

University of Missouri Extension

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Agricultural Hand Signals

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Voice communications are impossible in certain agricultural situations due to distance and noise. For this reason, standard Agricultural Hand Signals have been developed for farm machinery operators by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. Hand signals can prevent accidents and save time. Use them and teach others to use them. Learning this new "language" will give you an easy and effective way to communicate when working around or with machinery.

Illustrations and brief explanations are provided for the following hand signals.

Start the engine

Move arm in a circle at waist level, as though you were cranking an engine.

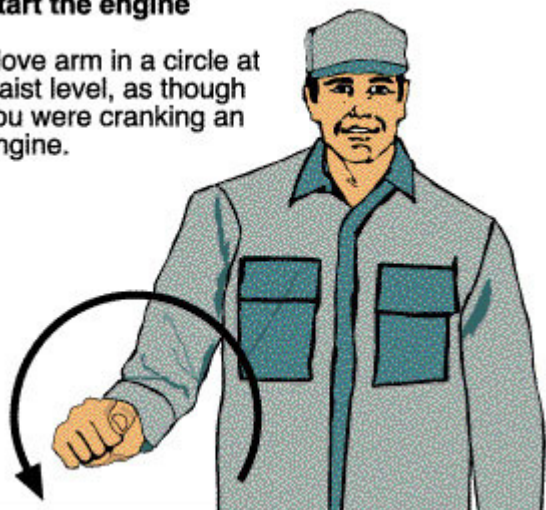


Figure 1

Start the engine.

Move arm in a circle at waist level as though you were cranking an engine.

Stop the engine

Move your right arm across your neck from left to right in a "throat-cutting" motion.

Figure 2

Stop the engine.

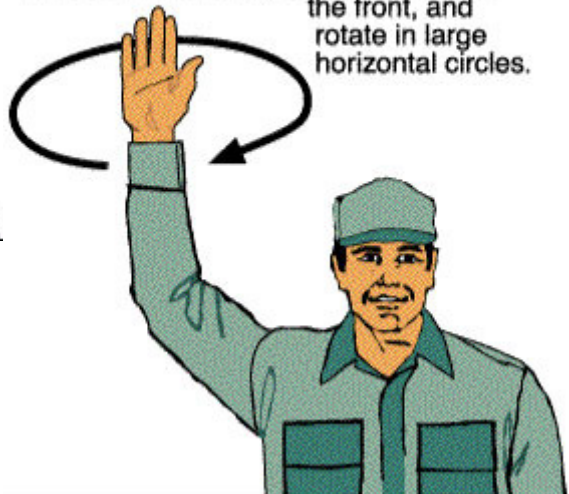


Move your right arm across your neck from left to right in a "throat-cutting" motion.

Come to me – (May mean "Come help me" in an emergency.) Figure 3

Come to me.

Raise arm vertically overhead, palm to the front, and rotate in large horizontal circles.



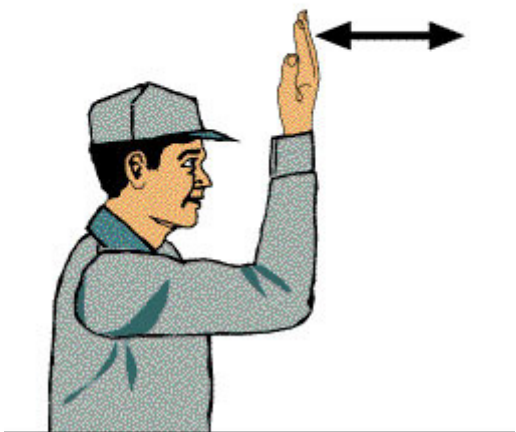
Raise arm vertically overhead, palm to the front, and rotate in large horizontal circles. (May mean "Come help me" in an emergency.)

Move toward me – follow me

Figure 4

Move toward me. Follow me.

Look toward person or vehicle you want moved. Hold one hand in front of you, palm facing you, and move your fore-arm back and forth.



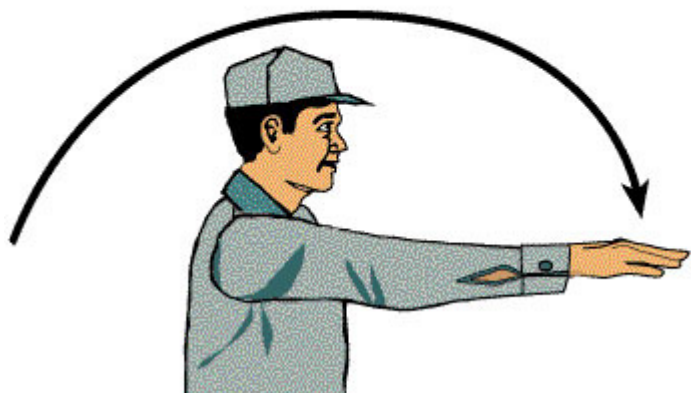
Look toward person or vehicle you want moved. Hold one hand in front of you, palm facing you, and move your forearm back and forth.

Move out – take off

Face desired direction of movement. Extend arm straight out behind you, then swing it overhead and forward until it's straight out in front of you with palm down.

Figure 5

Move out. Take off.



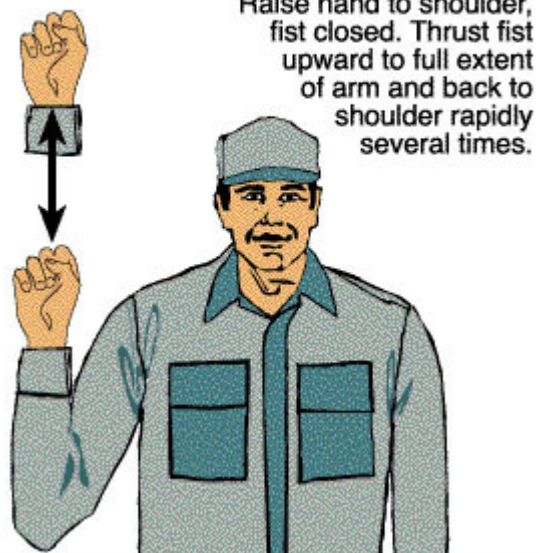
Face desired direction of movement. Extend arm straight out behind you, then swing it overhead and forward until it's straight out in front of you with palm down.

Speed it up – increase speed

Figure 6

Speed it up. Increase speed.

Raise hand to shoulder, fist closed. Thrust fist upward to full extent of arm and back to shoulder rapidly several times.



Raise hand to left shoulder, fist closed. Thrust fist upward to full extent of arm and back to shoulder rapidly several times.

Slow it down – decrease speed

Extend arm horizontally sideward, palm down, and wave arm downward 45° minimum several times, keeping arm straight. Don't move arm above horizontal.

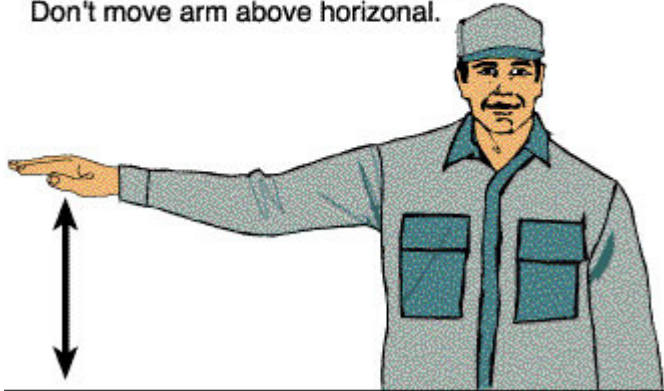


Figure 7

Slow it down. Decrease speed.

Extend arm horizontally at your side, palm down, and wave arm downward (45 degrees minimum) several times, keeping arm straight. Don't move arm above horizontal.

Raise equipment

Point upward with fore-finger, making a circle at head level with your hand.



Figure 8

Raise equipment.

Point upward with forefinger while making a circle at head level with your hand.

Lower equipment

Point toward the ground with forefinger of one hand while moving the hand in circular motion.

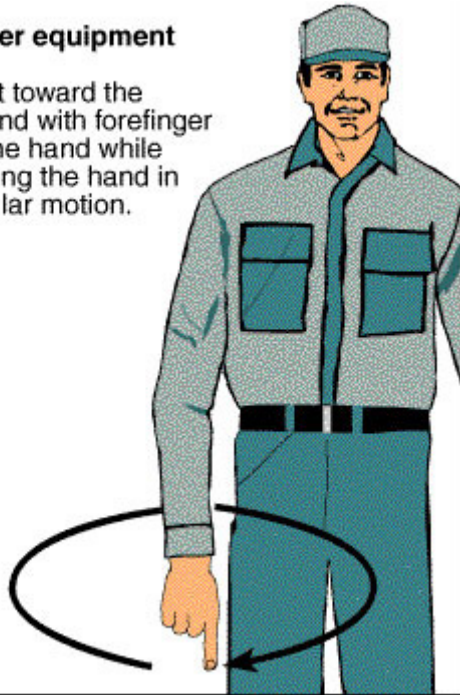


Figure 9
Lower equipment.

Point toward the ground with forefinger of one hand while moving the hand in circular motion.

This far to go

Put hands in front of face, palms facing each other. Move hands together or further apart to indicate how far to go.



Figure 10
This far to go.

Put hands in front of face, palms facing each other. Move hands together or farther apart to indicate how far to go.

Stop

Raise hand upward, arm fully extended, palm to the front. Hold that position until the signal is understood.

Figure 11

Stop.



Raise hand upward, arm fully extended, palm to the front. Hold that position until the signal is understood.

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Related MU Extension publications

- G1960, Safe Tractor Operation
<http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G1960>
- G1962, Noise: The Invisible Hazard
<http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G1962>

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