

# SIGNBANK

How To Look-Up Signs By  
Sign-Symbol-Sequence  
in SignWriting Dictionaries

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SignWriting dictionaries are  
sorted by ten basic hand groups,  
based on the numbers 1 - 10  
in American Sign Language (ASL).

**GROUP 1: INDEX FINGER**  
The ASL sign for “number 1”  
is the Index Finger.

Group 1 in the dictionary  
lists all signs that start using  
the Index Finger.

The signs are written from  
the signer’s point of view...  
from YOUR perspective. You  
are looking at your own  
hands, when you sign, and  
also when you read SignWriting.

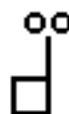
Within Group 1, the signs are  
listed by palm facing (orientation).  
Seeing the palm of the hand comes  
first in the dictionary...



one



cry



eleven



red

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Within Group 1, the signs  
are listed by palm-facing...

1. The palm of the hand,  
a white square, comes first  
(see previous diagram)...

2. The side of the hand,  
a square with one-half dark,  
one-half light, comes second.

The dark part of the square  
represents the back  
of the hand.

The light part of the square  
represents the palm  
of the hand.



Germany



mouse



dream



temperature



black

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Within Group 1, the signs  
are listed by palm-facing...

1. The palm of the hand,  
a white square, comes first  
(see previous diagram)...

2. The side of the hand,  
a square with one-half dark,  
one-half light, comes second.  
(see previous diagram)...

3. The back of the hand,  
a dark square, comes third...

4. Index-Bent  
(H handshape in ASL)  
comes next....

5. Index-Circle  
(D handshape in ASL)  
comes after that...

6. Little "look-up signs"  
are placed at the bottom  
and top of each dictionary page...



alarm



bell



z



apple



x



Ice skating



dinner



D



dessert



doctor