



American Sign Language has been used as the language of the hearing impaired for years. A combination of fingerspelling, body gestures, facial expressions, and specific sign names, ASL opens wide the door for communication between persons who experience any sort of language processing challenge. Children too young to speak, stroke victims, cerebral palsy patients - American Sign Language basic signs offer a means for expression of needs and feelings.

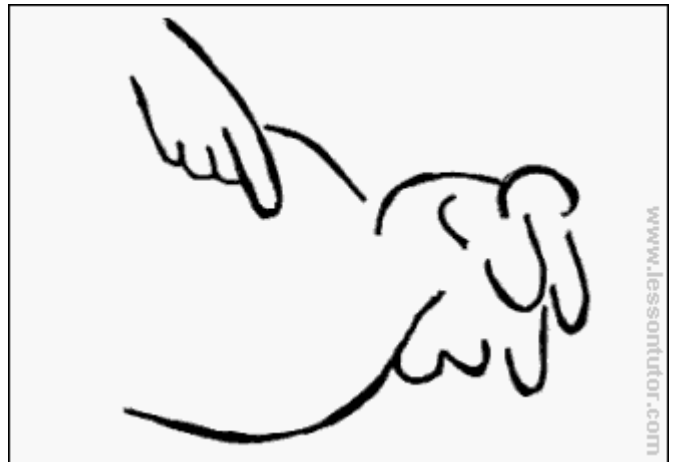
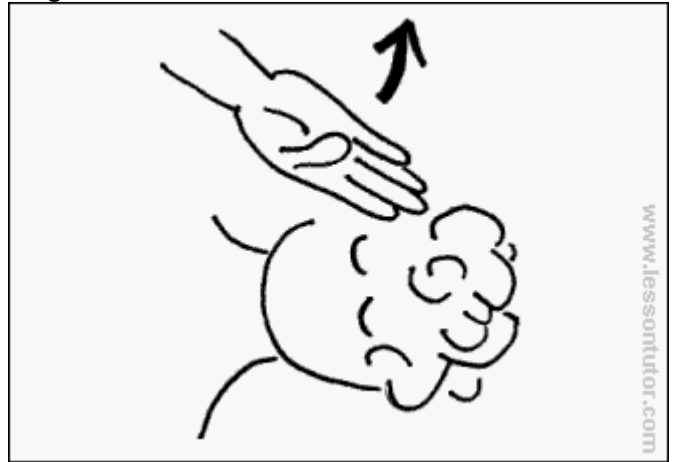
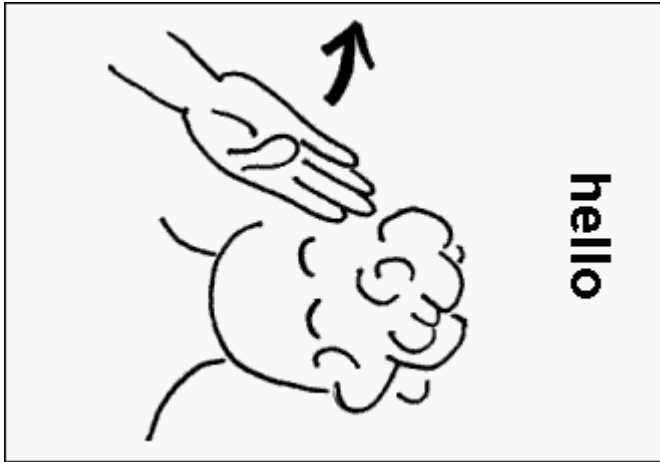
Sign language is also recommended for children with autism and Asberger's as a middle step for processing language. Many of those affected cannot get the idea from their minds into words, so they are encouraged to draw and to sign as a middle step. Actually, sign language is a perfect tool for any child with a language processing disorder including apraxia and Down's syndrome. One of my students has an auditory processing disorder. She has difficulty retrieving any meaning from auditory messages. She also has trouble memorizing. However, if she DOES something with the words, she remembers. She remembers songs that she does an ice skating routine to, and poems, songs, The Lord's Prayer, etc. that she signs.

Have fun with this make your own flashcard set and ignite an enthusiasm for the learning of new language. Words and concepts pictured include: hello, I/me, name, please, sign, you, yes, no, thank you, you're welcome, stop, again, good, am/was/were/..., hungry, eat, happy, sad, sorry, now, sit, want, phone, restroom, tired, good bye.

#### Excerpts from the **CHEAT SHEET for ASL Basic Signs**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Description of Action</b>
<b>again</b>	Slightly bend the right "b" hand as you bring it tips first to rest in the extended left palm. The motion should look like you are "putting" something into the left hand. If you wish to indicate that you have done something several times, tap fingers on left palm more than once.
<b>am/was/were</b>	Touch "d" hand to chin and then straight forward, keeping the tilt of the hand sideways, palm facing to the left.
<b>eat</b>	Touching all fingertips to the thumb tip, move the hand in that position to the lips, as if putting food in the mouth.
<b>good</b>	Make the "thank you" sign, but let the back of the right hand fall to rest in the palm of the extended left hand. (The only difference between "thank you" and "good" is that the sign for "good" ends in the palm of the left hand, while the "thank you" sign finishes in mid-air.)
<b>good bye</b>	Wave "good bye"!
<b>happy</b>	Use both hands in open position, touching palms to the chest in a down/up motion in two short movements.

### Basic ASL Signs



#### About the Author

**Elaine Ernst Schneider** entered the classroom as a special education teacher in the 1970's. Since then, she has taught mainstream English Grammar, Literature, music K-12, deaf education, psychology, Algebra, creative writing, social studies, psychology, law, and science in both public and private schools. In the 1990's, Elaine created an adaptive education program and implemented a student teacher program in a cooperative effort with the University of West Florida. While there, she opted to take the masters level courses in the area of learning disabilities. Today, she writes curriculum for several companies, as well as freelance articles on education. She is also a co-founder and managing editor for the educational website [lessonstutor.com](http://www.lessonstutor.com).