

A guide for welcoming Makaton users

Key signs to share an inclusive welcome to your natural heritage site



Makaton

What is Makaton?

Makaton uses signs (gestures), symbols (pictures) and speech, to help people communicate. It is used by both children and adults who experience difficulties communicating effectively or meaningfully by speech alone.

How Makaton works

Signs are used with speech to give extra clues to what you are communicating. Signs are always used in spoken word order and you should always speak when you sign. Symbols can be used to support signs and offer more permanence than a gesture: words or signs 'disappear' once spoken or made but a picture remains. Symbols can also be displayed to provide extra information or reinforce a message such as 'look at the trees'. Use your dominant hand when signing, if you are left handed this will be your left hand and if you are right handed it will be your right hand. Do the lead signing with your dominant hand and keep this consistent. You will use both hands for many signs, and instructions will always be clear as to which part is delivered with your dominant hand.

Top tips

- Remember to speak as you sign.
- Make sure you get the attention of the person you are communicating with.
- Use facial expressions to help communicate your message. For example, if you are saying and signing something is good, make sure you are smiling!
- Keep communication simple.
- Be patient and allow the Makaton user time to process the information.
- Remember to have a go and have fun!

Using Makaton to welcome people onto your site

By learning a few signs and supporting them with symbols you will be able to welcome groups that use Makaton onto your site. This will demonstrate that you have thought about Makaton users in advance enabling you to communicate directly, rather than through support staff, parents or carers.

This guide will help you to learn some Makaton signs for welcoming people, showing what you have on your site and communicating things such as where the toilets and cafe are.

You may wish to support the signs with symbols. We would recommend printing and laminating any symbols which could be displayed around your site to help people find their way around. For example, the symbol for toilet being put on the outside of your toilet. Another popular way to use these symbols is to attach them to a key ring. The symbols can then be shown as you move around to support what you are saying and signing at different points.

Don't feel like you have to learn all of the signs. Even if you can say hello and use one or two signs this will go a long way to making a group or family feel welcome.

Talking and signing

You should always say all of the words in your sentence when signing but you do not need to sign every word. Most of the time, you will only be signing the key words in a sentence. For example, you might want to say 'we will go to the cafe', for this you can sign 'go' and 'cafe'.

Want to know more?

If you would like to develop your Makaton skills, look out for training in your area

www.makaton.org/findtraining.

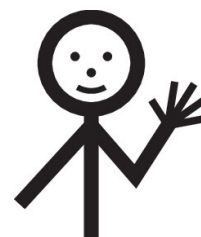
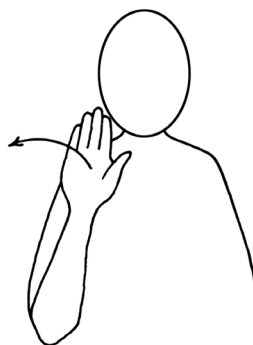
You can also download and purchase resources from the Makaton website

www.makaton.org/shop

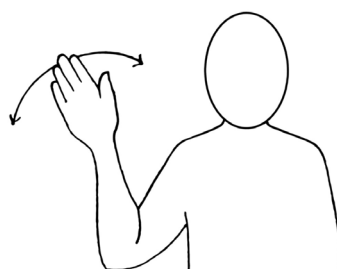
This resource has been produced with the support of The Makaton Charity.

To introduce yourself you can say 'Hello'.

Hello



Goodbye

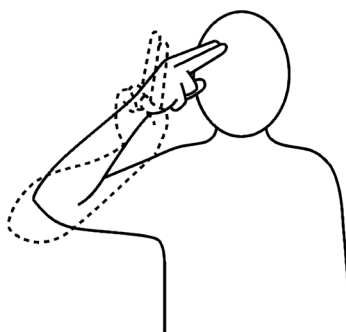


After saying hello you might want to say what your name is. You would say and sign 'my' and then 'name' and then finger spell the first letter of your name - see the finger spelling chart at the back of this guide.

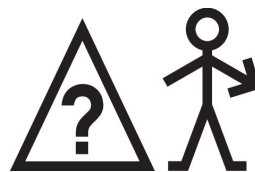
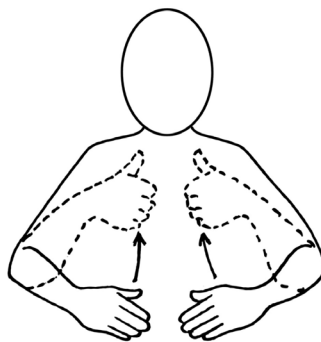
My



Name



How are you?



Good

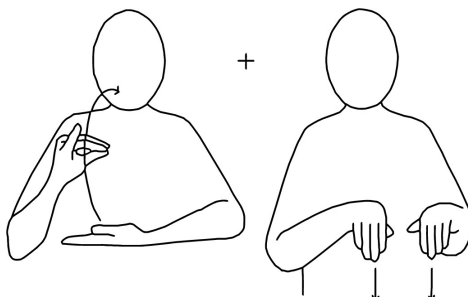


You will probably want to say where the toilet is, "The toilet is over there", you would sign 'toilet' and point in the direction of where it is.

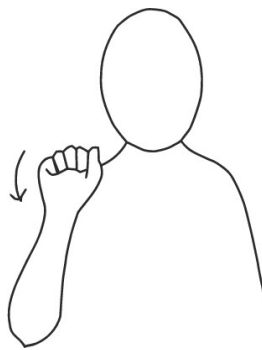
Toilet



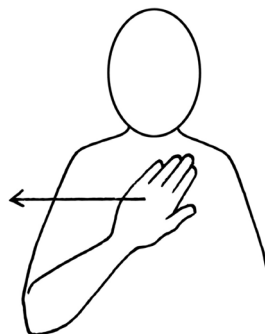
Café



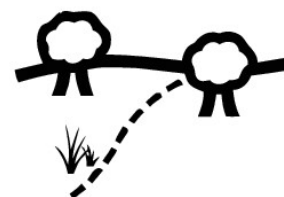
Yes



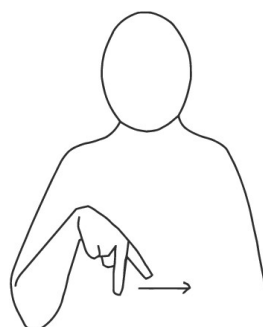
No



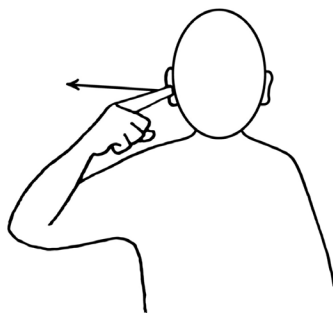
Path



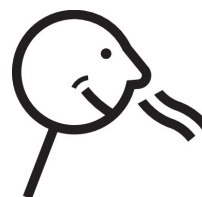
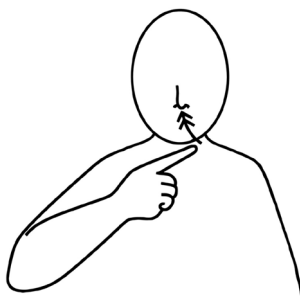
Walk



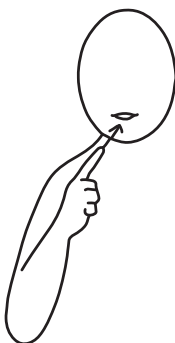
Hear



Smell



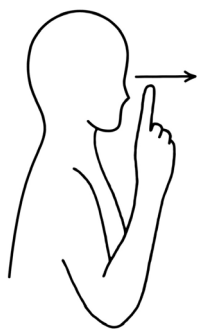
Taste



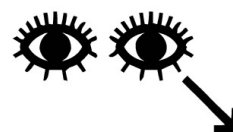
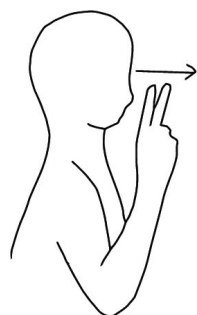
Touch



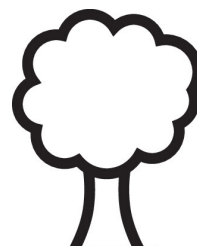
See



Look



Tree



Flower



Finger spelling chart



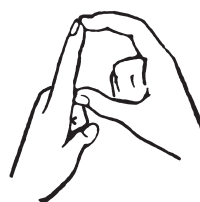
a



b



c



d



e



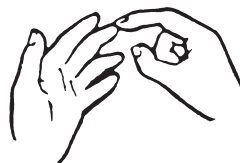
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g



h



i



j



k



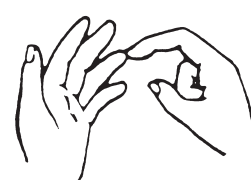
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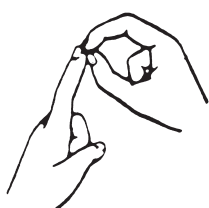
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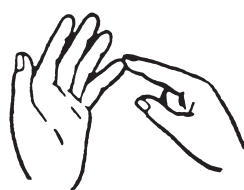
r



s



t



u



v



w



x



y



z