

Did you know?

ASL is **always singular** unless you say otherwise. If what you are talking about is plural, it is your job to make that clear.

Nothing about the noun changes on its own the way an English “s” does.

The only two plural signs

CHILDREN

PEOPLE

Five ways to clarify

1 Use a number

If you know the count, sign it. For three or more, list them off on your fingers and leave out “and.”

2 Use a quantifier

SOME, MANY, SEVERAL, PILE, ROW, BOTH, ALL — any of these makes the noun plural.

3 Use a cluster or a pointing word

A cluster affix such as GROUP, or a demonstrative such as THESE with an index finger.

4 Repeat the noun

Sign the noun twice, moving to the right. This is called reduplication, or repetition.

5 Use a plural pronoun

WE, THEY, ALL-OF-YOU.

Do not stack them

You cannot use repetition together with a quantifier or a number. The exceptions are **CHILD+** and **PARENT+**, so **MANY CHILD+** is fine.

For example

English: My friend has brothers and sisters. — any of these would clarify it:

SOME

FEW

SEVERAL

MANY

ABOUT

APPROXIMATELY

an exact number

You try

How would you clarify each of these in ASL? Write your version in gloss, then sign it to a partner.

1. I have blue plates.

ASL _____

2. The kids are outside.

ASL _____

3. On Wednesdays we wear pink.

ASL _____