

NZWAR

SILENT SIGNALS & LOW-TECH COMMUNICATION

FOR CIVILIAN EMERGENCIES & DISRUPTED COMMUNICATION

22 PRACTICAL REFERENCE CARDS



HAND GESTURES

- ▶ Stop • Move
- ▶ Follow • Warn
- ▶ Get help



SHARED SIGNALS

- ▶ Understand
- ▶ Acknowledge
- ▶ Ask for repeat



LOW-TECH COMMUNICATION

- ▶ Ground marks • Mirrors
Smoke • Light • Sound



GROUP PREPARATION

- ▶ Shared plans • Entry alerts
Improvised materials



SHARED / PRE-ARRANGED COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

AGREE FIRST. SIGNAL CLEARLY. CHECK THE REPLY.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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S01 STOP / HALT

Stop moving. Look at the signaller.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Raise an open hand.
- ▶ Face your palm toward them.
- ▶ Hold it still until seen.



PALM TOWARD THE RECEIVER

✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Stop moving.
- ▶ Look at the signaller.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.



UNDERSTOOD



KEY IDEA

Agree on this signal before you need it.



DO THIS

- ▶ Keep the hand visible and still.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not wave or keep moving.



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STOP MOVING. LOOK AT THE SIGNALLER.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

SO2 COME / FOLLOW

Come to me. Then follow my lead.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Face the receiver.
- ▶ Beckon toward yourself.
- ▶ Show where to follow.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Come to the signaller.
- ▶ Follow the indicated route.



KEY IDEA

Beckon toward yourself. Make the route clear.



DO THIS

- ▶ Wait until your signal is understood.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not beckon toward a hazard.



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COME TO ME. FOLLOW MY LEAD.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S03 GO / MOVE

Move in the direction shown.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Get their attention.
- ▶ Point along the route.
- ▶ Sweep your arm that way.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Look at the indicated route.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Move in that direction.



💡 KEY IDEA Show the route, not just a vague direction.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Point clearly before they move.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not move if the direction is unclear.



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SEE THE DIRECTION. THEN MOVE.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S04 LEFT / RIGHT

Follow the direction the signaller points.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Face the receiver.
- ▶ Point to their left or right.
- ▶ Hold the direction clearly.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Follow the pointing direction.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Move only when clear.



💡 KEY IDEA LEFT and RIGHT are from the receiver's viewpoint.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Use the actual direction shown.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not guess an unclear direction.

FOLLOW THE POINT. DO NOT GUESS.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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SOS WAIT

Pause here. Wait for the next signal.

SILENT SIGNALS PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM

✓ SEND

- ▶ Show a flat hand, palm down.
- ▶ Hold it steady at waist height.
- ▶ Keep the receiver in view.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Pause where you are.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Wait for the next signal.



💡 KEY IDEA WAIT means pause until the next agreed signal.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Watch for the next instruction.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not treat WAIT as permission to move.



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PAUSE. WATCH. WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

SOG QUIET

Stop talking. Keep noise down.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Face the receiver.
- ▶ Place one finger against your lips.
- ▶ Hold the signal until seen.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Stop talking.
- ▶ Keep movement quiet.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.



KEY IDEA

Use a visible hand signal to acknowledge.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Acknowledge without speaking.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not shout back a reply.



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STOP TALKING. KEEP NOISE DOWN.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S07 DANGER

Stop. Notice the hazard being indicated.

SILENT SIGNALS PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM

✓ SEND

- ▶ Raise a closed fist.
- ▶ Point to the hazard.
- ▶ Check that they have seen it.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Stop moving.
- ▶ Look at the indicated hazard.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.



 **KEY IDEA** Agree on the danger signal before you need it.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Identify the hazard before acting.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not move toward the hazard.

STOP. FIND THE HAZARD. ACT WITH CARE.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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S08 GET DOWN / TAKE COVER

Lower your body. Move behind solid cover.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Get their attention.
- ▶ Push a flat palm downward.
- ▶ Point to solid cover.



PALM DOWN. PUSH DOWN.

✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Lower your body.
- ▶ Move behind solid cover.
- ▶ Keep watching the signaller.



💡 KEY IDEA Lowering your body and taking cover are different actions.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Use solid cover when available.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not treat shrubs as solid cover.



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GET LOW. GET BEHIND SOLID COVER.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S09 GROUP UP

Come together at the indicated place.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Raise both arms visibly.
- ▶ Bring both hands inward.
- ▶ Point to the meeting place.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Go to the indicated place.
- ▶ Check everyone is there.



💡 KEY IDEA Use the meeting place agreed by your group.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Check who is missing.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not leave anyone unaccounted for.



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COME TOGETHER. CHECK EVERYONE.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S10 HELP

I need assistance.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Raise one open hand overhead.
- ▶ Wave it slowly side to side.
- ▶ Keep signalling until seen.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Check the area before approaching.
- ▶ Find out what help is needed.



💡 KEY IDEA **HELP** tells others you need assistance.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Make yourself easy to see.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not rush into a hazard.



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NOTICE THE SIGNAL. CHECK. HELP.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

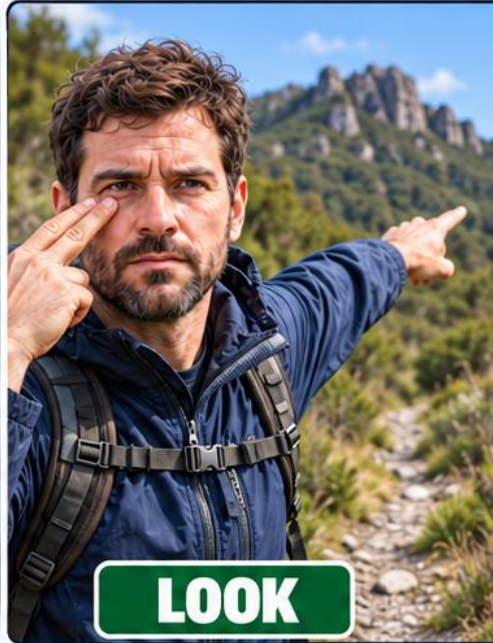
S11 LOOK / LISTEN

Pay attention to what is indicated.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Point to your eyes or ear.
- ▶ Point toward the source.
- ▶ Check that they are following.



LOOK



LISTEN

✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Look in the indicated direction.
- ▶ Listen when asked.
- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.



KEY IDEA

Show what to notice, not just the gesture.



DO THIS

- ▶ Indicate the source clearly.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not assume they noticed it.



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LOOK. LISTEN. PAY ATTENTION.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S12 TURN BACK

Return along the route you came from.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Get their attention.
- ▶ Point back along the route.
- ▶ Show the return direction.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Acknowledge with a thumbs-up.
- ▶ Turn around.
- ▶ Return along the indicated route.



KEY IDEA

Turn back means return, not take a new route.



DO THIS

- ▶ Keep the group together.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not continue forward.



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TURN AROUND. RETURN TOGETHER.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

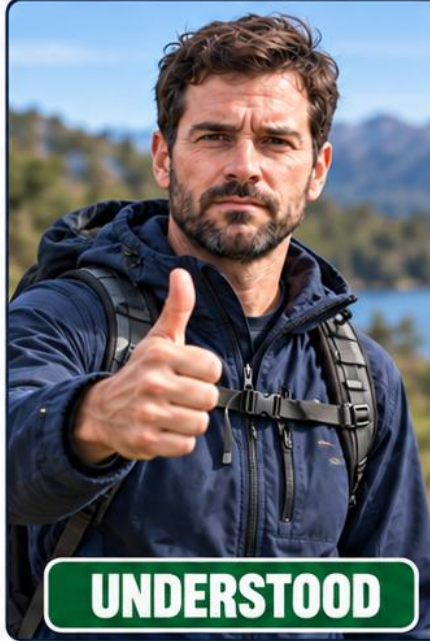
S13 UNDERSTOOD / REPEAT

Show whether you understood the message.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Send one clear signal.
- ▶ Watch for the reply.
- ▶ Repeat if they do not understand.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Understood: thumbs-up.
- ▶ Not understood: shake your head.
- ▶ Show both palms up to request repeat.



💡 KEY IDEA SENT does not mean UNDERSTOOD.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Check the reply before acting.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not pretend you understood.



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NOT CLEAR? ASK FOR REPEAT.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S14 GROUND SOS

Make your need for help visible from far away.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ MAKE IT VISIBLE

- ▶ Choose an open, visible area.
- ▶ Make a large SOS.
- ▶ Use strong contrast.



✓ CHECK IT

- ▶ Keep letters clear and separate.
- ▶ Use stones, branches or bright fabric.
- ▶ Check the view from a distance.



💡 KEY IDEA Large. Clear. High contrast. No fixed size.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Make it easy to spot from above.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not hide the signal under trees.

MAKE SOS BIG, CLEAR AND VISIBLE.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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S15 PRIVATE MARKERS

Use symbols your group has agreed on.

SILENT SIGNALS PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM

✓ AGREE FIRST

- ▶ Design simple markers together.
- ▶ Agree what each one means.
- ▶ Give everyone the same key.



✓ USE THE KEY

- ▶ Match the marker to your group key.
- ▶ Follow the agreed meaning.
- ▶ Check if you are unsure.



KEY IDEA

Private markers have no meaning until you agree.



DO THIS

- ▶ Keep your group key with you.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not assume strangers know your symbols.

AGREE THE SYMBOL. AGREE THE MEANING.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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S16 GROUP CODE CARD

Fill it in together. Everyone keeps a copy.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**



FILL IN FIRST

- ▶ Agree on the situations.
- ▶ Write the action and destination.
- ▶ Give each member the same copy.

GROUP: _____ UPDATED: _____

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT DO WE DO?

WHERE DO WE GO?



USE YOUR COPY

- ▶ Find the matching situation.
- ▶ Follow the agreed action.
- ▶ Go to the agreed place.



KEY IDEA

One shared plan. One copy per person.



DO THIS

- ▶ Update every copy when the plan changes.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not wait until separation to make a plan.



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FIND THE SITUATION. FOLLOW YOUR PLAN.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S17 MIRROR SIGNAL

Sweep reflected sunlight across the target area.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Catch sunlight with a mirror.
- ▶ Face the target's general direction.
- ▶ Sweep the reflection across the area.



✓ REPEAT

- ▶ Move slowly across the area.
- ▶ Repeat the sweep.
- ▶ Watch for a response.



💡 KEY IDEA Use sunlight. Sweep the area. Repeat.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Keep sweeping the target area.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not look directly at the sun.

SWEEP THE AREA. REPEAT THE FLASH.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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S18 SMOKE SIGNAL

Attract attention or send an agreed pattern.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ ONLY IF SAFE

- ▶ Use a small, controlled fire.
- ▶ Make visible smoke.
- ▶ Use only an agreed rhythm.



✓ KEEP CONTROL

- ▶ Watch the fire continuously.
- ▶ Keep extinguishing materials ready.
- ▶ Put it out completely.



KEY IDEA

Use only where fire is permitted and controllable.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Agree what the smoke pattern means.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not light a fire in dry or windy conditions.



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KEEP IT CONTROLLED. NEVER SPREAD FIRE.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S19 LIGHT SIGNAL

Use flashes to show your position or message.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Face the intended receiver.
- ▶ Use the agreed flash pattern.
- ▶ Pause, watch and repeat.



SOS: 3 SHORT / 3 LONG / 3 SHORT
For distress.

✓ READ THE SIGNAL

- ▶ Watch the whole pattern.
- ▶ Use your agreed code.
- ▶ Reply if you can.



KEY IDEA

Agree your code first. SOS is a distress signal.



DO THIS

- ▶ Keep the pattern simple and repeatable.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not assume a flash was understood.



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FLASH. PAUSE. WATCH FOR A REPLY.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S20 SOUND SIGNAL

Use a sound pattern your group understands.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SEND

- ▶ Choose a clear sound source.
- ▶ Use the agreed rhythm.
- ▶ Pause and listen for a reply.



✓ RECEIVE

- ▶ Listen to the whole pattern.
- ▶ Use your agreed meaning.
- ▶ Reply if you can.



KEY IDEA

Agree the meaning before you need the sound.



DO THIS

- ▶ Keep the rhythm simple and distinct.



DO NOT

- ▶ Do not assume strangers know your code.



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SOUND THE PATTERN. PAUSE. LISTEN.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.

S21 ENTRY ALERT

Use a noise alert to notice an opening door.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ SET UP

- ▶ Use a loose cord and noise-makers.
- ▶ Attach them to the opening door.
- ▶ Check that movement makes a sound.



✓ KEEP IT SAFE

- ▶ Keep the doorway clear.
- ▶ Make sure the cord releases easily.
- ▶ Tell your group it is there.



💡 KEY IDEA ALERT ONLY. Never trap or injure anyone.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Test the sound and keep exits clear.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not use tripwires or sharp objects.

HEAR THE ALERT. CHECK WHAT HAPPENED.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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S22 SIGNAL MATERIALS

Use what you have to make signals noticeable.

**SILENT SIGNALS
PRE-ARRANGED SYSTEM**

✓ CHOOSE

- ▶ Bright fabric for contrast.
- ▶ Reflective surfaces for sunlight.
- ▶ Stones or branches for ground marks.



✓ MAKE IT CLEAR

- ▶ Choose a contrasting background.
- ▶ Keep the shape simple.
- ▶ Check visibility from a distance.



💡 KEY IDEA Choose materials that stand out from the surroundings.

✓ DO THIS

- ▶ Use agreed shapes for private messages.

✗ DO NOT

- ▶ Do not use materials that blend into the background.

MAKE IT SIMPLE. MAKE IT STAND OUT.

DON'T REMEMBER. FIND THE CARD. FOLLOW THE STEPS.



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AGREE BEFORE YOU NEED IT.

SHARED / PRE-ARRANGED COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

SILENT SIGNALS REFERENCE NOTICE



**These cards are a practical reference.
They are not an international standard.
Do not assume everyone knows these signals.**



DISCUSS IT TOGETHER



- ▶ Agree what each gesture, symbol and signal pattern means.



PRACTISE TOGETHER



- ▶ Check that every member can recognise the signal and knows what to do.



CONFIRM UNDERSTANDING



- ▶ A sent signal is not always seen or understood.
- ▶ Look for a reply. Repeat or clarify when needed.



KEEP THE SAME PLAN



- ▶ Give every member a copy of your group code card.
- ▶ Update all copies when your plan changes.



USE WITH CARE

- ▶ Distance, darkness, noise and stress can make signals unclear.
- ▶ If the meaning is uncertain, clarify before acting.

REFERENCE ONLY — NOT A UNIVERSAL SIGNAL CODE.

AGREE THE MEANING. PRACTISE THE SIGNAL. CHECK THE REPLY.



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