

THE ANCIENT LANGUAGE OF THE FAN

As with most rules concerning manners, not everyone knew about or even used the rules for sending a message with a fan. For the most part, only the wealthiest ladies knew about the language of the fan. It is interesting to realize that there was a group of people who was so involved in observing all the rules of etiquette that it extended to the fan.

Carrying the fan in the right hand	Follow me.
Carrying in the left hand, in front of face	I would like to meet you.
Placing fan on left ear	I wish to get rid of you.
Drawing across forehead	You have changed.
Twirling in left hand	We are being watched.
Carrying in right hand	You are too willing.
Drawing through the hand	I hate you!
Drawing across the cheek	I love you.
Twirling in the right hand	I love another.
Presented shut	Do you love me?
Drawing across the eyes	I am sorry
Closing the fan	I wish to speak to you.
Letting it rest on the right cheek	Yes.
Letting it rest on the left cheek	No.
Open and shut	You are cruel.
Dropping the fan	We will be friends.
Fanning slowly	I am married.
Fanning quickly	I am engaged.
With handle to lips	Kiss me.
Open wide	Wait for me.

Teachers: To further understanding of these rules, let your students make fans and then practice using them to send messages. Or, use a fan yourself to let the students guess your messages.