
British Standard
BS 5499-1 Safety signs, including fire safety signs Part 1: Specification
This British Standard outlines:
1. How to use geometric shapes, colours and graphical symbols to create safety signs with specific meanings.
2. How to combine safety signs with supplementary text.
3. How to use signal words (see page 41 for more details).
4. How to use directional arrows.
5. How to calculate the size of safety sign you need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geometric shape</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Safety colour</th>
<th>Contact colour</th>
<th>Graphical symbol colour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>Prohibition</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Mandatory action</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equilateral angle</td>
<td>Mandatory action</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square: Rectangle</td>
<td>Supplementary information</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square: Rectangle</td>
<td>Fire-fighting</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UK Legislation
The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations became law within the UK on 1st April 1996.
The Regulations implement the European Safety Signs Directive (92/58/EEC) which has been designed to standardise safety signage across Europe and ensure that with the free movement of labour, there is no risk of safety signs being misunderstood.

The Legislation:
- Requires employers to use a safety sign whenever there is a risk that cannot be controlled by any other means.
- Demands that all safety signs boards contain a pictogram as, part of their intrinsic design features.
- Increases the number of safety symbols.
- Incorporates fire safety signs.

Use Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulation symbols design wise:
- You want your safety signs to look exactly like the illustration in the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.
- You want your safety signs to reflect European designs currently in use.

The Fire Precautions (Workplace) (Amendment) Regulations 1999
The Amendment Regulations came into force 1st December 1999 and further reduce 'exempted workplaces' by extending the Scope of the Fire Precautions Regulations to include those workplaces where a fire certificate is in force or is pending.
It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the requirements of these regulations are complied with.

In practice this will require employers to conduct a fire risk assessment on a regular basis and to keep records of the findings and action taken.

For workplaces that are subject to a fire certificate or licensing regime as well as the Fire Precautions Regulations, employers will need to consult with the local fire authority where their risk assessment conflicts with the existing certificate or license.

Tips for the Siting of Safety Signs
1. Safety signs should not be located in a place containing a number of other signs or objects of similar size and colour.
2. Safety signs should not be located in areas where colour contrast is poor.
3. Add supplementary text to safety signs to increase their length and further improve comprehensibility and legibility.
4. Plan all start, occupier and visitor to the meaning of distinctive colour and geometric shape of safety signs as well as the detail of any graphical symbols used.
5. Continue to reinforce this training and awareness.
6. For fire exit safety signs, it is preferable to use additional reinforcing directional signs rather than rely on one larger sign at a larger viewing distance.

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