



Agricultural Hand Signals Safety Training Program



Goal

The goal of this training program is to ensure agricultural personnel are trained in the use of standardized hand signals when working around farm machinery.

Objectives

Personnel will demonstrate the ability to use these standardized hand signals to communicate when noise or distance makes normal voice communications impossible.

Background

These standardized hand signals were proposed by the Tractor and Machinery Committee of the National Institute for Farm Safety. They were approved by the American Society of Agricultural Engineering (ASAE) in 1972 and adopted by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in 1982. Now known as the Agricultural Hand Signals Standard ([ANSI/ASAE S351](#)), these hand signals were reaffirmed in 2022.

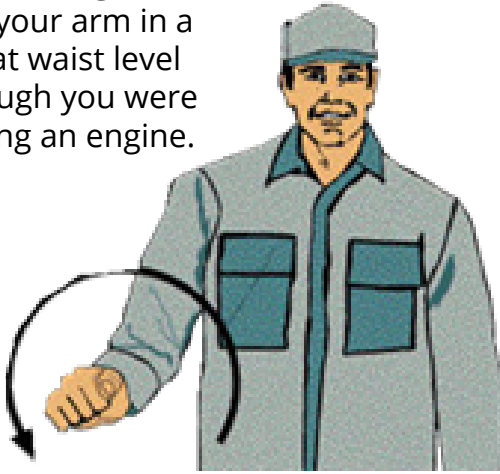
Hand signals

- **Stop the engine.**
Move your right arm across your neck from left to right in a “throat-cutting” motion.



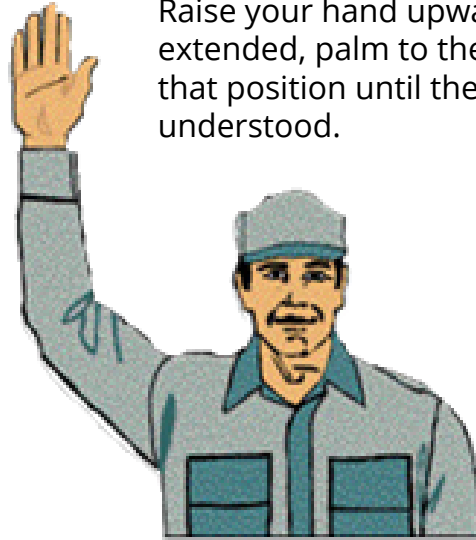
- **Start the engine.**

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



- **Stop.**

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



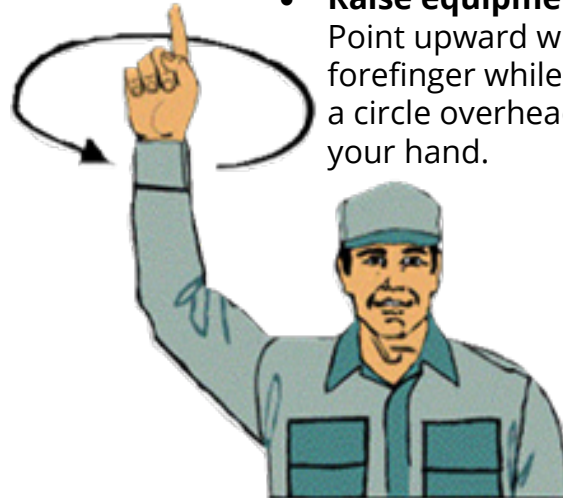
- **Speed it up.**

Raise your hand to your shoulder, close your fist, and thrust your fist upward to the full extent of the arm and back to the shoulder rapidly several times.



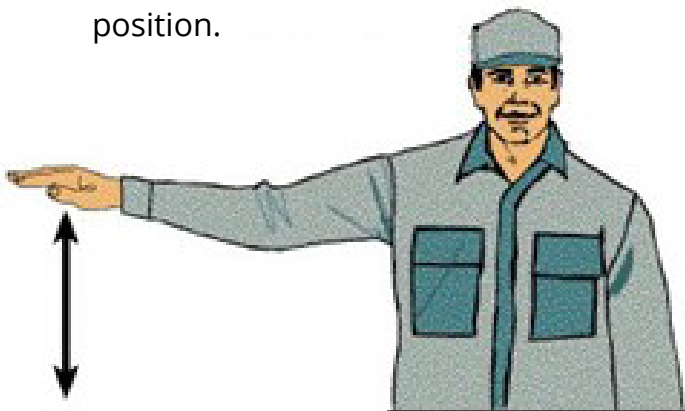
- **Raise equipment.**

Point upward with your forefinger while making a circle overhead with your hand.



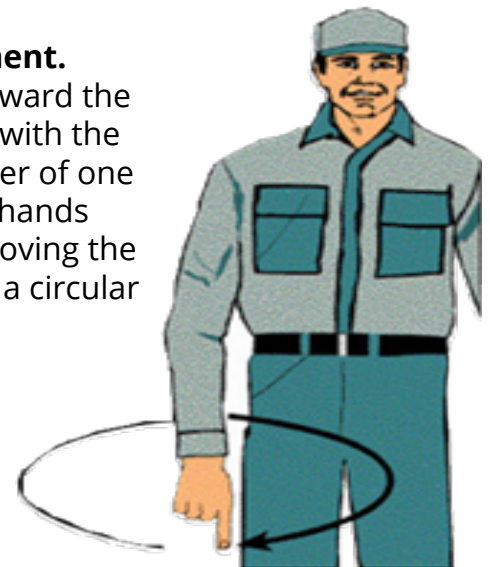
- **Slow it down OR decrease the speed.**

Extend an arm horizontally sideways, palm down, and wave the arm downward at least 45 degrees several times. Keep the arm straight. Do not move the arm above the horizontal position.



- **Lower equipment.**

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



- **This far to go.**

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



- **Move out OR take off.**

Face the desired direction of movement, extend an arm straight out behind you, then swing it overhead and forward until it is straight out in front of you with your palm down.



- **Come to me OR come help me.**

Raise your arm vertically

and
rotate



- **Move toward me OR follow me.**

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



Review Questions

- When are hand signals needed? _____
 - Anytime another person is near.
 - When voice communications are impossible due to noise or distance.
 - In the late afternoon.
 - When you are driving on a rough road.
- The hand signal for “come to me” can also mean _____.
 - Animals are loose.
 - Look away from me.
 - Pay attention to your surroundings.
 - Come help me.
- The hand signal for “start the engine” is done by _____.
 - Moving the hand in a circle at waist level.
 - Moving the arm across the neck from left to right.
 - Pumping your fist from the shoulder to overhead rapidly.
 - Placing your hands behind your head and wiggling your hips.
- Holding your arm horizontally sideways, palm down, and waving the arm downwards several times indicates _____.
 - The machine operator needs to slow down.
 - A flock of birds is obstructing your view.
 - Turn down the volume.
 - People are approaching.
- Pointing toward the ground with the forefinger of one hand while moving the hand in a circular motion would indicate _____.
 - There is a big rock in the way.
 - There are unauthorized people in the area.
 - The job is going over budget.
 - Lower the equipment.

Answers: 1. b; 2. d; 3. a; 4. a; 5. d.



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