

Simple Hand Signals

Introduction

Keeping control of the youth members during the meeting can be made relatively easy by adopting the hand signals developed by SCOUTS over the last 100 years. The benefits are:

- Not having to raise your voice to be heard.
 - It beats blowing whistles which irritate most people.
 - The youth members eventually learn to be aware of you all the time.
 - It impresses the parents (they will look at you with awe).
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Seven hand signals

There are seven basic hand signals you can use. You could develop more but seven seems to be the optimum for the youth members to remember.

The signs are:

1. Silence please, stay where you are.
 2. Form a circle in front of me.
 3. Form a line, tallest to shortest.
 4. Form two lines, tallest to shortest (or into sixes and patrols).
 5. Sit on the floor in front of me and listen.
 6. Alert.
 7. Stand at ease.
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Silence Please

The leader raises one arm and waits. Everyone else raises one arm and stops talking and moving.

This is a universal SCOUTS sign used around the world and works with youth and adult leaders alike. Usually the room is quiet within 10 seconds if not sooner.

Form a circle

The leader uses one arm to make a circle in the air in front of them in the direction of the required circle.

Form a line tallest to smallest

The leader holds one arm high and the other low.

This means make one line, with the tallest in front and the smallest at the back. It's normally used to divide the youth members into two teams to get ready for a game.

Form two lines

The leader holds two arms out in front, both pointing slightly down.

This means make two lines, or alternatively, get into Sixes or Patrols ready for a team type game, depending on what you teach the youth members.

Sit down

The Leader crosses arms. This means sit down on the floor in front of me and pay attention.

Alert

When the youth members are ready for parade and you want them at the alert with hands at their sides, legs together and shoulders back, slap your leg once with your hand.

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Simple Hand Signals, Continued

At ease

When the youth members are in a circle or horse shoe and you want them paying attention but at ease with legs apart and hands behind their backs, slap your leg twice.

New recruits

We suggest that you have the Sixer or Patrol Leader teach new recruits the hand signals during their first meeting. New recruits who are “bouncing off the walls” with excitement can really disrupt a meeting until they figure out what is going on. Be proactive and get the new youth members under control as quickly as you can.
