

These signs are intended for use with babies and toddlers. In addition to forming the sign, you may also use facial expressions to reinforce your meaning or the intensity of your emotions.

Share:

Hold your open, flat left hand still with the palm facing your chest, fingers together but the thumb pointing up. Hold the right hand the same way—flat with the thumb pointing up—and let the side of the little finger sweep back and forth across the crook of the thumb of the left hand.

Care:

Touch your chin with your hand in the crooked or bent “5” position: Hold your palm up vertically, fingers together and thumb pointing out; now bend the fingers from your knuckles so your fingers are 90° to your palm and touch your fingers to your chin. Now change to the handshape “S”:

Make a fist with the thumb closing over the first two fingers. To say, “I care,” point to yourself before making the sign for care. This sign also means “I cherish.”

Gentle:

Hold the left hand flat, palm up, fingers together at about chest level. With the right hand flat, palm down and fingers together, brush over the left hand, away from the body. Think of stroking a pet – your left hand is the pet; the right hand does the stroking. This sign also means “nice.”

Happy:

Touch your four fingers and thumb of your dominant hand together on your chest, with the thumb facing up and circle twice.

Please:

With the right flat hand facing your chest, make a circle to the right over the center of your chest.

Thank You:

Touch the chin or lips with the fingertips of one flat hand, then move the hand forward until the palms are facing up. The hand moves out and down. This sign is similar to the gesture of kissing one's hand and extending the hand towards someone else.

I Love You:

There are two easy ways to express "I love you." One is a single sign which combines the letters I, L, and Y:

With your palm facing the person, extend your thumb, index and pinkie fingers while keeping the middle and ring fingers closed and move your hand back and forth, left to right. To show intensity, you can "tap" your hand in and out towards the person. An alternative is to cross your arms over your chest with your fists closed and then point to the person to whom you are saying "I love you." This sign is also used in an affectionate manner to show one's appreciation toward others.

You're Welcome:

With the dominant open hand, palm up and held at waist level just less than 1 foot out, bring your hand inwards to your waist. You can also use a natural head nod.

The Emily Post Institute extends our sincere thanks to Anne Potter and Deborah Lamden for their invaluable assistance in developing "Emily's Sharing and Caring Words in ASL."

Anne Potter, Ph.D.
Director of Austine School for the Deaf/Vermont ASL Program
60 Austine Drive
Brattleboro, VT 05301

www.vcdhh.org

Deborah Lamden
Executive Director
Partners In Adventure, Inc.
P.O. Box 867
Shelburne, VT 05482
www.partnersinadventure.org