



Today's Teaching Tip: 'Can I use either hand to make these signs?'

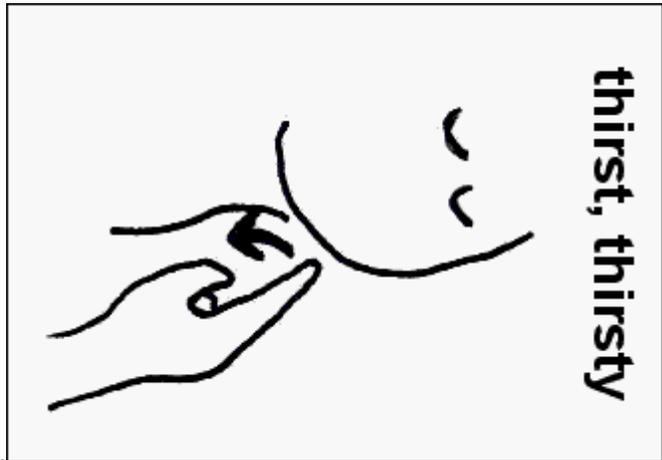
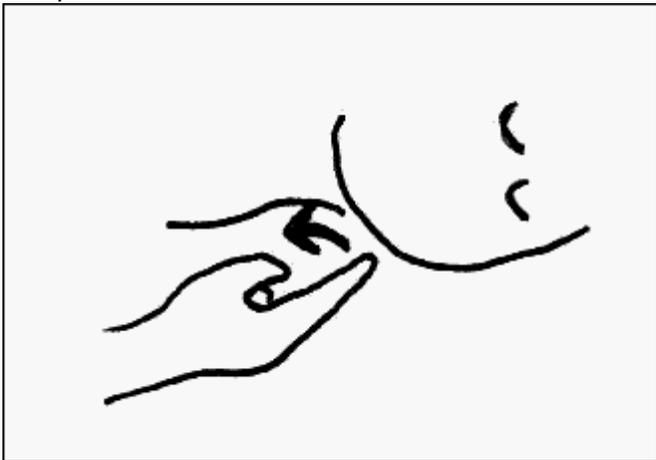
I am teaching five sign classes right now and I have two left-handed signers - would you believe in the same class? Traditionally, someone who is left-handed uses his or her left hand dominantly, although some "switching" may occur. For example, many a baseball player is a "switch-hitter" using either hand dominantly. Left-handed persons may throw a ball with one hand and catch with the other! So, my advice to lefties when they sign is to choose a dominant hand. If you tend to do some things ambidextrously and signing with the right hand dominant is comfortable, then this would be the first choice. It would help others in "reading" your signs because this is what most people are used to seeing - a mirror image of the right hand. But this is not a hard and fast thing. If you truly are left-handed in most all that you do (and I do understand this as I have a true "leftie" daughter) then just be sure that you use your left hand as the dominant one in all your signs. For example, you should make the 'I-love-you' sign with your left hand, spell with your left hand, and make any other one handed sign with your left hand. If two hands are used in a sign and one hand moves and the other remains stationary, then be sure that the "moving" hand is your left-hand. There is nothing that says you can't make your left hand your dominant signing hand. The only "rule of thumb" is that you are consistent.

Happy signing, :->

Elaine Schneider

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Sample flashcards:



Excerpt from the Cheat Sheet for ASL Survival Signs

Word or Concept	Description of Action
bath/bathe	Scrubbing your chest up and down using both hands in loose fists, like holding scrub brushes, at the same time.
change	Use "x" hands to move in a circular motion, "changing" from right hand on top to left hand on top.
cold	Two clenched fists 'shivering' about shoulder high.
come	Use "c" hands in circular motions that "come" from some place further out in front of you to a closer proximity to the body.
dirty	Shiver your fingers just under your chin

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- **Amazing Grace** Adapted for ASL Signs
- **Sign and Sing** a Song for **Christmas**
- **The Lord's Prayer (SE)** and the **10 Commandments (ASL)**

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, science, psychology, and law 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 her 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 [lesstutor.com](http://www.lesstutor.com).