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British Standard

# Safety signs and colours

Part 3. Specification for additional signs  
to those given in BS 5378 : Part 1

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Symboles et couleurs de sécurité

Partie 3. Symboles complémentaires à ceux de la première partie de la BS 5378 – Spécification

Sicherheitszeichen und -farben

Teil 3. Zusätzliche Zeichen zu den in BS 5378 : Teil 1 festgelegten Zeichen

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## Foreword

This Part of this British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Personal Safety Equipment Standards Committee.

BS 5378, originally published in 1976, was revised in 1980 to bring it into line with EEC Directive 77/576/EEC, and in preparation for legislation\* in the UK to implement the Directive. The revised edition consisted of two Parts; Part 1 dealing with basic principles and Part 2 giving guidance on the preferred sizes of signs and on the colorimetric and photometric properties of materials.

In addition to those signs required by legislation and included in BS 5378 : Part 1, the Technical Committee considered that a further Part of this standard was required to cover additional signs.

This Part utilizes the principles established in BS 5378 : Part 1 concerning the shape, colour and symbols. It is hoped therefore that these signs will reduce any confusion and be readily identifiable within the system introduced by BS 5378 : Part 1.

Examples of signs concerned with fire safety are contained in BS 5499 : Part 1, public information symbols are included in BS 6034, and signs for laser equipment in BS 4803. A sign is included for non-ionizing radiation, replacing that given in BS 4765 which is withdrawn on publication of this Part of this standard.

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British Standard

# Safety signs and colours

Part 3. Specification for additional signs to those given in BS 5378 : Part 1

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## 1. Scope

This Part of this British Standard specifies safety signs additional to those given in BS 5378 : Part 1, but utilizes the principles of sign design and colour contained in that same Part. Illustrations of these signs are given in appendix A. Advice on the selection and use of safety signs is given in appendix B.

NOTE. The titles of the publications referred to in this Part of this standard are listed on the inside back cover.

## 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this Part of this standard the definitions given in BS 5378 : Part 1 apply.

## 3. Safety signs

**3.1 General.** Whenever possible, the safety sign shall comply with the appropriate sign in appendix A of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980 or the appropriate layout described in 5.2 of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980. Where a safety sign in appendix A of this Part of BS 5378 is appropriate to convey a particular meaning, that safety sign shall be used.

**3.2 Design of symbols.** The design of symbols shall be as simple as possible and details not essential for the understanding of the message shall be omitted.

NOTE. If text is required in addition to a symbol it is recommended that this be included in a supplementary sign (see clause 4).

Caution signs shall show the nature of the danger. Mandatory signs shall show only what is being mandated and prohibition signs shall show only what, or who, is prohibited.

**3.3 Colour, shape and layout.** The colour, shape and layout of the signs shall comply with BS 5378 : Part 1 and the colorimetric and photometric properties shall comply with BS 5378 : Part 2.

## 4. Supplementary signs

It is recognized that supplementary signs (text only) may sometimes aid the understanding of a particular sign. If a supplementary sign is used, it shall be oblong or square and so placed that it is clearly associated with the sign.

The background colour shall be either white with the text in black, or the background colour shall be the same as the safety colour used on the safety sign it is supplementing, with the text in the relevant contrasting colour.

## 5. Lettering

**5.1 Standard lettering for signs.** The letter style shall be preferably Helvetica Medium, e.g.

# Helvetica Medium

but a similar letter style shall be acceptable provided that:

- (a) the widths of the stroke of any letter of that style do not vary by more than 10 % throughout;
- (b) the style is not condensed, expanded, italic, outline or shaded;
- (c) the letters are individually formed and not joined together;
- (d) the width of the letter is not less than 70 % of the height of the letter as defined by the letter X.

**5.2 Sign text.** In any text on a supplementary sign the initial letter of a sentence or proper noun shall be upper case and the remainder of the lettering shall be lower case, except for the words of a heading, or an imperative, or a cautionary word which may be all in upper case. The first letter of the subsequent word shall be upper case.

## Appendix A

### Examples of safety signs and their meanings

NOTE. The wording given opposite the examples of safety signs explains the meaning of the signs. If text on a supplementary sign is considered necessary, then this wording, or other wording to the same effect, may be used.

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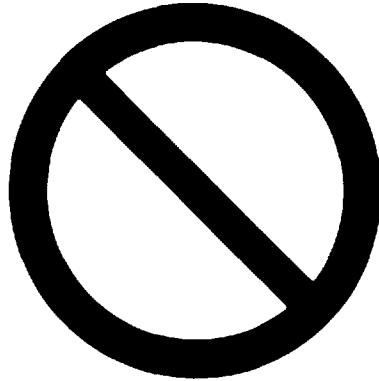
Safety sign

Meaning

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#### A.1 Prohibition signs

A.1.1



(General) prohibition

NOTE. This is the sign as given in 5.2.1 of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980. This is to be used where no suitable symbol is given in either Part 1 or in this Part of BS 5378, and it should be supplemented with appropriate text on a supplementary sign

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A.1.2



Do not use ladder

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A.1.3



Do not operate

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#### A.2 Warning signs

A.2.1



(General) hazard

NOTE. This is the sign given in A.2.9 of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980. This is to be used where no suitable symbol is given in either Part 1 or in this Part of BS 5378, and it should be supplemented with appropriate text on a supplementary sign

Safety sign

Meaning

A.2.2



Caution, guard dog(s)

A.2.3



Caution, non-ionizing radiation

A.2.4



Caution, fragile roof

A.2.5



Caution, overhead hazard (fixed hazard)

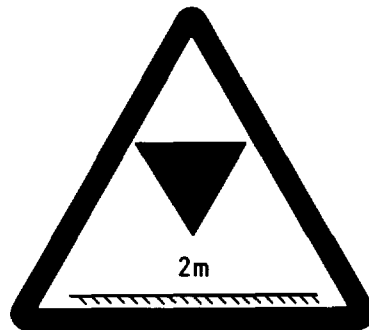
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Safety sign

Meaning

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A.2.6



Caution, limited overhead height  
NOTE. The height limitation may be indicated as shown or may be placed on a supplementary sign.

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A.2.7



Caution, trip hazard

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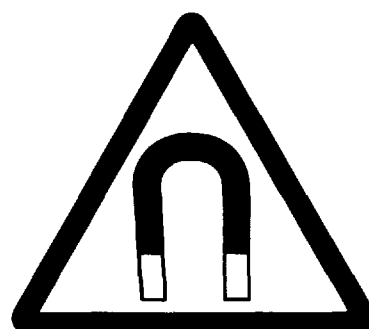
A.2.8



Caution, slippery surface

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A.2.9



Caution, strong magnetic field

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Safety sign

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Meaning

A.2.10



Caution, biological hazard

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A.3 Mandatory signs

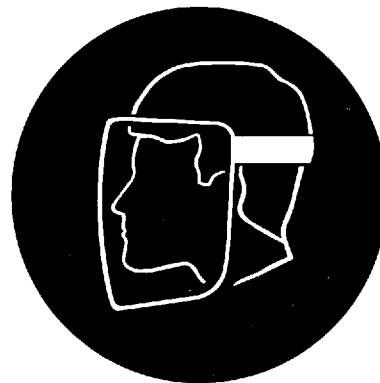
A.3.1



(General) mandatory sign

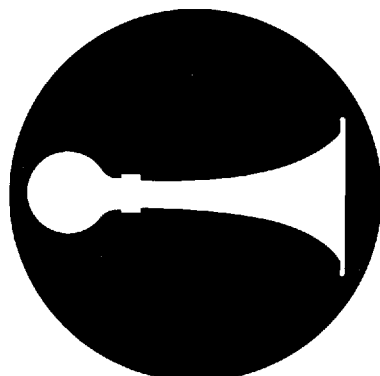
NOTE. This sign is to be used where no suitable symbol is given either in Part 1 or in this Part of BS 5378, and it should be supplemented with appropriate text on a supplementary sign

A.3.2



Wear face shield

A.3.3



Sound horn

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Safety sign

Meaning

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A.3.4



Wear safety harness/belt

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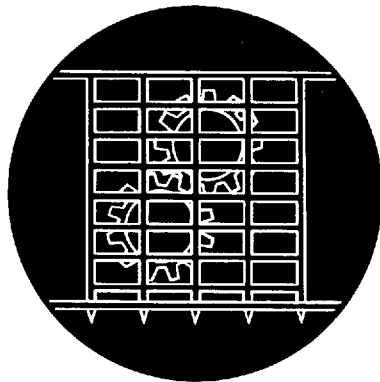
A.3.5



Use adjustable guard

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A.3.6



Use guard

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A.3.7



Wash hands

NOTE. This symbol may also be used on a safe condition sign

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Safety sign

Meaning

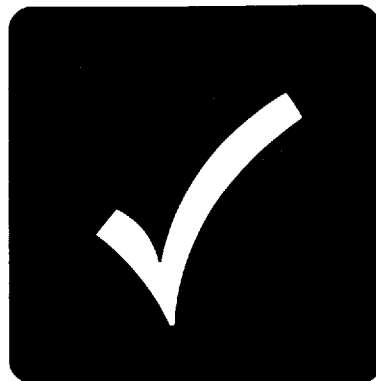
A.3.8



Keep locked

A.4 Safe condition signs

A.4.1



(General) safe condition

NOTE. This may be used where no suitable symbol is given either in Part 1 or in this Part of BS 5378, and it should be supplemented with appropriate text on a supplementary sign

A.4.2



Emergency shower

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Safety sign

Meaning

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A.4.3



Emergency eye wash

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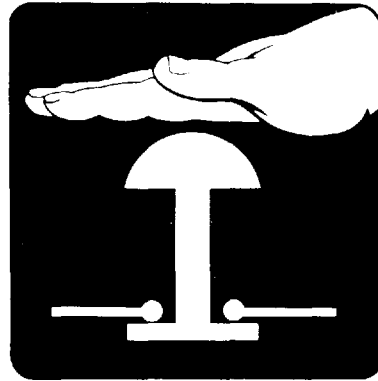
A.4.4



Emergency telephone

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A.4.5



Emergency stop push-button

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**Appendix B**

**Advice on selection and use of safety signs**

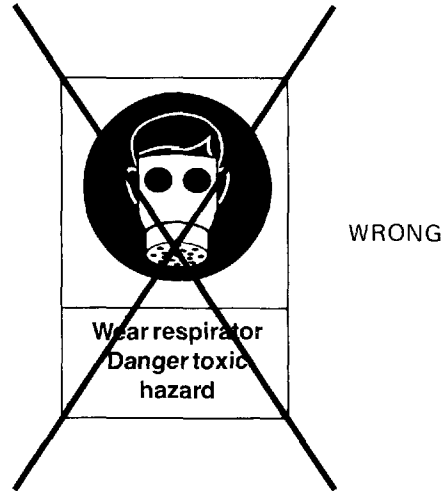
**B.1 Correct use of symbols, colours and shape.** All safety or health messages to be shown in the form of a safety sign should be identified in one or more of the four basic categories defined in 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980, i.e. prohibition, warning, mandatory or safe condition.

The safety signs given in appendix A of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980 and appendix A of this Part of BS 5378 are to be used where these symbols are relevant to the message that they intend to convey. Such symbols may be accompanied by text if required.

Where the symbols given in the aforementioned two appendices are not appropriate then either:

- (a) other symbols may be used provided they are as simple as possible and details not essential for their understanding of the message are omitted; supplementary text may be added if necessary; or
- (b) the general sign of one of the appropriate four categories may be used with text as a supplementary sign, e.g.

**B.2 Multi-purpose signs conveying more than one message.** Any text or supplementary sign associated with, or as part of, a safety sign should be restricted to that safety sign category only, i.e. prohibition, warning, mandatory or safe condition and should not include text relating to any other category. Thus, if a safety message containing a mandatory instruction accompanied by the reason for suggesting caution is required, the following sign, combining two categories of safety message, should not be used.

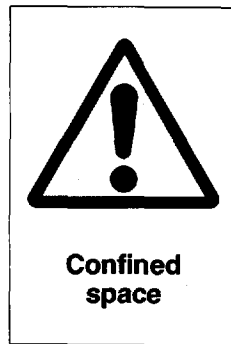


These two messages should be shown as two separate signs as follows

prohibition



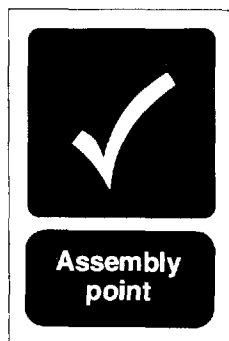
warning



mandatory



safe condition



or as a multi-purpose sign



Similarly, if a prohibition sign is required together with an explanation by way of a cautionary notice, this should not be shown as



A composite sign should not be used. This is a sign in which two or more symbols from Part 1 and/or this Part of BS 5378 have been superimposed to form one sign. An example of such a sign is:



This should be avoided by using the two separate signs for 'eye protection' and 'head protection' given in BS 5378 : Part 1 or combining them to form a multi-purpose sign.

but given as two separate signs



**B.3 Different conditions for certain signs.** The symbols in appendix A of BS 5378 : Part 1 : 1980 and in appendix A of this Part of BS 5378 have been given a meaning for each sign. Provided this intended meaning is not changed then their symbols may be supplemented with text that carries different wording, e.g.

Pedestrians prohibited

Caution, risk of fire



may be shown as

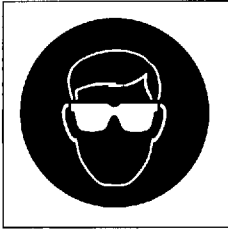
may be shown as



or a multi-purpose sign



Eye protection must  
be worn



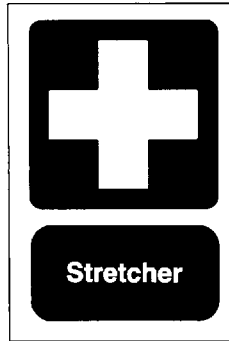
First aid



may be shown as



may be shown as



### Publications referred to

- BS 4765\* Safety signs to denote the actual or potential presence of a dangerous level of radio frequency or other non-ionizing radiation
- BS 4803\*† Radiation safety of laser products and equipment
- BS 5378 Safety signs and colours
  - Part 1 Specification for colour and design
  - Part 2 Specification for colorimetric and photometric properties of materials
- BS 5499\* Fire safety signs, notices and graphic symbols
  - Part 1 Specification for fire safety signs
- BS 6034\* Specification for public information symbols
- Statutory Instrument No. 1471\*

\*Referred to in the foreword only.

†Revised edition, in course of preparation.

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- British Rubber Manufacturers' Association
- British Safety Council
- \*British Steel Corporation
- Cement Makers' Federation
- \*Chemical Industries Association
- Council of Ironfoundry Associations
- Department of Industry (National Engineering Laboratory)
- \*Electricity Supply Industry in England and Wales
- \*Engineering Employers' Federation
- \*Engineering Equipment Users' Association
- Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors
- Glass Manufacturers' Federation
- \*Health and Safety Executive
- \*Industrial Safety (Protective Equipment) Manufacturers' Association
- Institute of British Foundrymen
- Institution of Civil Engineers
- Institution of Mechanical Engineers
- \*Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
- Institution of Production Engineers
- \*International Institute of Safety Management
- Iron and Steel Trades Confederation

- \*London Transport Executive
- Medical Research Council
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
- \*National Coal Board
- National Metal Trades Federation
- National Radiological Protection Board
- \*Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
- Trades Union Congress
- Transport and General Workers' Union

The organizations marked with an asterisk in the above list, together with the following, were directly represented on the Technical Committee entrusted with the preparation of this British Standard:

- British Sign Association
- Business Equipment Trade Association
- Chartered Institution of Building Services
- Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association
- Department of Health and Social Security
- Department of Transport
- Institution of Fire Engineers
- Ministry of Defence
- Paintmakers' Association of Great Britain Ltd.
- Royal Institute of British Architects
- United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority
- Coopted expert

## Amendments issued since publication

Amd. No.	Date of issue	Text affected