



rotten.com's
The Gaping Maw

Thoughts and ruminations
from your fearless leader
and other various minions



July 3, 2002

The Big Book of Sign Language

For decades, mankind has longed to be deaf. Jet engines, auto horns, the dullification of modern popular music - any one of these things alone might be worth the price of admission to a wholly silent world. So how does one sign up?

THE ROTTEN DOT COM

Big Book of Sign Language

Reproduced for the first time since its initial printing in 1972, Rotten Dot Com is proud to present its revised, expanded, fully up-to-date illustrated manual of contemporary American sign language, sometimes referred to as "finger spelling".



Drugs / Addiction / Street Terminology

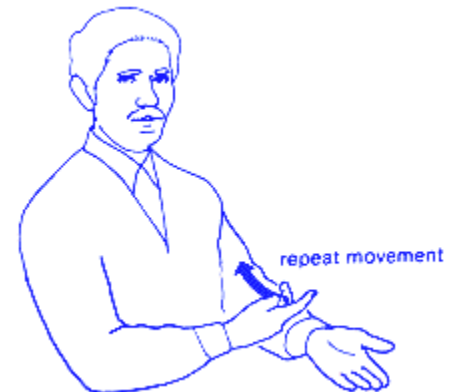
Deaf people can spiral downward into substance abuse problems just like hearing people, **and** they can blossom into alcoholics as easily as their well-eared counterparts. Those who find themselves chemically dependent and hard of hearing often face additional barriers while seeking a "fix" in a timely fashion.



YO, CAN YOU SPARE 32 CENTS TODAY
Useful in urban settings. Frantic hand waving, imploring look on face. Endeavor to conceal evidence of addiction.



A WHISPER OF WEED, OLD BEAN? RIGHTIE-O
Forefinger and thumb "pinch" together and retrieve modest dose of marijuana stash. Understood by prep-school students, frat boys, cheerleading squad.



HEROIN HEROIN HEROIN
Rapid, repeated "jabbing" motion of invisible syringe into forearm. Accompanied by William S. Burroughs gaze of world-weariness.



PUFFIN' THE BLUNT AND STARING AT THE SMOKE

(1) Tri-fingered drag and inhale. (2) Both hands simulate gentle waves and coils of smoke, which drift lazily overhead, then out the window, down the street, across the sea, beyond Earth's atmosphere, up up and away into outer space.



I'VE GOT COKE ON MY PINKY

Wry, knowing glance and tap-tap-tapping of pinky finger against nostrils. Best when pinky fingernail has grown into convenient spoon shape.



**YOU GOT NOTHING TODAY?
I KNOW YOU GOT SOMETHING.**

Continued desperate pleas to any and all passers by who might have change.

Actions / Emotions / Abstract Concepts

Like the Japanese character set, a single signed maneuver can illustrate a diverse array of abstract concepts. Feelings like sorrow, depression, anger, resentment, despair, nausea, headaches and constipation are common, as well as everyday emotional descriptors such as these:



VIRGIN

Index and middle finger brand "V" shape against forehead.



I GRABBED THE HOOKER BY HER HAIR

Angry "clamping" of fist followed by three or four violent shakes.



SNOTS BLEW OUT MY NOSE

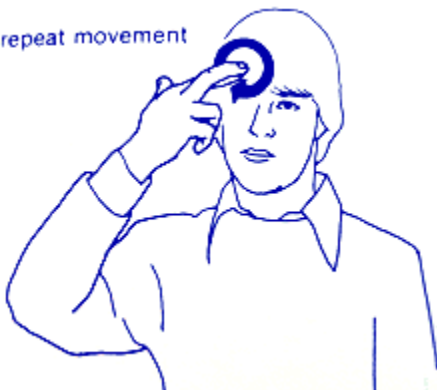
Finger moves from nose to palm, simulating trajectory of expelled material. Apologetic or simply explanatory.



SMACK SMACK SHUT UP

Sequential back-palm strikes meant to illustrate troubled relationship.

repeat movement



LOOK WHAT JEFFREY DAHMER DID

Index finger traces circle around forehead to illustrate acid-pour "drilling holes" applied by Dahmer during zombie construction.



SOON I'LL BE DARTH VADER

Digits of opposing hands touch, then expand and contract in deep thought. Useful during lonely lunch hours or high school P.E. class.



EXCRUCIATINGLY GAY

Flouncing, queen-like maneuver where both hands extend above head, and fall downward.



JEWISH

Two fingers grab either side of nose and pull down into a sweeping extended "hook".



YOUR MOUTH'S A-FLAPPIN' BUT I'M NOT A-LISTENING

Back of hand strikes mouth repeatedly to indicate annoying, repetitive discussion. Accompanied by dull, unenthusiastic stare.



HERE'S WHAT I THINK OF YOUR OPINION

(1) Fingers pluck invisible dust particle from the air and (2) "flick" particle at the ground.



Mental & Physical Health, Overall Well-Being

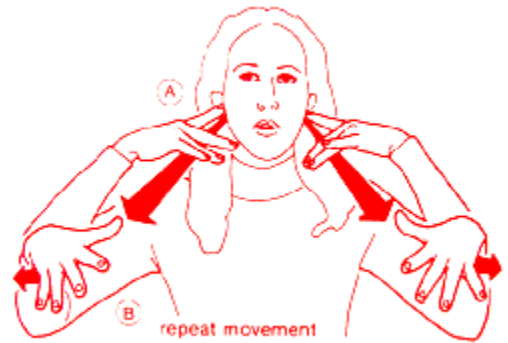
How are you feeling? How is your health? Not everyone cares to ask these rhetorical questions or actively seek a truthful response. In theory we all carry around unique and different emotional baggage, but those suffering from hearing loss like to be reminded that *they're people too*.



PLEASE SIR, CAN I HAVE SOME MORE
Hungry expression. Hands cupped forward in bowl shape, mocking haircut.



I HAVE CARPAL TUNNEL AND I'D LIKE TO GO HOME FOR THE DAY
Weak, unconvincing hand wiggle and simultaneous wrist clench. Look as though you're experiencing physical pain.



BLOOD IS SQUIRTING OUT OF MY EARS
(A) Each hand points to side of head, (B) Exaggerated double-hand "whoosh" as fingers spread down over clothing.



THE DELICATE MECHANISMS OF MY SANITY ARE PRECARIOUSLY BALANCED
Right hand forms object meant to simulate heavy rock. Left thumb serves as dainty perch.



I WANT TO PULL THE SHRIEKING VOICES FROM MY HEAD AND SMOOSH THEM
(1) Curl fingers near eyebrows, (2) Phantom demons are extracted and disposed of.



PLEASE PASS THE CROISSANTS, THE MASHED POTATOES, THE ROAST BEEF, THE GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICHES
Over and over, grasp imagined buffet items and pull them closer to your stomach.



PLEASE MAY I INSPECT YOUR PROSTATE?

Simulated stretching of rubber glove around right hand, with wiggling fingers.



CHOP OFF MY HEAD AND LET ME DIE
Guillotine slice at base of neck. (Traditional)



I HAD AN ABORTION FOR CHRISTMAS
Upturned right wrist pantomime as fetus is taken from womb and thrown away.

Jobs, Careers, Employment

Deaf people paying the rent? You bet. Summer internships and co-ops are important for any college student, but even more so for those who face communication challenges on the job. No longer content wiping off plastic cafeteria tables at the local community college, the hard of hearing are ascending corporate ranks everywhere in modern society - even operating their own businesses.



I CIRCUMCISE TEENAGERS

Right hand forms scissors, index finger of left hand mirrors penis.



I'M AN IDIOT

Confusing, incoherent undulation of fingers just below chin.



I CLIPPED THE LOCK WITH BOLT CUTTERS AND STOLE YOUR STEREO

Jerky cutting motion of chain around garage door.



I WORK AT WAL-MART

Stretched, forced smile with forefingers of each hand.



GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Motionless arms, stern disapproving glare. Does not listen to a word you say.



I SHOVEL SHIT ALL DAY LONG

Pantomime of individuals in human resources, bank tellers, civic employees.



MANAGER

Fingers of each hand interlock and remain stationary, thumbs twirl around in slow circles. Big smile.



PEEPING TOM

Forefinger of right hand curls down near eyeball, peeking through horizontal blinds.



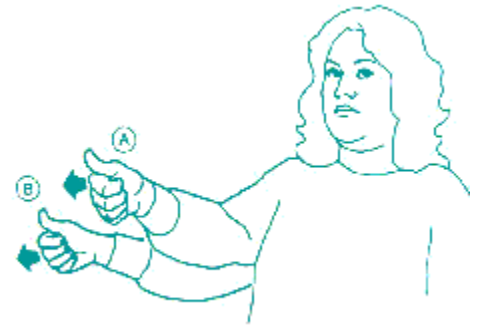
TURNTABLIST

Both hands flip-flop back and forth in a desperate attempt to appear busy and talented.



TWEAKER

Rapid-fire sequence of palm thrusts, elbow waves, finger wiggles, arm jerks, and random stabs at the air. See also: TURNTABLIST.



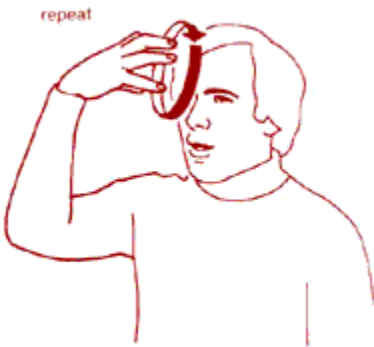
I WORK THE SHAKE MACHINE AT FOSTER'S FREEZE

Thumb pushes imaginary button over and over.



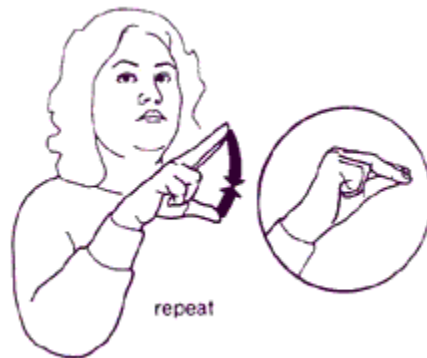
Hobbies, Pursuits, Leisure

Surfing, snowboarding, kayaking. The world is a big place, filled with so many different ways to pass the time. Why not gather together the deaf people in **your** community, and see how many activities you can do this summer. It won't cost a penny, and the memories are sure to last a lifetime.



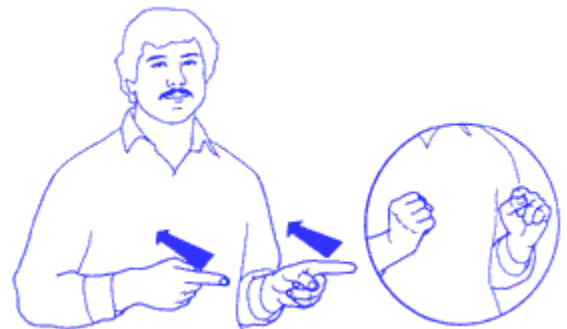
I'M THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Open fingers trace slow DUH-like circles around forehead. Conceal your genius from plain public view.



I WORK AT THE D.M.V.

Index finger and thumb open and shut several times, like a duck quacking.



PROGRAMMER BY DAY / CLUBBER BY NIGHT

Repetitive forefinger extension and retreat; rest of body stands motionless and aloof.



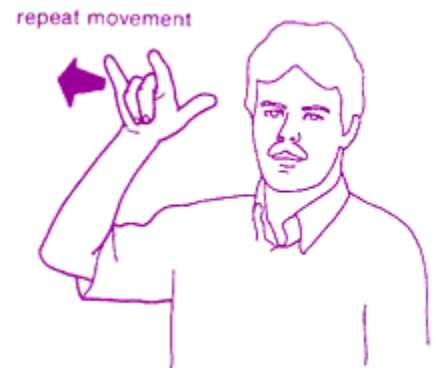
GODDAMNIT MOM, I ASKED YOU TO TIVO CRANK YANKERS

Fingers rub away fake tears from eyes, simulated headache and expression of contempt.



WOOO HOO!!! METALLICA RULES!!!

(1) Right hand waves around in traditional rock and roll gesture, (2) Excitable clapping and enthusiasm for live musical performance.



METALLICA IS OKAY

Single, muted rock and roll gesture.



BUTTOCKS THERAPY
Hands clasp and squeeze invisible cheeks.



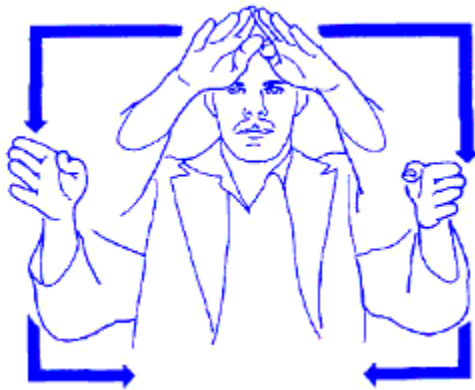
TIME TO COMMIT SUICIDE
Pantomimed finger-figure leaping from rooftop or extension bridge.



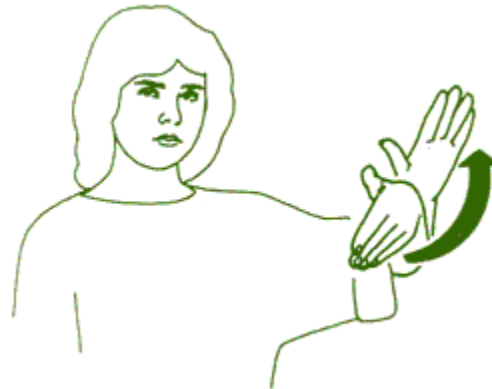
WHOO-DEE-DOO I'M PREGNANT
Index finger spins in series of quick, tight circles.



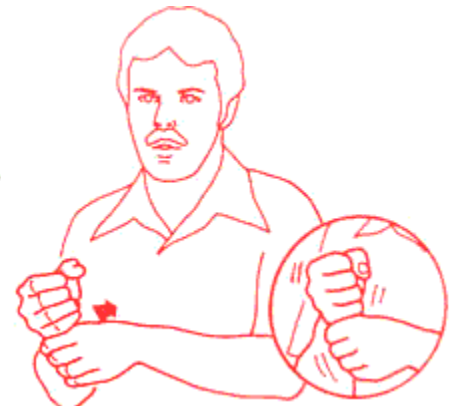
GLUG GLUG GLUG GLUG
Drinky-drinky motion and tired eyes.



DON'T BE SQUARE, DADDY-O
Enormous rectangular outline made in personal space. (Considered extremely offensive)



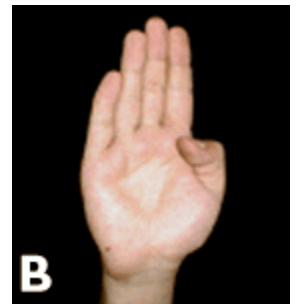
TRADITIONAL BITCH SLAP
Back of palm thrust outward. Flip quickly to strike nose of conversational opponent.



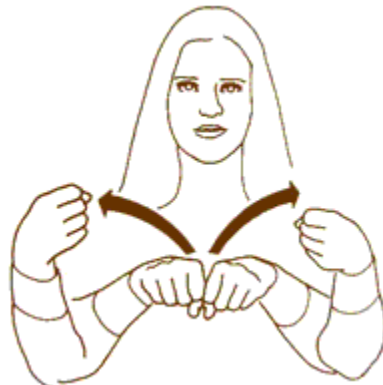
STAY BACK - I KILL YOU
Fists clenched together holding invisible baseball bat.

Dating / Mating / Relating

Deaf people having sex? Of course not. But they like to talk about it just like anyone else, and the modern lexicon of sign language terminology is exhaustive and more than up to the challenge. Our sign language dictionary concludes with succinct, suitable ways to communicate one's sexual wishes to a deaf partner.



PULL MY PANTS DOWN
Thumb and forefingers of each hand reach for belt loops.



UNLOCK MY LEGS AND GET IT OVER WITH
Simulated ankle separation and expression of resignation



HEY DIDDLE DIDDLE
Inverted palms, wiggling fingers. Used only when addressing two lesbians.



DUELING SWORDFIGHT ACTION?
(Female only) Solicitation for multiple partners, indicative of alcohol abuse.



I WOULD LIKE ONE COCK

(1) Hold up index finger to indicate single digit, then (2) make letter C.



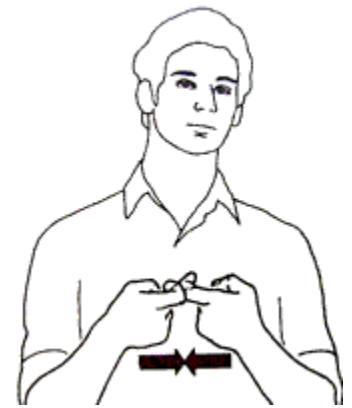
I PREFER TWO COCKS

Double clenched fists bracket and twist either side of face, cheeks puffed out.



I'D ENJOY AN ENORMOUS HORSE COCK

Both hands strain to wrangle an imaginary penis with the circumference of a coffee can.



LET'S KNOCK OUR COCKS TOGETHER

Forefingers of opposing hands bonk together repeatedly, bending knuckles.



YOU'VE GOT THE BIGGEST MELONS I'VE EVER SEEN

Flat palms curve downward across chest. Also: PREGNANT.



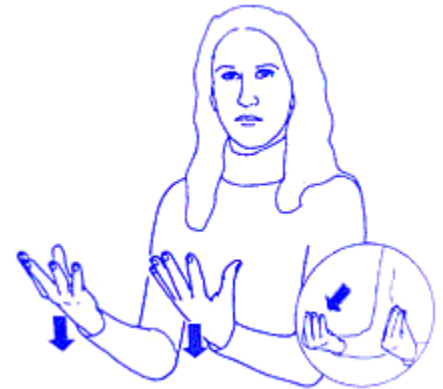
WHO'S UP FOR SOME FISTING?

Left hand grabs right wrist and "pushes" forward with implied friction. Repeat.



WANNA "PARTY" ?

Jovial "blowjob" pantomime of single fist going back and forth, to and from smirking mouth.



GRAB MY TITS AND PINCH

(A) Both hands cup implied breasts, and (B) squeeze imaginary teats.



MY EQUIPMENT IS LARGELY INADEQUATE

(1) Lick thumb or pinky finger of left hand to suggest wet willie, then (2) squeak moistened finger around in circles of opposing hand.



LACKLUSTER HANDJOB

Accompanied by dreary gaze, cup base of imaginary dick with right hand and bitterly illustrate only the bare minimum stimulation.



I'M LIKE AN OCTOPUS AT THE BONER BUFFET

Sequence of random grabs and "grope" at the air, squeezing as many penises as you can in a short period of time. Turn of the century bathhouse origin.