

# What is Semaphore?

Can you spot the signalling flags in some of the soldier's hands?

**Semaphore is a way of communicating with someone who is far away from you, for example on a ship or battlefield. In daylight, flags are used and in the dark torches are used.**

This photograph, from the archive at Durham University, shows the Scottish Command School of Signalling posing for a school photo.



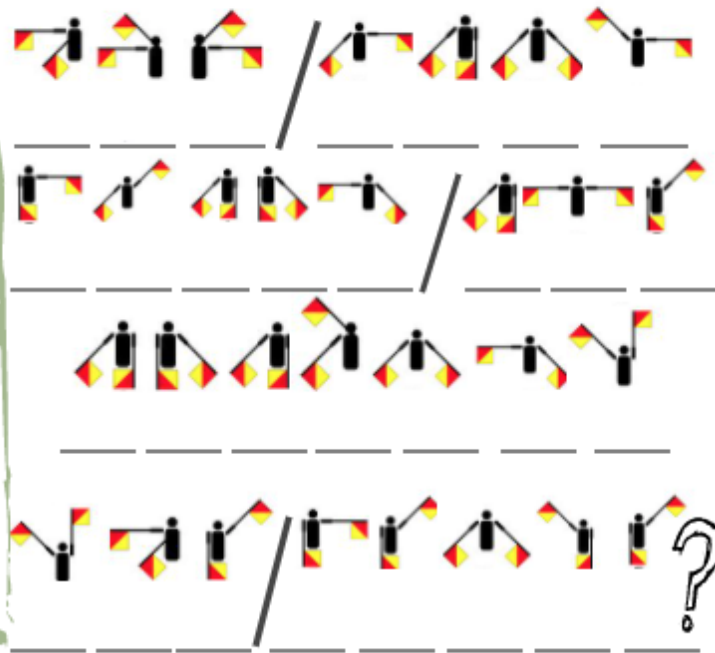
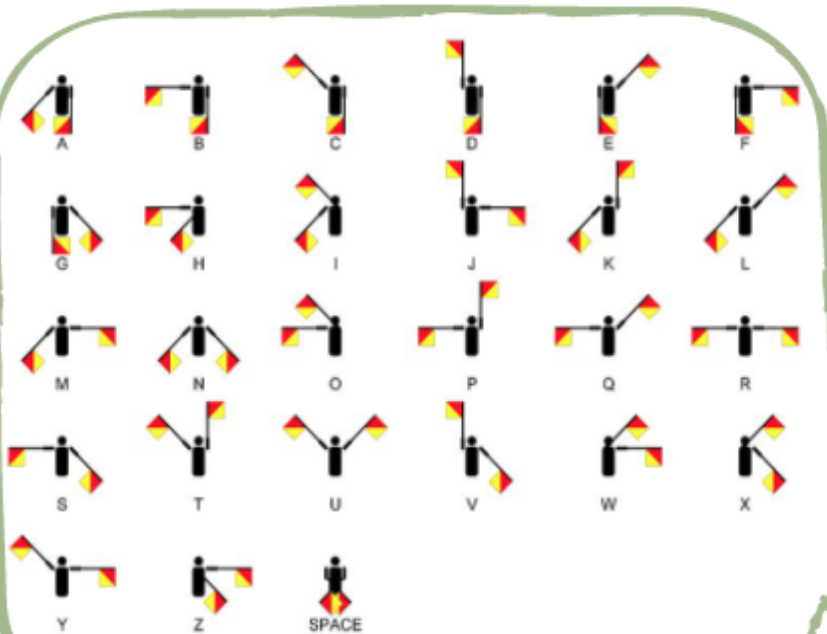
MIA 2/29 A.A. Macfarlane Grieve photo album July 1915 Scottish Command School of Signalling, at Peebles, on seating in front of a pavilion, officers and ORs, in uniform, with flags, also lamps, 103 present.  
[Digitised material for Durham University Library Miscellaneous Photograph Albums 2 - A.A. Macfarlane Grieve / MIA 2/29](#)

**Can you send your own message using torches or flags?**

## Learn how to translate and make your own messages.

You can make your own flags by attaching any piece of cloth or paper to sticks. Remember to make two!

Use this chart to decode our message to you. Research your answer and draw your semaphore answer in the space below.



Semaphore signals chart for the letters of the English alphabet, plus space. Based on the diagrams at <http://www.anbg.gov.au/flags/semaphore.html> and modified into a chart from the individual drawings by Denelson83

**Draw your semaphore answer below:**



We would love to see your semaphore messages, if your adults are happy with this, please ask them to send us any photographs to [4schools@durham.ac.uk](mailto:4schools@durham.ac.uk) or tweet us [@dulearning](https://twitter.com/dulearning).