

Fingers!
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What is the best finger? Most of us have them, but few truly think about them. (Without being judged as time wasting or peculiar). However, that doesn't matter as I will for you! Here goes!

Pinkie finger...

Most people I'm sure will disregard this one but they are FAR from useless. Especially in a fight. I'm not suggesting you poke your opponent's eye out with your mini finger as he stares confused (and he would be pretty confused), I'm saying try and make a fist without it. It will be the weakest fist in the world. Go on, try and do a pinkie-less punch. Rather than an 'ow' all you'll get is an amused reaction. And then a proper punch to your face.

Guitarists will love the finger too, as some chords are basically impossible without it. (But then again, some people work out how to play with their feet don't they? So maybe they're not impossible. Hm. I can't even move any of my toes independently, that's the thing). Anyway, pinkies are also great for those massive intervals guitarists like Dimebag Darrell loved. Sure, you can do the two handed tapping technique for similar results, but if you only have one hand, you'll need the mini finger. (And good luck finding a one hand guitar teacher. They're even rarer than foot teachers).

You also need the pinkie to do the devil horn sign. A must-have skill for all metal fans. Without the pink, it will just look to others like you're making an interesting point. Try it and see. Similarly, you'll need the small one to mime to someone that you're on the phone. Not exactly essential 99.9% of the time, but in that 0.01% you can save at least some confusion.

Ring finger...

The hardest of all fingers to hold up, alone. Luckily, as far as I'm aware, there is no such thing as the 'ring finger up' hand sign. I guess I could try and patent it, but I've done a bit of thinking and I can't work out what the point would be.

As most people know, the ring finger is where you wear your wedding ring. Does that mean if you have no such digit, you can't get married? Most people get taught that marriage is about more than just what your hands look like.

Did you know that Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi cut off the top of his ring finger (and middle finger) in an accident? It's interesting to note that soon after the soppiest finger was reduced, he wrote much darker music. That might be something you'll want to ponder on, too.

Middle finger...

The biggest, baddest and most offensive finger of all. The 'punk rock singer' of the human hand. The most hated, yet often most useful finger, however. The extra strength makes it great for flashy guitar playing and the digit is so respected by its brothers, if you hold up all fingers and try to put your middle one down, the ring finger will HAVE to follow it. (That's a theory I've been working on).

The up yours finger on the right hand is also the one that is used for the tapping technique most of the time. (Eddie Van Halen uses his index finger but that puts him at great risk of dropping his pick as that one is also used for holding the thing. His choice, I guess). And who doesn't like the sound of tapping? Interestingly, it sounds really complicated, but actually it's a relatively easy technique. (Sweep picking on the other hand, is evil).

Like the ring finger, the middle one isn't needed for that classic devil horn sign, but maybe that's for the best. You don't want one finger hogging all the fun, so to speak. Bringing it back down to Earth, the same finger isn't shown in the 'phone' sign. You can't have it all.

Index finger...

Possibly the most useful finger for guitarists. (Or is it the thumb? Might actually be the thumb). It's also pretty good for signalling someone to come close to you. (That is considered rude, but nowhere near as rude as using the middle finger to get someone to come close).

Impressively, Mr. Index is perhaps the most manoeuvrable of all digits. Even better, when rubbing against the thumb, it signals money. I don't know why, do people go around rubbing money? I've never seen anyone do that, anyway. I guess you CAN rub money though, so maybe that's the reasoning behind it.

Because of the controllability, the index finger is perhaps the best choice for poking someone in the eye, but that could be a serious felony if the action goes wrong. (Or too right). Maybe the pinkie is best for a 'lighthearted eye poking' but I for one have never heard of such a thing.

Mr. Thumb...

The only digit with two joints. Does the lack of a third joint cause any problems? Not for me, it doesn't. Never in my life has it done, in fact. Maybe if I had a third, I could give more interesting and varied thumbs up, but after a few minutes of thinking, that's the only thing I could think of. And I'm not sure if it would be more interesting. Well, maybe a little.

I'll tell you what IS cool about thumbs: Their burly nature makes them perfect in thumb wars. You could say they're the sumo wrestlers of the hand.

They may be the shortest of all digits, but they are the most independent and they're not afraid to do things a little differently. Admirably, this doesn't cause conflict with the other fingers and they all work together, great. Especially if you're like me and you can pull off sick guitar licks.

Lastly, I've thought of more things to say about thumbs up: If you don't have a thumb, you will look like you're making a fist when doing the sign and others could take that the wrong way. If you've learnt one thing in this monologue, please let it be that one.

Ok, that's the five digits reviewed! Do you have a favourite one? I know I do. Especially now that I've thought about it, deeply. It's the thumb! Without it I'd suck at guitar AND holding pens! Bye!