

BDSM Hand Signals

by [MASTERMARC](#) on [SEPTEMBER 18, 2015](#)

<https://www.devianceanddesire.com/2015/09/illustrated-guide-hand-signals/>

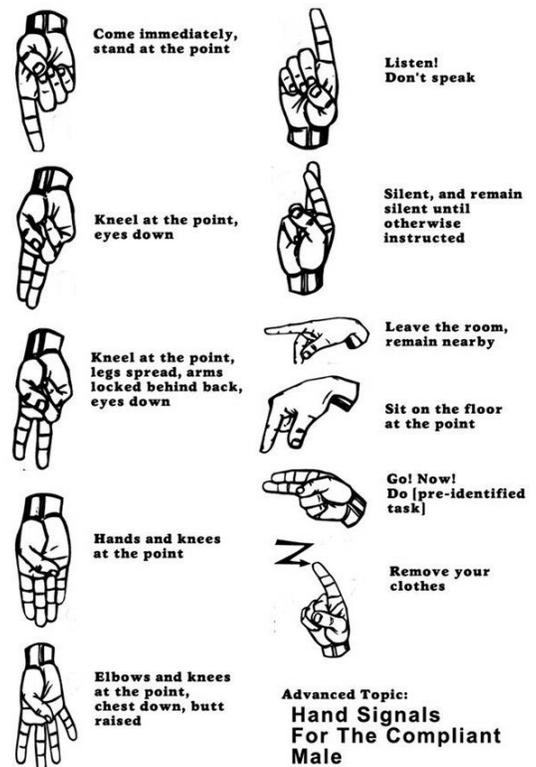


Some Doms use a standard set of hand signals in their training, but they vary from Dom to Dom and House to House. Why use hand signals?

- Saves the Dom from raising his voice in a noisy room or over a distance
- Emphasises a command and helps to ensure it is not misheard or misinterpreted
- Provides a private form of communication in vanilla environments

The eyes are more reliable than the ears in communication, and visual communication is actually quicker for the brain to process.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjCcoUCETCY>



Silent Communication Methods

AUGUST 17, 2017 MASTER KULDRIN [HTTPS://KULDRINSKRYPT.COM/SILENTCOMMUNICATION](https://kuldrinskrypt.com/silentcommunication)

Silent Communication Methods

Communication is the essential part of all BDSM relationships and activities but the ability to speak isn't always present. Here are a few suggestions that are tried and true methods for improving your play time.

1. Hand signals (a.k.a. gesturing): Hand signaling, from a psychological standpoint, is the best way to communicate during a scene regardless of a persons ability to speak. This is because the part of the brain that is used to make hand gestures as opposed to speaking won't pull the bottom out of subspace. Using color is common but can get confusing especially when people try to use too many. Just a few weeks ago I heard of couple boasting about their perfect use 5 or 10 different colors but when they started explaining the meaning of each color they started to argue because they disagreed about the meaning of a couple of them. Even using just three colors such as the red light system has serious flaws and limitations such as the color red. Most people will end a scene if red is called but what if it was just a cry out of pain from a particular toy and the bottom didn't want the scene to end just the use of that particular toy or the intensity in which it is being used. Some would that is what yellow is for but that certainly limits things. This, and the fact that most say it becomes a natural part of scening after just couple times using it (some say it fell into place naturally the first time they used it) makes it stand out far beyond other methods. To correctly use this technique the bottom must be positioned where the top can see the bottom's dominant hand and the bottom will signal after each hit or at the point of change in intensity level. Also, remember that if the bottom is positioned where grasp could grasp something the choice of which fingers to use could come into play. For example, if on a St. Andrew's Cross the thumb or pinky might appear to be wrapped around the cross or hidden so one couple has told me that they use the thumb, index, middle, and ring finger open with the pinky curled down for the number 4 instead of using the traditional index, middle, ring, and pinky fingers. As with anything, you have to try it out and see what works best for you. Finally, most bottoms consider a perfect a scene to be a mostly threes with a few fours mixed in because it gives them a little push toward their limit without sending them over the edge. Usually, before a scene, I will negotiate to also include one intentional five. This helps both me and my bottom know exactly where the limit is for the scene. I build up to it gradually because I don't want to hit a scene stopping, safe word calling level but people's tolerance constantly changes so it's important to find out where their high end is so long term we can find the general high end and see as it evolves to a great level of tolerance. (INTENTIONAL FIVES ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR BEGINNERS OR NOVICES!!!)

1. Are you freaking kidding me?!?!? I'm warmed up!!! Let's get going!
2. Still not near enough intensity but getting there.

3. OMG! That is perfect! I'm in heaven! Thank you, Sir/Ma'am!
4. Woe! That's a bit much and near my limit.
5. That's was at or past my limit. No need to end the scene but back it down.
6. ***A closed fist, also known as number zero, means move to a different toy and/or sensation.
7. ***Though I don't recommend it, giving "the bird", "the finger", or "flipping off" the top can also be used as a signal. Yes, it is playful but it usually depends on the personality of the bottom as to how it is used and this creates communication confusion when playing with others. For example, if I am playing with a "brat" or "pain slut" they would be likely to use the middle finger to signal level one because "brats" and "pain sluts" typically like to taunt tops and tell us that we are number one. Other types of bottoms, typically non-brat/non-pain slut switches will use it when the intensity hits a four or five...and that in its self is confusion. "Was that a four or five? Because they have totally different means."

A. I teach to use the middle finger as a full stop safe word if someone is incapable of speaking. Keep in mind that the calling of a safe word IS NOT a bad thing and could be done for thousands of reasons. i.e. the position has become too tiring, a restraint needs to be adjusted, someone needs a drink, use the restroom, or just take a brief break, ... many different reasons and none of them are bad or shameful. Also, tops need to remember that they can call a scene for any of these reasons as well.

This is a list of things that the 0-5 hand signals typically replaces:

1. The headspace of both the top and bottom being ruined or ended because of verbal communication.
2. The bottom holding an object in their hand and dropping it as a sign of a safe word.
3. Scenes not fulfilling their potential because of a lack of or improper communication.
4. Limited communication through the red light system.
5. The confusion and time it takes to remember and implement a color system of 5 to 10 colors.

Obviously, I highly recommend everyone try this method because it is quick and simple to learn and implement. In fact, just by reading it once you've already learned. Now, grab a consenting partner and give it a spin.

Thanks for checking out this article and feel free to share it just make sure to include the web link for the website and Fetlife group so others can listen to Kuldrin's Krypt: A BDSM 101 Podcast and join our Fetlife community.

-Master Kuldrin

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