EMERGENCY SIGNAGE

Emergency Lighting & Safety Signage

Emergency lighting is essential for guiding occupants safely out of a building. Key points to consider:

Emergency Lighting Requirements (BS EN 1838:2013)

- Must make escape routes clearly visible from any location
- Maintained mode recommended in areas where occupants may be unfamiliar with the building
- Must be conspicuous and easily seen
- Placement should account for smoke accumulation

Signage Location (BS 5499-4:2013)

- At all normal exits
- At all emergency exits
- Along escape routes
- In any area where the path to the nearest exit may not be immediately obvious

Signage Requirements

- Green background (safety colour) with white pictogram (contrast colour)
- Minimum illuminance of 2 cd/m^2 on the safety colour
- Contrast ratio between background and pictogram: greater than 5:1 but less than 15:1
- Max-to-min luminance ratio within safety or contrast colours: less than 10:1
- Signs must illuminate to at least 50% of required luminance within 5 seconds, and full luminance within 60 seconds

These standards ensure that emergency lighting and signage are effective, reliable, and compliant, keeping occupants safe in all situations.

The current internationally recognised format has a pictogram and arrow, and the wording is optional. It is not permitted to mix the different designs.

BS 2560
Prohibited since 1999; replacement required

HTM 65 - HOSPITALS
No longer in use

BS EN 54499-4:2013
Used in existing installations to ensure uniformity

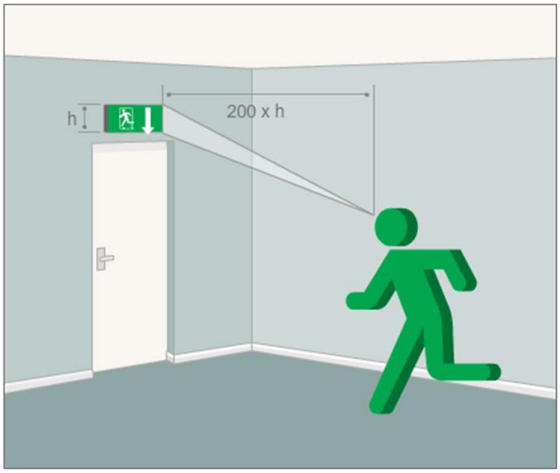
EEU Signs Directive
Used in existing installations to ensure uniformity

ISO 7010
Referenced in BS EN 5266-1:2016 and BS EN ISO 7010:2012 (E002)
Endorsed by ICEL

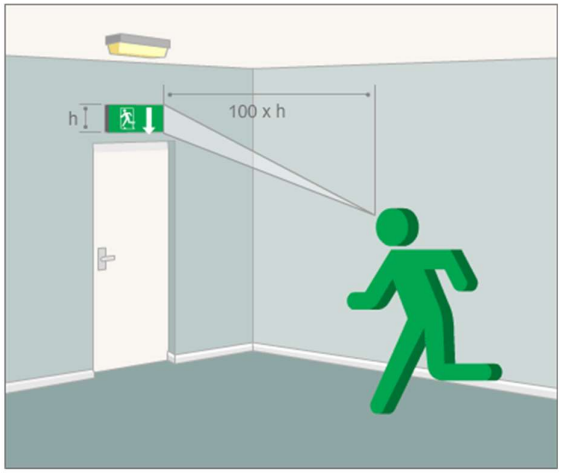
Sign types should not be mixed within a building. Older types of sign formats may still be used for existing buildings. New buildings should use ISO 7010 format as referenced in BS 5266.

Maximum Viewing Distances

INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGNS
200 x the panel height



EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGNS
100 x the panel height



Examples

- Internally illuminated sign 175mm high

The maximum viewing distance is 35,000mm or 35 metres (175mm x 200 = 35 metres)

- Externally illuminated sign 175mm high

The maximum viewing distance is 17,500 mm or 17.5 metres (175mm x 100 = 17.5 metres)