

Fire Signage

Introduction:

The main piece of legislation is The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals Regulations) 1995. The guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive states:

People usually leave premises by the same way that they enter or by routes which are familiar to them. Alternative exits (i.e. all emergency exits and any exits not in normal use) need to be clearly indicated so that people know that there are ways to leave other than the way they use to enter. In addition, the provision of well signposted exits in full view will give a feeling of security in an emergency.

Make sure the fire exit sign is displayed immediately above the exit opening or, if this is not possible, choose a position where the sign can be clearly seen and is least likely to be obstructed or obscured by smoke.

Where an exit cannot be seen or where a person escaping may be in doubt about the location of an exit (e.g. in warehouses where goods for transit and other obstructions may prevent a clear view of the exit doors), **fire exit signs including a directional arrow are appropriate at suitable points along the escape route.**

Emergency escape or first-aid signs

Intrinsic features:

- (a) Rectangular or square shape;
- (b) White pictogram on a green background (the green part to take up at least 50% of the area of the sign).

Meaning of signs:

N.B. The legal requirement is for the sign to have a pictogram, wording is not a legal requirement but does explain the sign.

Signs can either be to BS 5499:Part4 – 2000 or to European Council Directive 92/58/EEC, both are acceptable but all signs should be the same throughout the escape route.

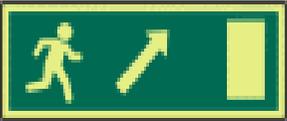
BS 5499: Part 4 – 2000 Signs

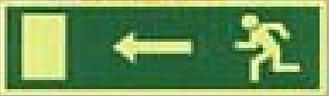
Sign	Meaning as viewed from in front of the sign	Examples of location
	<p>1. Final exit door</p>	<p>1. Above final exit door leading directly to a place of safety, usually at the door leading outside to fresh air or final exit from a floor to protected stairwell.</p>
	<p>1. Progress down to the right (indicating change of level).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at head of stairs or ramp. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level.</p>
	<p>1. Progress up to the right (indicating change of level). 2. Progress forward and across to the right from here (when suspended within an open area).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at foot of stairs or ramp. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level. 4. Suspended in open areas.</p>

	<p>1. Progress down to the left (indicating change of level).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at head of stairs. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level.</p>
	<p>1. Progress up to the left (indicating change of level). 2. Progress forward and across to the left from here (when suspended within an open area).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at foot of stairs or ramp. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level. 4. Suspended in open areas.</p>
	<p>1. Progress forward from here (indicating direction of travel). 2. Progress forward and through from here; when sign is sited above a door (indicating direction of travel). 3. Progress forward and up from here (indicating change of level).</p>	<p>1. Suspended in corridor leading to door. 2. Suspended in front of door. 3. Positioned above door. 4. Suspended in open areas. 5. Suspended at foot of stairs or ramp.</p>
	<p>1. Progress to the right from here (indicating direction of travel).</p>	<p>1. On corridor walls. 2. Suspended adjacent and left of the exit. 3. Suspended at change of direction.</p>
	<p>1. Progress to the left from here (indicating direction of travel).</p>	<p>1. On corridor walls. 2. Suspended adjacent and right of the exit. 3. Suspended at change of direction.</p>
	<p>1. Progress down from here (indicating change of level).</p>	<p>1. Suspended at head of stairs or ramp. 2. Suspended at change of level.</p>

European Council Directive 92/58/EEC Signs

Words can be included in signs.

Sign	Meaning as viewed from in front of the sign	Examples of location
	<p>1. Final exit door</p>	<p>1. Above final exit door leading directly to a place of safety, usually at the door leading outside to fresh air or final exit from a floor to protected stairwell.</p>
	<p>1. Progress down to the right (indicating change of level).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at head of stairs or ramp. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level.</p>
	<p>1. Progress up to the right (indicating change of level). 2. Progress forward and across to the right from here (when suspended within an open area).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at foot of stairs or ramp. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level. 4. Suspended in open areas.</p>
	<p>1. Progress down to the left (indicating change of level).</p>	<p>1. On wall or suspended at head of stairs. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level.</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress up to the left (indicating change of level). 2. Progress forward and across to the left from here (when suspended within an open area). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On wall or suspended at foot of stairs or ramp. 2. On half landing wall of stairs. 3. Suspended at change of level. 4. Suspended in open areas.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress forward from here (indicating direction of travel). 2. Progress forward and through from here; when sign is sited above a door (indicating direction of travel). 3. Progress forward and up from here (indicating change of level). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suspended in corridor leading to door. 2. Suspended in front of door. 3. Positioned above door. 4. Suspended in open areas. 5. Suspended at foot of stairs or ramp.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress to the right from here (indicating direction of travel). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On corridor walls. 2. Suspended adjacent and left of the exit. 3. Suspended at change of direction.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress to the left from here (indicating direction of travel). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On corridor walls. 2. Suspended adjacent and right of the exit. 3. Suspended at change of direction.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress down from here (indicating change of level). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suspended at head of stairs or ramp. 2. Suspended at change of level.

Positioning of escape signs: (From **Fire Safety Risk Assessment in Educational Premises** produced by the Department for Communities and local government in 2006. This provides guidance to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The presence of other signs in educational premises (such as staff notices and student information) can distract attention from, or obscure the visibility of, escape signs. This could affect people's ability to see and understand escape signs, particularly if there is a fire evacuation. Always ensure that escape signs are not overwhelmed.

Escape signs should meet the following criteria:

- They should provide clear, unambiguous information to enable people to safely leave a building in an emergency.
- Every escape route sign should, where necessary, incorporate, or be accompanied by, a directional arrow. Arrows should not be used on their own.
- If the escape route to the nearest exit is not obvious then it should be indicated by a sign(s).
- Signs should be positioned so that a person escaping will always have the next escape route sign in sight.
- Escape signs should be fixed above the door in the direction of escape and not be fixed to doors, as they will not be visible if the door is open.
- Signs mounted above doors should be at a height of between 2.0m and 2.5m above the floor.
- Signs on walls should be mounted between 1.7m and 2.0m above the floor.
- Mounting heights greater than 2.5m may be used for hanging signs, e.g. in large open spaces or for operational reasons, but care should be taken to ensure that such signs are both conspicuous and legible. In such case larger signs may be necessary.
- Signs should be sited at the same height throughout the escape route, so far as is reasonably practicable.