Signs of a deaf ferret

1. Unusual markings ... panda/panda with strip on head, and irregular pretty patterns, and a marked white.
2. They are usually more vocal and their sounds are louder.
3. They startle more to vibrations.
4. “No nip” training is a very common training issue and when they do bite, they bite harder than most as babies and adults.
5. They have a fascination to the back end of a vacuum cleaner.
6. They sleep sounder and play harder. Many will often sleep with their head hanging out of the hammock touching the floor of the cage. Ferrets have sensors in the bones of their head and they can feel vibrations better this way.

Some ferrets are smarter than others and will take only a week or so to learn each sign others may take a month or more of your being consistent. Please be patient and do not over load until your ferret is comfortable with each command. Make it fun with praise and treats

The first part of training a deaf ferret is to gain their trust. Place them in a harness hold palm up to their belly with feet and head between fingers so you can hold them securely. Place their body on your arm for support. Then place your ferret back of head to your throat. Talk gently and in a soothing way. It does not matter how loud, but you must use a soothing voice. Your vocal vibration and hand signals are the key to training your ferret to communicate with you.

Rules of working with a Deaf ferret

Note:
Ferret Play: Puppies and kittens out grow nipping and biting when they are done teething. A ferret never does out grow biting. It is how they play with each other. Their skin is tough ours is not. How you handle them will determine weather they will have a biting issue.

ALWAYS offer your palm UP and your fingers TOGETHER pointing downward with palm just off the floor so that they can climb on to your hand. To them, this means **COME**. Remember that your hands are to love and care for your ferret.

NEVER offer your fingers or hand out to your ferret. Your fingers and hands are your mouth and neck to a ferret, as are your toes and feet. We are very funny to a ferret, as we have four mouths and four necks as far as they are concerned.

Always use a toy or other object that is ferret safe to play with your ferret.

Ways of communicating with your deaf ferret

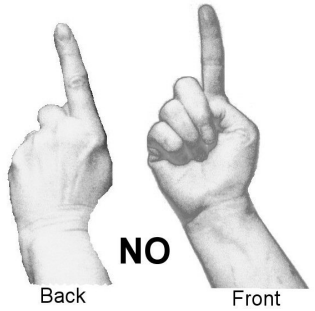
1. Hand Signals. When teaching your ferret to communicate, your hand should be held 18-24 inches from ferret’s face. . Too close - they may feel threatened. Too far away - they may not see well and also loose interest.
2. Hissing and talking. Your ferret can smell your breath from over 30 feet away.
3. Waving a treat in the air will catch their sense of smell very quickly.
4. Stamp your foot to get their attention. Older homes flooring works better. The vibration is what gets their attention.
5. Use of a new squeaky toy with the squeaky towards your ferret. No, they can not hear it, bit their is a powder that the manufacture use to keep the plastic from sticking. It is sweet and your ferret can smell it. Most ferrets love sweet smelling things. This is also the reason most ferrets love to chew on Latex toys. The smell is a treat to them. CAUTION ... ALL Latex and rubber toys as they can cause a serious blockage in their digestive system.
6. Use a flashlight or laser pointer to attract your ferret. Be careful not to point it directly in their eyes as this can cause damage to their eyes.

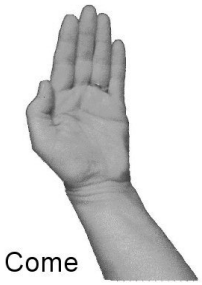
Advantages of using a deaf Ferret for education

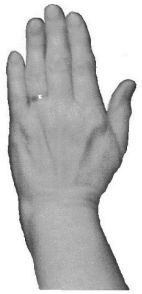
A well-trained deaf ferret will know how to communicate with their owners without the fear of being startled. They are more bonded to their humans and usually will stay close to them.

Sign Language for ferrets

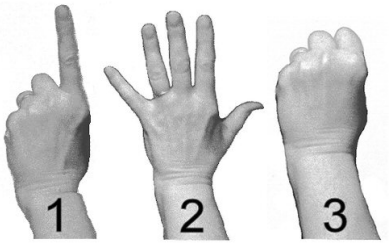
Note* Trainer's hand in photos are left-handed.



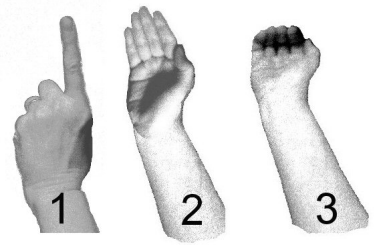




Stay

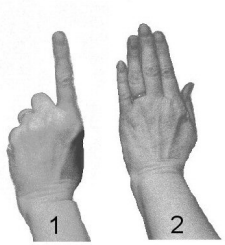


No Bite

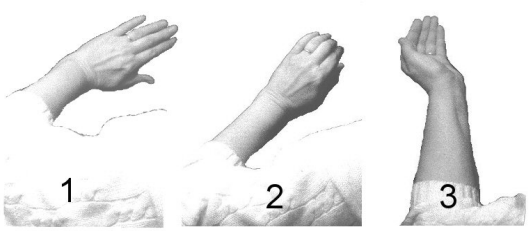


No Dig

Turn palms down,
this just shows
position of hands



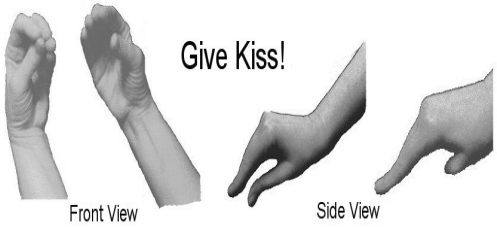
No Go

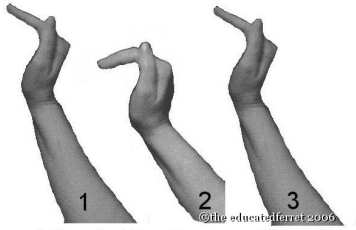


Roll Over

Roll over & Spin!

Place ferret in your hand (1) and then roll them over (2 & 3). When they are on their back, place a ball on their stomach. Then control your laughter, as a ferret can smell your breath and will get excited and forget what it is doing. After some practice, hand signals is all you will need.





Weasle War Dance with me!
(hand is held high in the air)

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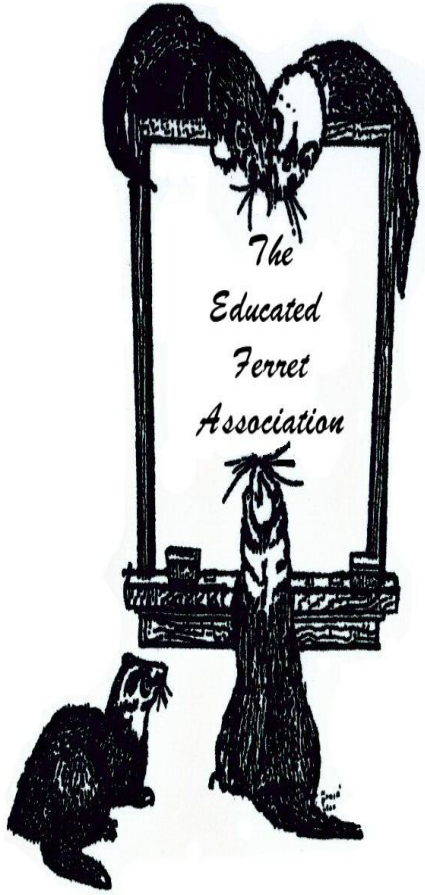
Production by: Dianna Desrochers

Sign Language For Deaf Ferrets



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