



**Safety Signs**



## Safety Signs

### What does this section deal with?

This section deals with signs. It includes signboards and acoustic, verbal or hand signals. Signboards use a combination of shape, colour and a symbol or pictogram. Signboards should not contain text as the symbols or pictograms should be understood independently of the literacy or language ability. Only information authorised in Regulations may be displayed on safety signs at workplaces. Employees must be provided with information and instruction. Where there is a risk because of traffic, signs should be put in place.

### Does this section apply to all safety signs?

This section does not apply to signs used for

- ▲ the placing on the market of hazardous substances and mixtures, products or equipment
- ▲ regulating road, rail, inland waterway, sea or air transport

Signboards with text in place before 1 November 2007 should be replaced by 1 January 2011.

### Some Important Points

- ▲ Where hazards cannot be avoided, employers must assess and reduce risk
- ▲ Where hazards cannot be avoided or reduced, employers must put in place appropriate signs
- ▲ Safety signs must never be a substitute for necessary protective measures
- ▲ The risk assessment and safety statement should identify necessary signs
- ▲ The objective of the system of safety signs is to draw attention rapidly and unambiguously to specific hazards
- ▲ Safety signs may only be used to give information related to safety
- ▲ The effectiveness of safety signs is dependent on provision of full information



## Safety Signs Checklist

| Interpretation   | Yes                   | No                    | N/A                   | Action Date |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <p><i>“acoustic signal”, “emergency escape or first-aid sign”, “hand signal”, “illuminated sign”, “information sign”, “mandatory sign”, “prohibition sign”, “safety colour”, “safety or health signs”, “signboard”, “supplementary signboard”, “symbol or pictogram”, “verbal communication” and “warning sign” are all defined (r158)</i></p> |                       |                       |                       |             |
| Chapter does not apply to signs for hazardous substances and mixtures, products or equipment (r159)  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Chapter does not apply to signs for road, rail, inland waterway, sea or air transport (r159)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |

| Requirement   | Yes                   | No                    | N/A                   | Action Date |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Provide signs where hazards cannot be avoided or reduced by collective protection or organisation of work (r160)  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Ensure signs are in place (r160)  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Regard the risk assessment and safety statement when determining whether to provide a sign (r160)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Use prescribed sign regulating traffic involving road, rail, inland waterway, sea or air, where such forms of transport are present at place of work and give rise to a risk (r160) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Signboards and/ or a safety colour mark permanently the location and identification of fire-fighting equipment (s9pA)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Places where risk of colliding with obstacles or falling permanently marked with a safety colour and/ or with signboards (s9pA)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Traffic routes permanently marked with a safety colour (s9pA)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Illuminated signs, acoustic signals and/ or verbal communication where occasion requires (s9pA)   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |

| Requirement   |                                  |   | Yes                   | No                    | N/A                   | Action Date |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Hand signals and/ or verbal communication where occasion requires, to guide dangerous manoeuvres ( <i>s9pA</i> )  |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| The instructions in the table below apply to all signs incorporating a safety colour ( <i>s9pA</i> )  |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Colour  | Meaning or Purpose               | Instructions and Information                                    |                       |                       |                       |             |
| Red   | Prohibition sign                 | Dangerous behaviour   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
|   | Danger alarm                     | Stop, shutdown, emergency cut-out devices                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
|   | Fire-fighting equipment          | Evacuate<br>Identification and location                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Yellow or Amber   | Warning sign                     | Be careful, take precautions<br>Examine                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Blue  | Mandatory sign                   | Specific behaviour or action                                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Green   | Emergency escape, first-aid sign | Wear personal protective equipment                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
|   | No danger                        | Doors, exits, routes, equipment, facilities<br>Return to normal | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Effectiveness of a sign not adversely affected by   |                                  |   |                       |                       |                       |             |
| ▲ presence of another emission source of the same type which interferes with visibility or audibility in particular ( <i>s9pA</i> )   |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ placing of too many signs too close together ( <i>s9pA</i> )  |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ two illuminated signs likely to be confused being used at the same time ( <i>s9pA</i> )   |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ an illuminated sign being used in proximity of another similar illuminated source ( <i>s9pA</i> )   |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ two acoustic signals being used at the same time ( <i>s9pA</i> )  |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ acoustic signal being used if there is too much ambient noise ( <i>s9pA</i> )   |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Effectiveness of a sign not adversely affected by poor design, insufficient number, incorrect positioning, poor state of repair or incorrect functioning of the signs or signalling devices ( <i>s9pA</i> ) |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Signs and signalling devices cleaned, maintained, checked, repaired, and if necessary replaced on a regular basis ( <i>s9pA</i> )   |                                  |   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |

| Requirement  | Yes                   | No                    | N/A                   | Action Date |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <b>Schedule 9 Part B – Signboards</b>  |                       |                       |                       |             |
| <p><b>Prohibition Signs: Shape=Round, Background=White, Symbol=Black</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Red must appear around the edge and in a transverse bar and cover at least 35% of the surface (<i>s9pB</i>)</p>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p><b>Warning Signs: Shape=Triangular, Background=Yellow with Black edging, Symbol=Black</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> A yellow triangle must have a black edge. Yellow must cover at least 50% of the surface (<i>s9pB</i>)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p><b>Mandatory Signs: Shape=Round, Background=Blue, Symbol=White</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Blue must cover at least 50% of the surface (<i>s9pB</i>)</p>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p><b>Emergency Escape or First-Aid Signs: Shape=Rectangular or Square, Background=Green, Symbol=White</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Green must cover at least 50% of the surface (<i>s9pB</i>)</p>                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p><b>Fire-Fighting Signs: Shape=Rectangular or Square, Background=Red, Symbol=White</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Red must cover at least 50% of the surface (<i>s9pB</i>)</p>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p><b>Supplementary Signs: Background=White Safety Colour, Symbol=Wording: Black, Wording Contrasting Colour</b></p>   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p>Containers together with visible pipes containing or transporting hazardous substances and mixtures labelled (<i>s9pC</i>)</p>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p>Signs on containers and pipes shall be mounted on visible sides, and in unipliable, self-adhesive or painted form. (<i>s9pC</i>)</p>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| <p>Where appropriate, signboards</p>   |                       |                       |                       |             |
| <p>▲ made of shock and weather-resistant material suitable for environment (<i>s9pC</i>)</p>   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |

| Requirement   | Yes                   | No                    | N/A                   | Action Date |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| shall fulfil the conditions of use for signboards laid down in paragraph 2 of Part B.   |                       |                       |                       |             |
| ▲ installed at suitable height and position to the line of sight in a well-lit and easily accessible and visible location and be easily seen and understood ( <i>s9pC</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ phosphorescent colours, reflective materials or artificial lighting where natural light is poor ( <i>s9pC</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ removed when situation ceases to exist ( <i>s9pC</i> )  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| ▲ labels on pipes positioned visibly in vicinity of most dangerous points, such as valves and joints, and at reasonable intervals ( <i>s9pC</i> )                             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Fire-fighting equipment identified using red colour for equipment and location signboard and/ or red colour for places where equipment kept, or access points ( <i>s9pD</i> ) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Places where risk of colliding with obstacles, of falling or of objects falling marked with alternating yellow and black, or red and white stripes ( <i>s9pE</i> )            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Where so required traffic routes for vehicles clearly identified by continuous stripes in clearly visible colour, preferably white or yellow ( <i>s9pE</i> )                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Permanent traffic routes in built-up areas outdoors similarly marked, unless suitable barriers or pavements ( <i>s9pE</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Acoustic signals sound levels considerably higher than ambient noise without being excessive or painful ( <i>s9pG</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Continuous evacuation signal ( <i>s9pG</i> )  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Spoken messages short, simple and clear and in language understood ( <i>s9pH</i> )  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| verbal skills of speaker and hearing abilities of hearers to ensure reliable verbal communication ( <i>s9pH</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |

| Requirement   | Yes                   | No                    | N/A                   | Action Date |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Hand signals precise, simple, expansive, easy to make and to understand, and clearly distinct ( <i>s9pH</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Where both arms used, moved symmetrically and for giving one sign only ( <i>s9pH</i> )  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Hand signals consistent with any relevant code of practice ( <i>s9pH</i> )  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Operator shall interrupt ongoing manoeuvre to request new instructions if unable to carry out orders with necessary safety ( <i>s9pH</i> )                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Operator able to recognise signaller without difficulty ( <i>s9pH</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Signaller shall wear one or more appropriate distinctive items, e.g. jacket, helmet, sleeves or armbands, or carry bats ( <i>s9pH</i> )                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Distinctive items shall be brightly coloured, preferably all the same colour and for exclusive use of signallers ( <i>s9pH</i> )                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| No person under 18 to give signals or operate lifting equipment ( <i>r51</i> )  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Signal for directing movement of lifting equipment is distinctive and easily seen or heard ( <i>r51</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Signalling devices properly maintained, and protected from accidental interference ( <i>r51</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Provide information to employees and/ or representative concerning safety or health signs especially signs incorporating words ( <i>r161</i> )              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Give suitable instruction, in particular specific directions concerning safety or health signs, which must include the meaning of the signs ( <i>r161</i> ) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |
| Signs do not include information other than that authorised ( <i>r162</i> )   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |             |

*This is a guidance document and using the checklist should help you comply with the Regulations. The checklists are non-exhaustive and in no particular order. Further guidance can be found at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)*