;O&quot; shape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>all fingers forming an &quot;O&quot; shape; this sign is often used to make concept/word signs and is formed by compressing the fingers together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>open fist with thumb curved across palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended and crossed (hint: railroad crossing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>closed fist with thumb curved over fingers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>closed fist with thumb between pointer and middle fingers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>tip of thumb to tip of ring finger with remaining fingers extended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>closed fist with pointer finger extended (note: this sign is often used to make concept/word sign)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>closed fist with pointer and middle fingers extended and separated (note: some use letter &quot;G&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>closed fist with extended and separated pointer and middle fingers and thumb (note: different from letter &quot;G&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>four fingers extended and separated with thumb across palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>closed fist with thumb and little finger facing in and facing out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>tip of thumb to tip of little finger with remaining fingers extended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-19</td>
<td>composed like 15; &quot;O&quot; shape followed by shape for single digit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>closed fist with thumb and pointer finger extended; open and close thumb and pointer finger two times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>closed fist with thumb and pointer and middle fingers extended; open and close thumb and fingers two times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>fingers in &quot;C&quot; shape (hint: C is the Roman numeral for 100; can precede the &quot;C&quot; with &quot;1&quot; shape)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>&quot;M&quot; shape with fingertips of right hand resting on palm of left hand (hint: M is the Roman numeral for 1,000; can precede the &quot;M&quot; with &quot;1&quot; shape)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Specific Handshapes
- **ASL Charts**: http://www.sparkcharts.com/american-sign-language.charts.htm

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**American Sign Language Chart** by SparkNotes LLC. Copyright © 2004 by SparkNotes LLC.
**AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE**

### Greetings and Phrases

- **Hello**: 'H' hand along right side of head
- **I'm fine**: 'S' hand with thumb touching chest
- **Please**: Right hand open on chest
- **Excuse me**: Fingertips of right hand across open left palm
- **Goodbye**: Open hand with fingers extended and pressed together
- **What's your name?**: Pointer finger of 'I' hand pointing out to other person
- **Thank you**: Open hand with tips of fingers on mouth
- **How are you?**: Fingers of both hands at chin, knuckles touching
- **How's the weather?**: How hands up and out to palms facing up, then extend primary pointer finger knitted

### Question Words

- **Whose?**: Pointer finger of 'T' position at mouth
- **Which?**: Both hands in 'O' position at chest
- **What?**: Right hand in 'T' position, left hand open with palm angled toward body
- **How?**: Fingers in to chest, knuckles touching
- **When?**: Both hands in 'I' position
- **How much?**: Both hands curved and open
- **Where?**: Hand in 'I' position with palm out
- **How many?**: 'S' hand with palm up

### Days and Time of Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both hands open in front of shoulders</td>
<td>'S' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each hand makes a small, repeated circular motion</td>
<td>Circular motion with hand around vertical line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening church doors</td>
<td>'S' for Saturday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both hands open in front of shoulders</td>
<td>'I' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'H' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Light bounce of right arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular motion with hand around vertical line</td>
<td>'W' for Monday</td>
<td>'W' for Tuesday</td>
<td>Circular motion with hand around vertical line</td>
<td>'F' for Friday</td>
<td>Sun setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'W' hand, palm out, in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'O' for Wednesday</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Sun setting below horizon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular motion with hand around vertical line</td>
<td>'H' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>Circular motion with hand around vertical line</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Right hand, curved with palm facing down, rests on downtrodden left hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'O' for Monday</td>
<td>'O' for Tuesday</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'O' for Thursday</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Light bounce of right arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun moving across sky</td>
<td>'O' for Wednesday</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'O' for Tuesday</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Right arm, bent with flat palm inward, extends upward while resting on palm of left hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'O' for Monday</td>
<td>'O' for Tuesday</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'O' for Thursday</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Right arm extended with palm up, left in crotch of right arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'O' for Wednesday</td>
<td>'O' for Tuesday</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'O' for Thursday</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Right open palm moves toward face twice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'O' for Monday</td>
<td>'O' for Tuesday</td>
<td>'W' hand in front of right shoulder</td>
<td>'O' for Thursday</td>
<td>'F' hand with palm up</td>
<td>Sun rising</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Glossary

- **Fingergapping**: 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Son</th>
<th>Uncle</th>
<th>Husband</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both hands or &quot;F&quot; position with thumb touching head, start with thumb touching, then circle in outward direction until little fingers meet.</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; hand at right side of forehead. Right hand moves from male position on head to join left arm in cradle position, rocking a male child.</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; hand at right side of forehead, repeated downward movement on forehead, rocking a male child.</td>
<td>Right hand on right side of chin, curved left hand in front of body, &quot;tissue = marry&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;F&quot; shape on forehead, touch forehead and then chin. Right hand moves from female position at chin to join left arm in cradle position, rocking a female child.</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; hand at right side of chin.</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; hand at right side of chin, curved left hand in front of body and then female shape of face.</td>
<td>Right hand pans left hand in dish, &quot;woman = marry&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CLOTHING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Skirt</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Coat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both hands in &quot;F&quot; position touching chest and below shoulders.</td>
<td>Both hands open with fingers down at hips, move hands down twice, location of skirt.</td>
<td>Both hands in &quot;F&quot; position angled down in front of body, repeatedly slide extended fingers against each other, clicking heels together.</td>
<td>Both hands in &quot;F&quot; position above shoulders and arc hands down to waist, crossing upper body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smooth hands down across chest two.</td>
<td>Location of skirts.</td>
<td>Location of pockets or pant legs.</td>
<td>Location of hat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COLORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Tan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand in &quot;I&quot; position at lips.</td>
<td>&quot;G&quot; hand in front of chest.</td>
<td>Relaxed fist, palm down, with extended pointer finger on forehead.</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; hand on right cheek, double strike on cheek.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two downward strokes on lips, bending finger down each time.</td>
<td>Waving motion, bending wrist.</td>
<td>Pull finger from left to right across face, touching black, yellow.</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; for tan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red lips</td>
<td>&quot;G&quot; for green.</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>&quot;F&quot; for brown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squeezing an orange (also sign for fruit).</td>
<td>Waving motion, bending wrist.</td>
<td>Touching a white skin.</td>
<td>&quot;B&quot; for yellow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Food and Meals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To eat</th>
<th>Restaurant</th>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Bread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fingered ‘O’ hand</td>
<td>Touch extended fingers first to right side and then to left side of mouth</td>
<td>Double twist of fingers twist</td>
<td>Slightly bent right hand above left hand extended with downward push</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring hand to mouth (waste to sign ‘food’ vowel)</td>
<td>Repeat movement!</td>
<td>‘Y’ for fruit</td>
<td>Slicing motion of right hand across left hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing food to mouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Slicing bread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To drink</th>
<th>Hungry</th>
<th>Vegetable</th>
<th>Fork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘C’ hand, thumb at mouth</td>
<td>Finger tips of ‘C’ hand touching cheek</td>
<td>Pointer finger of ‘V’ shape on right side of chin</td>
<td>Right hand in ‘W’ position with left hand open, palms facing each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tip fingers to nose</td>
<td>Slide hand down chest</td>
<td>Sweep ‘V’ across chin, ending with middle finger of ‘V’ on left side of chin</td>
<td>Tap right hand on left palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking from a cup</td>
<td>Digestive tract</td>
<td>‘Y’ for vegetable</td>
<td>Tines of fork</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Thirsty</th>
<th>Dessert</th>
<th>Knife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘O’ hand at mouth</td>
<td>Pointer finger of ‘I’ hand on throat</td>
<td>Both hands with fingers touching in ‘O’ shape as head of chess</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘L’ position, palms down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to extended right arm with palm up, left hand in crook of right arm than move right open palm toward face twice</td>
<td>Slide finger down throat</td>
<td>Move hands apart two times</td>
<td>Slide right extended finger across left extended finger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eat’ = meaning</td>
<td>Dry throat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Meat</th>
<th>Fish</th>
<th>Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘O’ hand at mouth</td>
<td>Right thumb and pointer finger pinch flesh of open left hand</td>
<td>Open right hand extended forward at waist level with left fingers touching right above</td>
<td>‘W’ hand on chin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to bent arm with flat inward palm extending upward while raising on palm of left hand; bounce twice</td>
<td>Shake hands together twice</td>
<td>Right hand waves side to side</td>
<td>Hip chin twice with pointer finger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eat’ = night</td>
<td>Grasping nearly feel all part of skin</td>
<td>Movement of fish (or fish’s tail) in water</td>
<td>‘W’ for water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dinner</th>
<th>Drink</th>
<th>Talk</th>
<th>Plate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘O’ hand at mouth</td>
<td>‘C’ hand on front of body</td>
<td>‘C’ hand in front of body</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘L’ position, several inches apart, palms in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to crooked right hand with palm down resting on wrist of left hand with palm down, making two tabs of palm of right hand on wrist of left hand</td>
<td>Open and close to ‘S’ shape</td>
<td>Open and close to ‘S’ shape</td>
<td>Fingers from sides of plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eat’ = meaning</td>
<td>Making a cow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Emotions and Feelings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Afraid</th>
<th>Jealous</th>
<th>Sad</th>
<th>Angry</th>
<th>Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle finger of ‘O’ hand on chest</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘S’ position on chest; right hand palm down, left ‘S’ hand palm down</td>
<td>‘I’ hand with little finger at right corner of mouth</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘S’ position at sides of face</td>
<td>Both hands in slow position with fingers toward each other at lower chest</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘W’ position, bent fingers on chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move upward on chest</td>
<td>Slide hands delicately toward center of chest</td>
<td>Make small ‘S’ shape, changing palm from outward to inward</td>
<td>Make alternating, forward circular movements</td>
<td>Move hands up to shoulders</td>
<td>Drop hands but keep little fingers on chest, thumbs resting on pointer fingers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings come from the heart</td>
<td>Protecting body</td>
<td>‘Hand in ‘Y’ position; pointer finger rubbing on splinted hand, fingers up</td>
<td>Blush on cheeks</td>
<td>Anger rising in body</td>
<td>Drop hand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Weak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right hand palm down, in ‘Y’ position, with extended pointer finger slightly above left hand; left ‘S’ hand, palm down</td>
<td>Left arm bent across body with right elbow resting in left hand; right hand in ‘I’ position with pointer finger upward</td>
<td>Right hand in ‘U’ position; little finger resting on open palm left palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide hands delicately toward center of chest</td>
<td>Left hand arcs toward left elbow</td>
<td>Right hand in ‘U’ position with little finger resting on open left palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘time’ = block</td>
<td>Sun moving across sky</td>
<td>Skills ‘O’ hand across open palm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hour</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right hand in ‘I’ position; pointer finger rubbing on splinted hand, fingers up; left palms facing in</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘I’ position; left hand with pointer finger upward, palm facing right; right pointer finger touching left pointer finger toward body</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘S’ position at waist, with right hand above left right little fingers to left thumb; palms in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make circle on palm with pointer finger</td>
<td>Minute hand sweeping through one hour of time on clock face</td>
<td>Circle right hand around left, ending in starting position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘hour’ =</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Earth rotating around the sun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>First</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same as ‘hour’; short push of index finger on palm</td>
<td>Very short push of index finger on palm</td>
<td>Short push of index finger on palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minute hand moving short distance on clock face</td>
<td>Second hand moving very short distance on clock face</td>
<td>Short push of index finger on palm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Weak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right hand palm down, in ‘Y’ position, with extended pointer finger slightly above left hand; left ‘S’ hand, palm down</td>
<td>Left arm bent across body with right elbow resting in left hand; right hand in ‘I’ position with pointer finger upward</td>
<td>Right hand in ‘U’ position with little finger resting on open left palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide hands delicately toward center of chest</td>
<td>Protecting body</td>
<td>Right hand in ‘U’ position with little finger resting on open palm left palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘time’ = block</td>
<td>Sun moving across sky</td>
<td>Skills ‘O’ hand across open palm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right hand in ‘I’ position; pointer finger rubbing on splinted hand, fingers up; left palms facing in</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘I’ position; left hand with pointer finger upward, palm facing right; right pointer finger touching left pointer finger toward body</td>
<td>Both hands in ‘S’ position at waist, with right hand above left right little fingers to left thumb; palms in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make circle on palm with pointer finger</td>
<td>Minute hand sweeping through one hour of time on clock face</td>
<td>Circle right hand around left, ending in starting position</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘hour’ =</td>
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<td>The Earth rotating around the sun</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Second</th>
<th>First</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Very short push of index finger on palm</td>
<td>Short push of index finger on palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minute hand moving short distance on clock face</td>
<td>Second hand moving very short distance on clock face</td>
<td>Short push of index finger on palm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**AROUND THE HOUSE**

- **House:** both hands in “H” position, fingers touching in front of forehead.
  - Move hands apart/drawn to shoulders, then straight down to waist.
  - Shape of roof and walls.

- **Bathroom:** "T" hand in front of chest.
  - "T" back and forth.
  - "T" for toilet.

- **Window:** both hands in “B” position, right above left, touching palms in line.
  - Lift right hand twice.
  - Opening a window.

- **Bed:** right open palm on right cheek.
  - Lay head on palm.
  - Head on pillow.

- **Dining Room:** flat hand with fingers pointing outward 6 inches apart.
  - Move hands from right/forehead to back/shoulder position.
  - Four sides of room.

- **Kitchen:** right “L” hand resting on open left palm.
  - Lip: On palm, then sign room.
  - "Cook” + ‘room’.

- **Living Room:** both hands in “B” shape, with right “U” curved over extended left “U” palm.
  - Top of table.

- **Bedroom:** both hands in “B” position, palms down, at waist level.
  - Alternate move hands upward over one another.
  - Climbing stairs.

- **Door:** 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.

- **Telephone:** "Y" hand at ear.
  - Holding phone to ear.

**HEALTH AND THE BODY**

- **Body:** both hands in open position, palms in and touching the upper chest.
  - Touch upper chest, then lower chest.
  - Indicating body.

- **Mouth:** "T" hand at mouth.
  - Circle mouth with pointer finger.
  - Location and shape of mouth.

- **Eye:** hand in “T” position with pointer finger down.
  - Point to one foot, then the other.
  - Indicating feel.

- **Nose:** both hands in “B” position, right middle finger bent.
  - Touching bridge.
  - Left middle finger bent, touching cheek level.
  - Sick in head and stomach.

- **Ear:** modified "B" position with thumb and pointer finger pinched together near ear.
  - Tiredness.

- **Hand:** modified "S" hand with pinched pointer finger and thumb on nose.
  - Double downward movement pinching pointer finger and thumb together each time.
  - Wearing nose.

**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.

**Plural:**

- ASL uses both hands: "one," "two," "three," etc., but "four," "many," etc., is signed as a noun.

**Verb Tenses:**

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

**Negatives:**

- ASL sentences are made negative through the addition of negative signs such as "no" 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.