

Hand Signals for Winching

Demonstrated by
Buddy the Off-Road
Assistant.



Buddy Character created
by Chris Susut for
BC4wd.CA

Winching is usually collaboration between two or more people, and it is vital that everyone knows the role they play.

The Winch Boss is in charge and is the one to give signals to the Winch Operator.

The Winch Operator will normally be also driving the vehicle. The Winch Boss should be the only one communicating with the Winch Operator and Driver.

Riggers and Spotters take direction from the Winch Boss and report back to him or her. If a Rigger or Spotter gives a signal such as On Hook or Stop then the Winch Boss repeats the signal to the Operator.

It is good practice for everyone involved in the operation to repeat On Hook and off Hook to inform those around of a Live Line (one potentially ready to take a load).



On Hook

Bring Fist into Palm and call out “On Hook” to warn of a Live line.



Off Hook

Make On Hook then separate hands and call out “Off Hook”.



Stop

Closed fist military style is clearer than a palm-forward stop.



Power Winch In

Point Upward and twirl finger.
Operator continuously powers winch in.



Power Winch Out

Point Downward and twirl finger.
Operator continuously powers winch out.



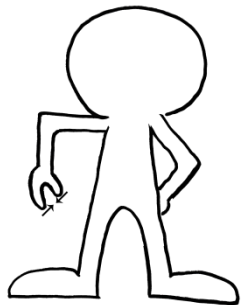
Stop NOW

Also used for greater distances when the spotter is harder to see.



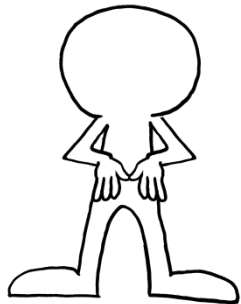
Bump Winch In

Tap Fingers together. Each finger tap means operator does one tap on the controller.



Bump Winch Out

Tap Fingers together. Each finger tap means operator does one tap on the controller.



Handling Winch

Point fingers towards winch.
Operator takes hands off controller



Combine Winching and Spotting Signals

Be consistent as to which hand is for winching and which is for spotting.



Shut Down

Hand moves in back and forth “Cut” motion
Driver shuts downs and secures vehicle



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Winching Tips

- Use Gloves any time you are handling recovery equipment.
 - When guiding winch line do it hand-over-hand. Do not let the line slide through your hand.
 - Know and respect the rating of all components in the rigging.
 - Use a double-line pull whenever feasible. It increases pulling power and reduces the load on the electrical system.
 - Keep your hands well clear of pinch points.
 - Use a safety line if there is any chance of the vehicle going out of control during or after winching.
 - Ensure spectators and assistants are clear before the vehicle moves.
 - Avoid placing anyone in the path of the winch line or the vehicle in case the winch line breaks.
 - Have an escape route planned in case of loss of vehicle control.
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- Make large clear hand signals.
 - Whenever possible keep your hands to the side of your body for visibility.
 - If you need to talk to the Operator or Driver don't yell from a distance, stop the operation and then talk.