

Questions and Statements

The basic question is not a sign at all. It's a body and facial expression. Put your hands in your pocket, and without using vocabulary ask **WHICH, WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE, WHEN** or **HOW**. Most of us know how to express wonder with our face and bodies. It doesn't represent any specific question, just a sense of wonder. The context of the conversation often makes it clear which question is being asked.

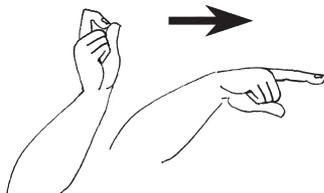
For the sake of simplicity we'll reduce the questioning facial expression to *eyebrows down*. *Eyebrows down* asks a question all by itself. We may include the sign, but we don't have to. The sign, on the other hand, always includes *eyebrows down*. Remember, the basic question is on the face, and not the hands.

Sign has another facial expression for asking **YES-NO QUESTIONS**, which oddly enough reduces to:

eyebrows up

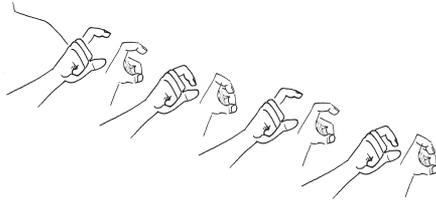
Sign *drink – you* with *eyebrows up* to ask, “Do you want a drink?” Signing *want* is unnecessary. It's very efficient.

What follows are signs for asking questions, and also for giving answers. More generally, it's the vocabulary for expressing knowing and not knowing. It's the vocabulary we use to express the intellectual side of our being.



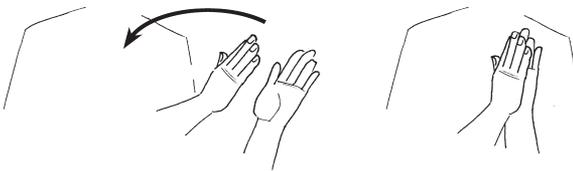
ASK, INQUIRE, QUESTION, QUERY, SOLICIT

Flick the index finger toward the person being asked. Anyone can ask anyone else something by moving the sign in the proper direction. Flick it toward yourself if you're the one being asked.

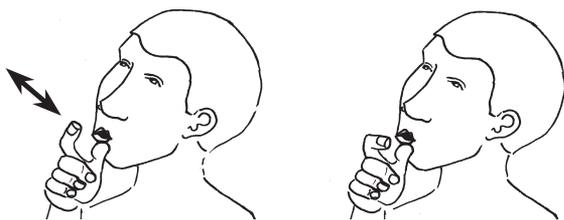


TEST, SURVEY, POLL, EXAMINATION, QUIZ, INTERROGATE,

The index fingers wiggle up and down in tandem while both hands travel in tandem parallel motion. Direct the sign toward the one being asked. Both hands circle out of phase from each other for **MANY QUESTIONS**.

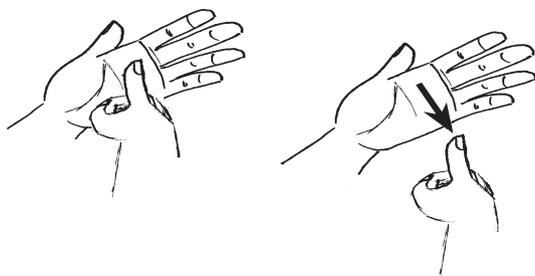


ASK, REQUEST (as a favor)

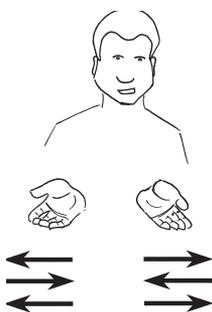


WHO

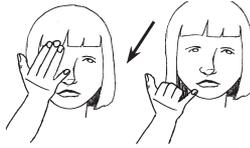
Notice the eye brows.



WHAT



WHAT



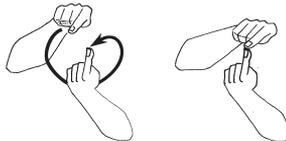
WHY

Combine the signs *why* and *not* on page 100 for **WHY NOT** and **DON'T KNOW WHY NOT**. Put the thumb on the chin, fingers sticking straight up and apart, and move the hand out. Move the three middle fingers to a *Y*—*hand shape* during the hand movement. *Eyebrows down* accompanies the question *why not*. *Eyebrows up*, as in “I don’t know,” accompanies *don’t know why not*. It’s interesting how two hand shapes with different movements and locations combined. Language is constantly evolving to ease communication.



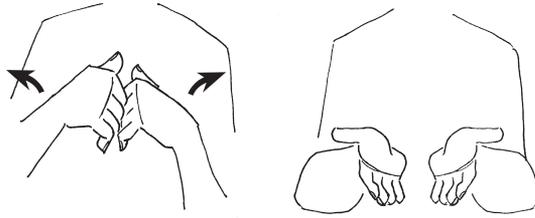
WHERE

The arm moves back and forth as the index finger points to *here or there*. It’s actually done with a wiggle of the wrist.



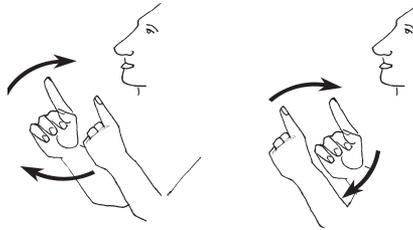
WHEN

The whole dominant arm can move, or it can be all wrist action. Notice that the dominant hand travels to the dominant side and behind the subordinate hand.



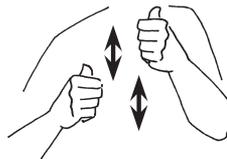
HOW

The hand scoops inward as the palms flip out.



SIGN

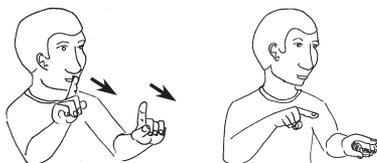
This is an important sign. If there's a sign you wish to know, just ask. It's the best way to learn new vocabulary.



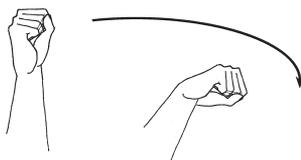
WHICH, EITHER, OR

Repeat the motion a few times. The thumbs represent things being weighed on a scale. Our last scale was *between* on page 49.

We've covered the basic questions. Now we need some *answers*.



ANSWER, REPLY, RESPONSE, REACT



YES

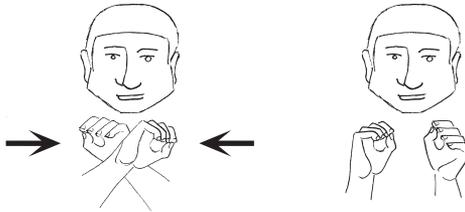
This is an emphatic **yes**. An unemotional **yes** holds the arm more horizontal, and alternates the hand up and down from the wrist. The fist represents the head moving up and down. The facial expression should agree with the sign. The same goes for **no**.



NO (the opposite of yes)

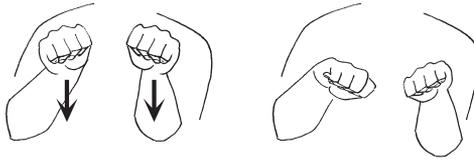
This is an emphatic **no**. Keep the arm still for a regular **no**. Contact between the thumb and the fingers may repeat or happen only once. Also, **yes** and **no** can have directional qualities. One person in the sign space can say **yes** or **no** to another person by moving the sign in the appropriate direction.

We'll include an off topic *no*.



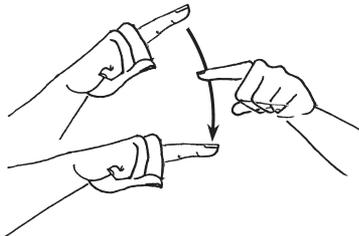
NO, NONE, NOTHING

The *0* – *hand shapes* represent nothing. There are other ways to represent “nothing” using this hand shape. Ask your Deaf friends.



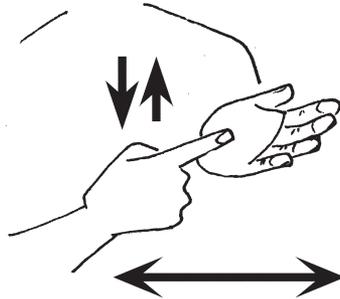
CAN, ABILITY, APTITUDE, ABLE, CAPABLE, COMPETENT, COULD, MAY, POSSIBLE

The movement is in the wrist. The arms may also rotate down from the elbow.



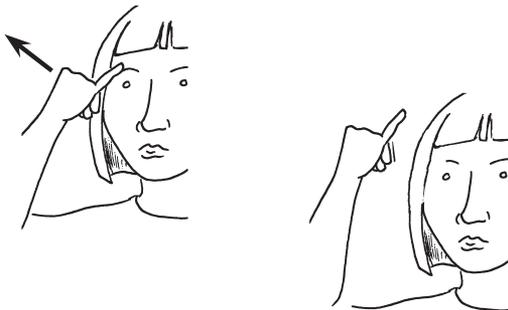
CAN'T, UNABLE

Questions solicit answers, and statements solicit responses. Answers are statements, and statements, with proper facial expression, could be questions. This vocabulary group is difficult to sub categorize. In general, it's the vocabulary we use to *discuss ideas* and *thoughts*.

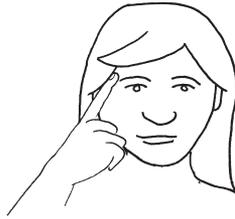


DISCUSS, DISCUSSION, CONFER

Both hands move back and forth a few inches while the dominant index finger drums on the subordinate palm. The subordinate hand moves in a large circle to indicate a **LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION**.

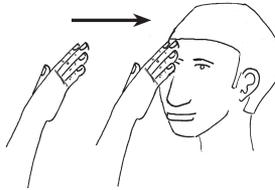


IDEA, INSPIRATION, A THOUGHT



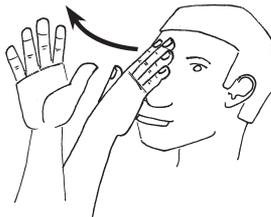
THINK, THOUGHT

Use one or both hands in small circular motion for **PONDER, MULL OVER, WONDER** or **RUMINATE**.



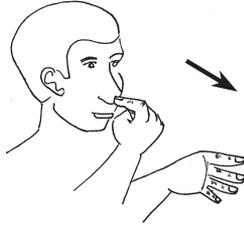
KNOW, KNOWLEDGEABLE, CONSCIOUS, AWARE, COGNIZANT

The motion may repeat any number of times. **SUBCONSCIOUS** has the fingers touch the back of the head, behind the ear, palm facing the head.



DON'T KNOW

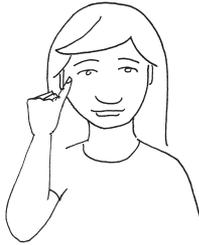
It's something not in the mind. Use a flick of the wrist.



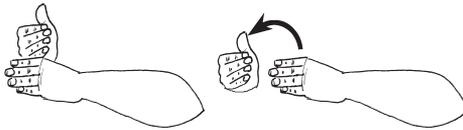
DON'T CARE

It's something you'd throw away.

Language contours thought, and thought contours language, supposedly through a system of logic. We'll include a few signs relating to logic.



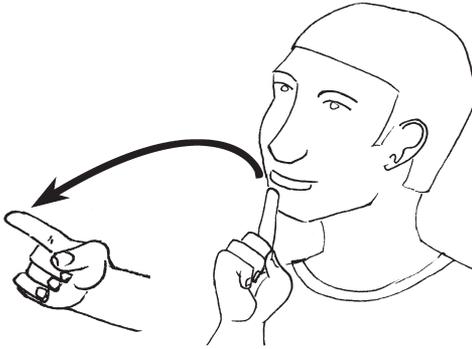
IF



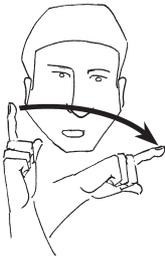
THEN

The English word “then” also introduces what happens **NEXT**.

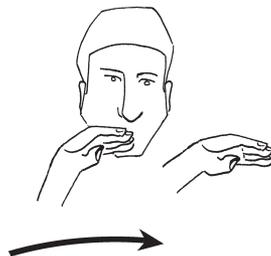
Any statement of logic could be *true* or *false*.



**TRUE, TRUTH, TRULY, FACT, FACTUAL, VALID,
ABSOLUTELY, ACTUAL, ACTUALLY, INDEED,
AUTHENTIC, CERTAINLY, FIDELITY, FRANKLY,
GENUINE, SURE, SURELY, REAL, REALLY,
POSITIVE, POSITIVELY, SINCERE, SINCERELY**

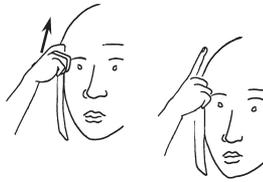


FALSE,



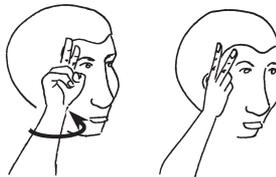
LIE, LIAR

We can *understand* or *misunderstand* someone's *meaning*.



UNDERSTAND, REALIZE, COMPREHEND

Add *not*, signed or otherwise, for **DON'T UNDERSTAND**. Use this hand movement just below the chest for **BURP**. Use this hand movement from the mouth, index finger shooting toward the ground for **SPIT**. Use this hand movement from the mouth, index finger shooting toward the side for **TATTLE**. This is a great example of how location can influence the meaning of a sign.



MISUNDERSTAND, MISINTERPRET, MISREAD, MISCONSTRUE, MISAPPREHEND

It's a picture of ideas being turned around.



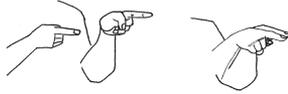
MEAN, INTEND

The dominant index and middle fingers poke the subordinate palm twice.

We can *agree* or *disagree* with someone.



think



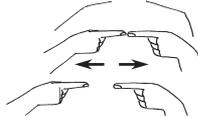
SAME

AGREE, AGREEMENT, CONCUR, CONSENT

To agree is to *think same*. Tap the sides of the index fingers together twice when signing *same* by itself.



think



opposite

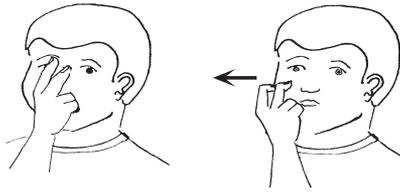
DISAGREE, DIFFER

To disagree is to *think opposite*.

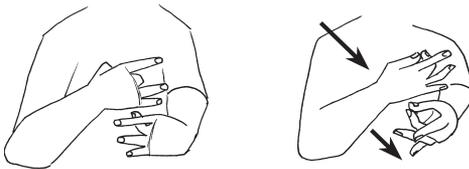
We can *believe*, *doubt* or be *interested* in someone's ideas.



BELIEVE, CONVICTION, DEEM



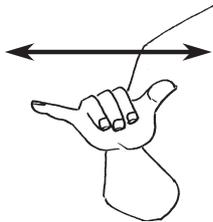
DOUBT, CYNIC, CYNICAL, DISBELIEF, DON'T BELIEVE, INCREDULITY, SKEPTIC, SKEPTICAL



INTERESTING, INTERESTED, INTEREST

The fully extended thumb and middle finger of each hand move toward each other and touch.

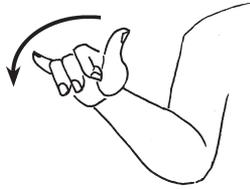
We could have the *same* experience as someone else.



SAME, SAME AS, ME TOO, ALSO, TOO, ALIKE, IDENTICAL

It moves between two things that are the same, the thumb and pinky pointing to the two things. Move both hands in tandem if you like. Move the sign in a circle to include a *group of things that are the same.*

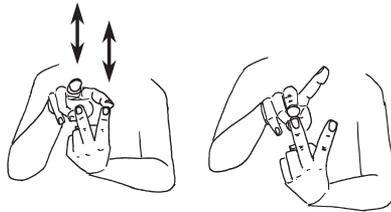
A statement could be about *that* or *this*.



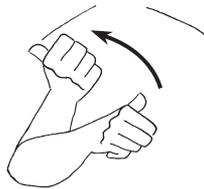
THAT, THIS

Direct the sign at whatever is *this* or *that*. Of course, *pointing* also refers to *this* or *that*. Maybe sign *that* and also *point*. Redundancy is okay in Sign. This uses the same hand shape as *stay* on page 146, which keeps the wrist rigid.

Things could be *either* this or that, or some *other* thing entirely.

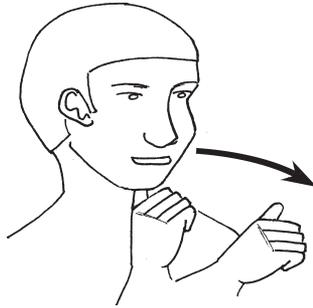


EITHER, OR



OTHER, ANOTHER, A DIFFERENT, SOMETHING ELSE

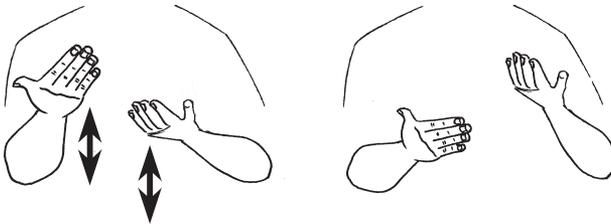
We negate a statement with *not*.



NOT

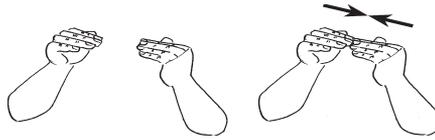
Shaking the head also means *not*. Sign in the affirmative, and negate it with your head movement. The signed *not* may appear before or after a statement for emphasis. The head shaking *not* may appear anytime.

Things are not always absolute. Sometimes they're only *maybe*.



**MAYBE, PERHAPS, POSSIBLY, POSSIBILITY,
PROBABLY, SUPPOSE, MIGHT, CONCEIVABLY**

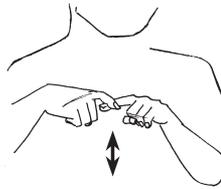
This is a scale weighing the possibilities.



EVEN, BALANCED, FAIR, EQUAL

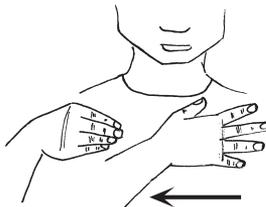
This is another scale. Things are rarely in balance. **UNBALANCED, UNEVEN** and **UNEQUAL** start with *balanced*, and then drops one side **OUT OF BALANCE**. The situation determines how far it drops.

Whether something is or isn't might *depend*.



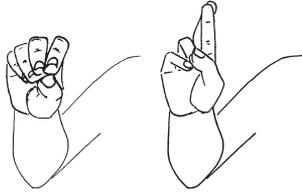
DEPEND, RELY

We'll include conjunctions, because statements and questions often include more than one thing. These are not frequently used in Sign, but may help in the transition from English to Sign.



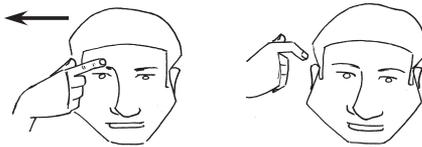
AND

A *pause* will suffice in lieu of *and*.



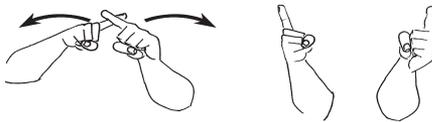
OR

It's merely fingerspelled. Add a slight forward movement.



BECAUSE

Sign uses a rhetorical question in lieu of *because*. Make a statement and then sign *why*, followed by the answer. The *why* is the English “because.”



**BUT, YET, HOWEVER, ON THE
CONTRARY, DIFFERENT**

The two crossed index fingers move apart once. *Different* may repeat any number of times. Repeat and move *different* around if there are many different things.