



Teacher's page

Fun lesson plans from Learn Hot English

Most hated hand gestures!

Level: Pre-Intermediate (A2) to Advanced (C1)

Video: Yes

In this fun lesson, your students will discuss the topic of hand gestures. This practical class will get your students using lots of useful language and all the essential skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Here are some ideas for doing it in class. Good luck!

1 Warm-up

Simon says

Play a game of *Simon says* to revise parts of the body. First, brainstorm parts of the body and write these on the board. Make sure there are lots of not-so-common ones such as *eyelid, earlobe, elbow, shoulder...* apart from the typical ones (*arm, leg, head, etc.*).

Then, play the game. Students touch their body in the right place if you say *Simon says*, but not if you don't say it. For example:

Teacher: *Simon says* touch your head!
[Students should touch their heads.]

Teacher: Touch your arm! [Students shouldn't touch their arms because you didn't say *Simon says*.]
Etc.



Body song

Watch and learn the song "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes!" Once students know it, sing it along with the music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZanHgPprl-0>

Hand gesture brainstorm

Ask your students to show you or name as many hand gestures as they can. Discuss them, and compare them to ones that you know. Are they the same? Do they mean the same thing?

2 Lesson activities

Put your students into pairs. Then, give page 1 of the lesson to one student, and page 2 to the other student. Students read over their information. Then, they take turns doing a hand gesture and explaining what it means.

3 Follow-up activities

Memory game

Play a game with the information. Do one of the hand gestures and students have to identify it. The first student to do so gets a point for his/her team. Or they could write down the answers and you could check them afterwards. For example:

Teacher: [Doing the “I’m watching you!” gesture.]

Student: I’m watching you!

Etc.

Mime conversation

In pairs, students create a dialogue based entirely on mime or gesture. They should try to use as many of the hand gestures from this lesson as possible, but they can also use any others. When they’re ready, ask for volunteers to perform their mimed dialogues (with no words at all). Other students watch and then have to describe what is happening.

Invent it

Students invent a new hand gesture. When they’re ready, they present it to the class explaining what it means and why we need to have it. They could think about the following areas for their new hand gesture:

- In class for the teacher
- In class for the student
- At work for an employee
- At work for a manager
- In a restaurant
- During an army exercise
- At the gym
- In a hotel
- While driving

Other?

Objective To learn about forms of non-verbal communication in English-speaking countries.

Think about it


What do these signs mean in your country? Are there any that don't exist? Which ones?

Part 1

MOST HATED HAND GESTURES!

A recent survey lists the most hated hand gestures in the UK. What do you think of them? Are they popular in your country? This is the first of a two-part series. More next month!

1



Blah, blah, blah

Method: Make an imaginary mouth with your hand. Then, move your fingers and **thumb** to make the mouth look as if it's talking.

Meaning: "You're boring me!"

2



Talk to the hand

Method: Hold up a hand with the **palm** facing someone.

Meaning: "Talk to my hand, because I'm not going to listen to you anymore!"

3



It's none of your business

Method: Touch your nose with your **index finger**.

Meaning: Stop asking me questions about something that's **none of your business**.

4



The pistol

Method: Use two fingers and a thumb to form the shape of a gun.

Meaning: You're in trouble! / Watch it! / I'm going to kill you! / I'm going to shoot you!

5



Hand punch

Method: Make a **fist** and hit it into one of your palms.

Meaning: You're in trouble! / Watch it! / I'm going to hit you!

6



I'm watching you

Method: Touch the corner of your eye with your **index finger**. Or, touch the corner of both eyes with your index and **middle finger**.

Meaning: I'm watching you! / Be careful!

7



Call me

Method: Use your thumb and little finger to form the shape of a phone. Hold the thumb to your ear, and your little finger to your mouth.

Meaning: Call me! / I'll call you! / Let's call one another!

GLOSSARY

- a thumb** ¹¹ the thickest (and shortest) finger on your hand
- a palm** ¹¹ the inside part of your hand
- an index finger** ¹¹ the finger you use for pointing at things
- (it's) none of your business** ^{exp} it's private / it's got nothing to do with you / it isn't your problem
- a fist** ¹¹ a closed hand used for hitting
- a middle finger** ¹¹ the finger in the middle of your hand. It's your longest finger

Objective To learn about hand gestures from English-speaking countries.

Think about it

Do you ever use any of these hand gestures? Which ones have a different meaning in your country?

Part II

MOST HATED HAND GESTURES!

A recent survey lists the hand gestures people hate the most in the UK. This is the second part of a two-part series. Model: Danielle Ott

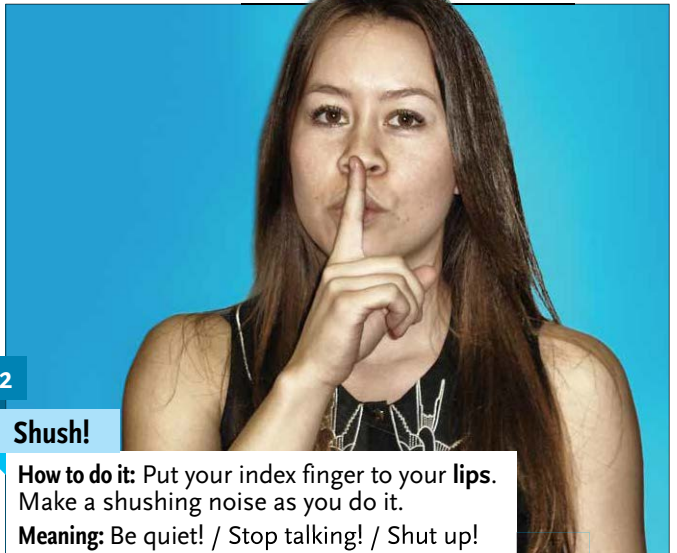


1

No!

How to do it: Move your **index finger** from right to left as a way of saying “no”.

Meaning: No! / You can't do that! / Don't do that!



2

Shush!

How to do it: Put your index finger to your **lips**. Make a shushing noise as you do it.

Meaning: Be quiet! / Stop talking! / Shut up!



3

Cut throat

How to do it: Run your index finger across your **throat**.

Meaning: You're in trouble. / I'm going to kill you. / You're going to die!

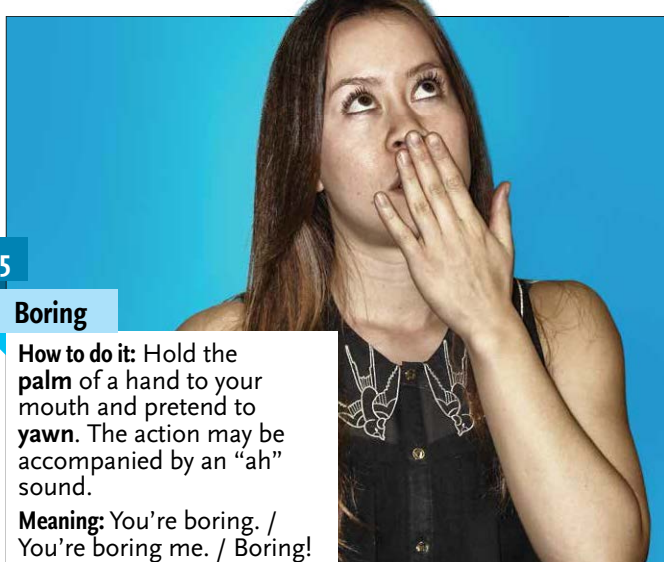


4

Inverted commas

How to do it: Using your index fingers and middle fingers make some **inverted commas** in the air.

Meaning: This is often used to add emphasis to a word or to show that you're being **ironic**. For example, if you say, *I thought the film was really “good”!* (putting the inverted commas around the word “good”), you're saying you thought the film wasn't good (it was bad!).




5

Boring

How to do it: Hold the **palm** of a hand to your mouth and pretend to **yawn**. The action may be accompanied by an “ah” sound.

Meaning: You're boring. / You're boring me. / Boring!



6

Seal your lips!

How to do it: Move your index finger and thumb across your lips.

Meaning: It's a secret! / Keep your lips **sealed**! / Don't tell anyone about it! / Keep quiet about it!

GLOSSARY

an index finger *n*
the finger you use for pointing at things

lips *n*
the part of your mouth that you use for kissing

a throat *n*
the tube that goes from your mouth to your stomach

inverted commas *n*
punctuation marks that are used in writing to show where speech begins and ends: “**ironic**”

ironic *adj*
if you're being “ironic”, you say the opposite to what you mean, often as a way of being funny or as a type of humour

a palm *n*
the inside part of your hand

to yawn *vb*
when you “yawn”, you open your mouth very wide and breathe in more air than usual, often when you are tired or bored

to seal *vb*
if you keep your lips “sealed”, you don't talk. Literally, to “seal” something is to close it so that no air can enter