Selected Excerpts from www.lessontutor.com's
Introduction to American Sign Language: Series 3
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## About the Author

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Lesson 1: Simple Answers and Beginning Phrases


| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| good | Make the "thank you" sign, but let the back of the right hand fall to rest in the palm of the <br> extended left hand. (The only difference between "thank you" and "good" is that the sign <br> for "good" ends in the palm of the left hand, while the "thank you" sign finishes in mid-air.) |
| good bye | Wave "good-bye"! |
| hello | Place hand on forward as if to salute (but not as rigid). Move hand outward, ending up with <br> palm facing forward in the air just a few inches from the forehead. |
| no | Using the right hand, close the thumb and first two fingers together once. |
| please | Use right hand, flat, fingers together. Rub in a circular motion mid-chest. |
| see | Using a right "v" hand, hold fingertips of the "v" directly in <br> front of eyes. Then move the right hand outward as if extending vision. |
| sorry | Move "s" hand in a circular motion mid-chest. <br> hith open hand, touch lips, and then extend hand outward, keeping palm facing the face <br> (as if throwing a thank you kiss). |
| yes | Using right "s" hand, move the wrist to make the "s" fist go down, up, then down again, as <br> if it is someone's head shaking a "yes" acknowledgment. |
| you | Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |
| you're | Touch forehead with the index finger of the "w" hand, then touch chest with the wrist of that <br> same "w" hand. The motion will be somewhat semi-circular, as if you are inviting or <br> welcoming someone to be close to you. |
| welcome |  |

## Lesson 2: Emotions and Feelings

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| angry | Hold the right hand in front of the face, palm facing in. Bend and unbend fingers twice. <br> Make an angry face as your hands make the sign. |
| bored | Place the index finger of the right hand on the right nostril, rotating the wrist slightly to the <br> front. |
| cold | Two clenched fists 'shivering' about shoulder high. |
| happy | Touch chest with closed fingers of both hands in a forward circular motion, as if "stirring" <br> emotions of joy. |
| hot | Take the hot (food) out of your mouth and drop it! |
| hungry | Loosely, weakly hold an empty cup. Draw it down your throat to chest level. <br> interested <br> Place the left hand just in front of the chest (not shown in illustration) and the right hand <br> near the nose. Then move the hands forward while closing the thumb and index fingers <br> until touching (all other fingers remaining extended). |
| sad | Spread fingers and place hands several inches in front of the face, palms in . Move hands <br> in a downward position to indicate a flow of tears. |
| sick | Middle fingers, both hands, point to head (right) and chest (left) at the same time. <br> Hold a semi-open hand in front of your eyes, then close them gradually as you bring them <br> down, to mimic closing your eyes. |
| sleepy | Right index finger traces a line down your throat as if following a drink down. |
| thirst | Place fingertips of bent "c" hands on upper chest. Move hands in a downward motion, <br> pivoting the hands so that each finger touches the chest as the hands rotate into the final <br> position where fingertips point upward, no longer touching the body. |

## Lesson 2: Emotions and Feelings


happy

thirst

tired

sick

angry

bored

sleepy


hungry
sad


interested

## Lesson 3: Question Words


who?

what? (as in "What do you mean?" or "I don't understand")

when?

why?

where?

what? (like "What time?" or "What book?")

how?

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| how | Place hands back to back in front of the chest area, hands slightly bent, palms downward. <br> Knuckles will slightly touch. Revolve hands in and then upward until hands end in a <br> position where palms are flat and turned upward. |
| what (as in 'what Use the index finger of the right hand to pass over the palm of the left open hand (fingers <br> time? or 'what <br> book?') <br> tightly close) from the base of the index finger to the base of the little finger. |  |
| what (do you <br> mean?) | Slightly raise both palm up hands at your sides with a shrug. |
| when | Hold the left "d" hand in front of body, palm up. The right index finger moves in a clockwise <br> motion around the left, then rests on the left index finger to symbolize the element of time. |
| where | Wave your upward pointing index finger left and right as if panning the space before you. |
| which | Alternately move vertical "a" hands up and down 2 or 3 times. <br> who <br> Place the right "L" hand on the chin, touching with the thumb. Slightly move the index <br> finger twice. |
| Place fingers of the right bent hand on the forehead. Then move the right hand forward <br> (palm turned toward the body) changing the formation into a "Y" hand as you move. |  |

## Lesson 4: Common ASL Phrases

As was discussed in the first series of sign lessons, two methods of signing exist: American Sign Language and Signed English. (For an explanation and comparison, see http://www.lessontutor.com/eesASLIntro.html) The signs for words, for the most part, are the same. It is the structuring of the sentences that sets the two systems apart. For example, the Signed English sentence "Are you hungry?" might just as easily be conveyed by the American Sign Language phrase "Hungry, you?" In this lesson, you will be introduced to some common ASL phrases.


Are you hungry?


Do you want to go to church with me?

.book

boring

The book is boring.

Assignment: Try signing these phrases

1. I am sick (hint: me sick)
2. You are not eating? (hint: you eat not?)
3. I have a new red car. (hint: new car, red, me)

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| book | You don't judge a book by its cover. Palms together, fingertips up, then 'open' your <br> hands, thumbs leading, to display the contents. |
| boring | Place the index finger of the right hand on the right nostril, rotating the wrist slightly to <br> the front. |
| church | Make a left "s" hand and hold it with the palm facing downward. Place a right "c" hand <br> on the back of the left hand. Note: The sign symbolizes that the church is set on the <br> rock. |
| go | "G" hand pushes away from the body in front. "Shoo!" |
| hungry | Use right "c" hand and run the hand down the center of the chest in a downward motion, <br> touching the fingertips to the body as if outlining where the esophagus lies within the <br> chest cavity. |
| me | Point to self, mid-chest. |
| want | Extend both hands forward, palms up. Move both open curved hands toward the chest <br> several times, as if drawing in the desired object. |
| you | Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |



Have you eaten, yet?

want

which

juice

tea

Which do you want, juice or tea?


Why didn't you sleep last night?

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| baseball | Pantomime gripping a baseball bat with both "S" hands and then swinging at an imaginary <br> ball. |
| best | Touch lips with the fingertips of the right flat hand (fingers together.) Then move the hand <br> across the lips and to the right and then upward to above head, ending in the "a" hand <br> position. Note: This sign's meaning comes from the association of giving something a taste <br> and then affirming something good with a "thumbs-up." |
| football | Push a right "a" hand (thumb turned upward) outward twice across the left upturned palm <br> of the left hand, as if kicking the football out of the left hand. |
| juice | The letter "j" sign swings wide towards your mouth. |
| like | Place the right thumb and index finger against the chest as if picking lint from the shirt. <br> Then pull the right hand away from the body, bringing the thumb and index finger together. <br> Note: Some signers use the thumb and middle finger for this sign. |
| night | Hold the left arm in a horizontal position in front of the body, fingers pointing right, palm <br> down. Place the right forearm on the back of the left hand, fingers curved downward. |
| not | Using the right "a" hand, brush thumb under chin and move hand forward. <br> Move the right flat hand backward over the right shoulder and "wave" slightly as if throwing <br> the past behind you. |
| past | Hold a semi-open hand in front of your eyes, then close them gradually as you bring them <br> down, to mimic closing your eyes. |
| sleep | Use the thumb and index finger of the right hand to mimic dipping a tea bag into the left "s" <br> hand which represents a teacup. Slightly rotate the wrist as if "swishing" the tea bag in the <br> hot water. |
| tea | Extend both hands forward, palms up. Move both open curved hands toward the chest <br> several times, as if drawing in the desired object. |
| want | Alternately move vertical "a" hands up and down 2 or 3 times. |
| Place fingers of the right bent hand on the forehead. Then move the right hand forward |  |
| (palm turned toward the body) changing the formation into a "Y" hand as you move. |  |



Have you finished your homework?


The movie is over.


I feel better now that I have taken the medicine.


The car is broken beyond repair.

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| better | Touch lips with the fingertips of the right flat hand (fingers together.) Then move the hand <br> across the lips and to the right of the head, ending in the "a" hand position. Note: This <br> sign's meaning comes from the association of giving something a taste and then affirming <br> something good with a "thumbs-up." |
| broken | Pantomime holding a stick as if intending to break it. Snap it in half sharply downwards. |
| car | "c" hand hovers over left fist, then moves up imaginary steering column of car |
| finish, finished | Hold open hands (fingers spread) in front of chest, palms facing inward. With a sudden <br> movement, rotate wrists so that palms face outward. |
| home | Use a closed right hand, all four fingers touching the thumb, to touch the right side of the <br> face, first at the chin and a second time on the right cheek bone near the ear. |
| me | Point to self, mid-chest. |
| medicine | Use the right middle finger to make a small counter-clockwise circle in the left palm. <br> Hold the right hand, fingers spread, slightly behind the left hand, fingers closed and palm <br> down. Move the right hand side to side to indicate film moving through a projector. |
| now | Bend hands, palms upward, and drop both hands from chest level to the waist. |
| work | Tap the right "s" hand on the back of the left "s" hand. |
| you | Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |

## Lesson 7: Negative Phrases

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| don't know | 1: Touch forehead with fingers of right hand, palm facing the face. 2: Turn hand out and <br> away towards the right shoulder. |
| don't like | 1: Touch chest with longest fingers 2: Swing right hand out and away from chest |
| don't want | 1: want - Extend both hands forward, palms up. Move both open curved hands toward the <br> chest several times, as if drawing in the desired object. <br> 2: not - Both hands are held in front of the body, palms down, fingertips toward the front. <br> Then hands are moved slightlly downward and to the side, as if wiping a slate clean. |
| him | Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |
| \| | Point to self, mid-chest. |
| know | Touch forehead with fingers of right hand, palm facing the face. |
| like | Place the right thumb and index finger against the chest as if picking lint from the shirt. <br> Then pull the right hand away from the body, bringing the thumb and index finger together. <br> Note: Some signers use the thumb and middle finger for this sign. |
| not | Using the right "a" hand, brush thumb under chin and move hand forward. |
| nothing | Hold "o" hands in front of chest, palms facing, and fingers touching. Separate hands, <br> moving both to the outsides of the body to indicate that the air in front of you is left blank, <br> i.e. void of anything. |
| she | Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |
| tells | Use a right "d" hand to visually move the spoken word from the mouth into the air. |
| want | Extend both hands forward, palms up. Move both open curved hands toward the chest <br> several times, as if drawing in the desired object. |



She doesn't tell a thing.


Tells

him

not


I

I didn't tell him.

like

want

know

don't like

don't want

don't know
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## Lesson 8 Everyday Phrases



Where

live

you

Where do you live?


What is your phone number?


T T Y

have

Do you have TTY?


May I go with you?


Sit


Be seated, please.

## Lesson 8 Everyday Phrases Continued...

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| have | Place fingertips of both hands, palms bent back toward wrists, on the chest to indicate <br> possession. |
| live | Pace both hands in "L" shapes on front hips. Then move hands simultaneously up the <br> body's torso, stopping at the upper chest level. |
| me | Point to self, mid-chest. <br> Touch fingertips of two "O" hands and move them forward and backward in opposition <br> on to the other. |
| number | Hold a "y" hand to the side of the head, much as you would a telephone receiver. |
| phone | Use right hand, flat, fingers together. Rub in a circular motion mid-chest. <br> Using "h" hands, "sit" the right "h" hand on the top of the left "h" hand, palms facing <br> downward. |
| please | Fingerspell these initials. Note: TTY (Text Telephone Relay) is a relay system which <br> enables hearing impaired persons to make phone calls. The deaf person types a <br> message which a hearing person (relay operator) hears and then relays/speaks to a <br> person on the other end. |
| TTY | Use the index finger of the right hand to pass over the palm of the left open hand <br> (fingers tightly close) from the base of the index finger to the base of the little finger. |
| what | Wave your upward pointing index finger left and right as if panning the space before <br> you. |
| where | Bring both hands together as "a" hands, touching palms at the end of the motion. |
| Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |  |
| you |  |

## Lesson 9: Past Tense

In ASL/English there are time indicators like today, tomorrow, last night, next year. etc... 'I will go to the store tomorrow' is English word order. In ASL, does the 'tomorrow' come first and then 'store go to I will' or 'tomorrow go store will I'? I am not sure which is first. Mary, Dec. 2002

Rather than answer your question off the top of my head, I have gone to The American Sign Language Phrase Book (http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0809235005/lessontutor) by Lou Fant. I will quote him but also add in some explanation. My words will be in brackets. Here is what Fant has to say about Time Indicators:
"In order to sign the equivalent of 'I saw you,' it is necessary to use a time indicator. One may use signs that will place the event in a specific time, such as 'yesterday,' 'last night,' or 'this morning.'
[These phrases would come at the beginning of the sentence.]
One may also use the "finish" sign [after the verb] to indicate no specific time, simply the past.
[Most deaf that I know use the "finish" sign to indicate that the activity has just been completed.]
The 'past' sign may be used instead of the 'finish' sign, which conveys slightly more information.
[Use of this sign usually indicates something completed further back in time than when using the 'finish' sign.]
For a nonspecific future time, use the "will" sign. Notice that nonspecific time indicators such as 'finish' and 'will' usually follow the verb; however, they may come before the verb as well. Specific time indicators, on the other hand, always come at the beginning of a statement. Context is used a great deal in ASL when establishing or determining tense. For instance, the signer may tell the watcher about an incident that occurred sometime in the past or that will occur in the future. The signer will first establish the time of the incident by using a time indicator sign; then the signer will never repeat the time indicator sign or use any additional ones. The watcher knows that all the events described by the signer occur in the time frame established at the beginning of the statement." That's a nice little summary by Lou Fant, don't you think? I hope the info begins to answer some of your "time" questions. You might want to consider getting this book. I find it invaluable. Good luck in your ASL studies!! Sincerely,
Elaine Schneider


Did you tell him/her?

tell

finish

I told him/her.

## 1. Did you eat your banana? I ate it.

2. Did you drive to school? I drove.
3. Did you sing in church? I sang.

Need to review your signs? Look them up in the Vocabulary Index here http://www.lessontutor.com/eesASLdictionarylinks.html.

past

long ago, in the past

Combination phrases:

last week


| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| finish | Hold open hands (fingers spread) in front of chest, palms facing inward. With a sudden <br> movement, rotate wrists so that palms face outward. |
| him/her | Point in the direction of where someone is located. If no one is there, point to an <br> "imaginary" person. |
| last week | Place the back of a right "1" hand in the upward turned palm of the left hand. Then move <br> the right hand to the right shoulder, symbolizing throwing the spent week over your <br> shoulder. Note: To show 2 weeks ago, make a 2 with the right hand; for 3 weeks, use the <br> sign for 3, etc. as the right hand moves to the shoulder. |
| last year | Make an abbreviated sign for "year" (touch the "S" hands together). Then move the right <br> hand to the right shoulder, opening the fingers during the movement. This symbolizing a <br> year that has been thrown away (over the shoulder). Note: To show 2 years ago, make a 2 <br> with the right hand; for 3 years, use the sign for 3, etc. as the right hand moves to the <br> shoulder. |
| long ago, in <br> the past | Hands alternate back over the shoulder. <br> pastMove the right flat hand backward over the right shoulder and "wave" slightly as if throwing <br> the past behind you. |
| tell | Use a right "d" hand to visually move the spoken word from the mouth into the air. |



buy

go

come


| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| answer | Move both index fingers form the mouth outward to suggest an answer coming out of <br> the mouth. |
| ask | Place palms together, touching, hands flat, fingers together. Move hands in a <br> backward arc toward the body. |
| break | Pantomime holding a stick as if intending to break it. Snap it in half sharply <br> downwards. |
| buy | Place the right slightly bend hand in the palm of the left upturned hand. Then move the <br> right hand out of the left, as if removing money from it. |
| Bring both "B" hands (palms forward, finger closed, and fingertips pointing |  |
| upward) together. |  |

Lesson 11: Professions: A Question and Answer Lesson
Questions
Where do you work?


## What kind of work do you do?


specialty/major

what

you

Answers:

lawyer

insurance agent

doctor

teacher

housewife

police

pastor

secretary

musician

store clerk/salesperson

banker


| Signs | Word Descriptions of Actions |
| :--- | :--- |
| artist | 1) art - Use a right "i" hand to imitate drawing in the left upturned palm. <br> 2) person - End with the universal sign for "individual" or "person who." It is made by <br> moving open hands, palms turned in toward the body, down the sides of the body, chest <br> to hip. |
| auto repairman | 1) car - "c" hand hovers over left fist, then moves up imaginary steering column of car. <br> 2) fix - Touch index fingers and thumbs of both hands, holding hands close together at <br> that point. Then move hands alternately forward and back. <br> 3) person - End with the universal sign for "individual" or "person who." It is made by <br> moving open hands, palms turned in toward the body, down the sides of the body, chest <br> to hip. |
| banker | 1) bank - Make a left "c" hand. Then gently push the right open hand (palm down, fingers <br> closed) through the space created by the "c" as if depositing money in a bank vault. <br> 2) person - End with the universal sign for "individual" or "person who." It is made by <br> moving open hands, palms turned in toward the body, down the sides of the body, chest <br> to hip. |
| Touch a right "d" hand to the upward turned wrist of the left hand. |  |
| doctorTouch the back of a right "B" hand to the forehead to symbolize a firefighter's helmet. |  |
| firefighter | 1) house - Hold open hands (fingers together) in front of body with palms facing. Touch <br> he fingertips to create a rooftop. Note: Some signers continue the image by moving the <br> hands downward to trace the walls. <br> 2) married - Clasp hands to indicate a union or marriage. |


| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| I, I am | Point to self, mid-chest. <br> insurance <br> agent |
| 1) insurance - Move a right "i" hand left to right. <br> 2) person - End with the universal sign for "individual" or "person who." It is made by <br> moving open hands, palms turned in toward the body, down the sides of the body, chest <br> to hip. |  |
| lawyer | 1) law - Hold the left hand out in front of the chest, palm facing forward. Use a right "I" <br> hand to touch the left hand first at the fingers and then at the base of the palm, <br> 2) person - End with the universal sign for "individual" or "person who." It is made by <br> moving open hands, palms turned in toward the body, down the sides of the body, chest <br> to hip. |
| 1) song - Wave the right "b" hand from left to right in the crook of the slightly bent left arm. |  |
| 2) person - End with the universal sign for "individual" or "person who." It is made by |  |
| moving open hands, palms turned in toward the body, down the sides of the body, chest |  |
| to hip. |  |


hotel

taxi or cab

pay


key

vacation

plans

## Suggested Activities:

- Role play checking into a hotel, getting your room number, taking your suitcase to your room, and asking where the restaurant is located.
- An additional scene could be in the restaurant where you role play ordering a meal.
- RULES: No voice, all signs. If you don't know the sign for a word, fingerspell.
- You may wish to review
- numbers (http://www.lessontutor.com/eesASL4.html ),
- direction signs http://www.lessontutor.com/ees asl directions.html, and
- food signs http://www.lessontutor.com/ASLgenhome.html from previous lessons before beginning.

| Signs | Description of Sign Action |
| :--- | :--- |
| bag, suitcase | Dangle right arm at your side, grasping an invisible bag or suitcase handle. |
| cab, taxi | Tap hand on top of your head to indicate the dome on top of a taxi. |
| hotel | Make a right "H" hand and place it on the left index finger of a "D" sign, touching the <br> little finger edge of the right hand to the left finger tip. Then move the "H" fingers back <br> and forth to represent the flickering of a hotel's sign. |
| key | Touch a right crooked finger on the palm of the left palm (turned inward) and twist the <br> right hand forward 180 degrees as if turning a key in a lock. |
| pay | Place the right slightly bend hand in the palm of the left upturned hand. Then move the <br> right hand out of the left, as if removing money from it. |
| plans | Face open flat palms toward each other, fingers pointing forward. Move both hands <br> simultaneously to the right in several movements, hesitating slightly between motions as <br> if sectioning off the parts of a plan. Alternate sign: Some signers move the hands to the <br> right and then to the left, rather than in one direction. |
| restaurant | Touch the fingertips of a right "R" hand to the right side of the lips. |
| room | Place "R" hands to the front of the body with palms facing. Then rotate both wrists so <br> that the left "R" hand is close to the body and the right hand is further away (palms of <br> both hands facing inward). |
| vacation | Place the thumbs of open hands (palms facing each other) on the chest. Tap the chest <br> twice. |

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|  |  |  |  | what (do yo |  |
| eat | .. 8 | night | ... 8 | mean?) |  |
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|  |  | nothing | ... 12 | which | ... 5 |
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| finished |  | number | ... 13 | why | ... 5 |
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|  |  | past | ... 8 | yet | ... 8 |
| go | ... 6 | pastor | ... 21 | you | ... 2 |
| good | ... 2 | pay | ... 23 | you're | ... 2 |
| good-bye | ... 2 | phone | ... 13 | welcome |  |
|  |  | plan | ... 23 |  |  |
| happy | ... 4 | please | ... 2 |  |  |
| have | ... 13 | police | ... 21 |  |  |

# Keep adding to your growing Sign Language Vocabulary 

Printable Flashcard Series:
ASL Basic Signs
ASL Survival Signs
ASL Signs of Spring
ASL Signs of Summer
ASL Signs of Fall
ASL Signs of Winter

## Practice speed and grace by signing to familiar songs and verse

The Pledge of Allegiance + God Bless America
Star Spangled Banner
O, Canada
Sign and Sing Christmas Vol. 1, 2, and 3
23rd Psalm
Amazing Grace
and many, many more....

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