

United States

# Road Symbol Signs



**U.S. Department of Transportation**  
Federal Highway Administration  
Washington, DC 20590






# Preface

Roadway signs in the United States increasingly use symbols rather than words to convey their message. Symbols provide instant communication with roadway users, overcome language barriers, and are becoming standard for traffic control devices throughout the world. Familiarity with symbols on traffic signs is important for every road user in order to maintain the safety and efficiency of our transportation facilities.

The color of roadway signs is an important indicator of the information they contain. The use of red on signs is limited to stop, yield, and prohibition signs. A white background indicates a regulatory sign; yellow conveys a general warning message; green shows permitted traffic movements or directional guidance; fluorescent yellow/green indicates pedestrian crossings and school zones; orange is used for warning and guidance in roadway work zones; coral is used for incident management signs; blue indicates road user services, tourist information, and evacuation routes; and brown is for guidance to sites of public recreation or cultural interest.

Sign shape can also alert roadway users to the type of information displayed on a sign. Traffic regulations are conveyed in signs that are rectangular with the longer direction vertical or square. Additional regulatory signs are octagons for stop and inverted triangles for yield. Diamond-shaped signs signify warnings. Rectangular signs with the longer direction horizontal provide guidance information. Pentagons indicate school zones. A circular sign warns of a railroad crossing.

The illustration below shows how the shape and color of a sign indicate the nature of the message.

-  REGULATORY
-  WARNING
-  GUIDE
-  SERVICES
-  CONSTRUCTION
-  RECREATION
-  SCHOOL ZONE
-  INCIDENT MANAGEMENT\*\*

Test your Sign IQ by taking the interactive shape and color quiz available on the web at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov>. On the navigation bar under Knowledge, select Sign Shape/Color.

Standards for the design and application of the signs shown here as well as for other traffic control devices are contained in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*. Dimension drawings for signs can be found in the *Standard Highway Signs* book. Both of these books are available in electronic format online at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov>. This web site also contains information on standard lettering used on highway signs and pavement markings and on highway sign color specifications.

Hard copies of the *MUTCD* can be purchased from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (<http://www.aashto.org>); the Institute of Transportation Engineers (<http://www.ite.org>); the American Traffic Safety Services Association (<http://www.atssa.com>); and the US Government Printing Office (<http://www.gpo.gov>). The *Standard Highway Signs* book can be purchased from the US Government Printing Office and the American Traffic Safety Services Association through the web sites listed above.

Prepared in 2002 by the  
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\*\*The use of coral for incident management signs was anticipated for inclusion in the 2003 edition of the MUTCD at the time of this printing.

# Warning Signs



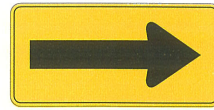
LEFT TURN AHEAD (W1-1)



LEFT REVERSE TURN AHEAD (W1-3)



RIGHT CURVE AHEAD (W1-2)



SHARP CURVE TO RIGHT (W1-6)



WINDING ROAD LEFT AHEAD (W1-5)



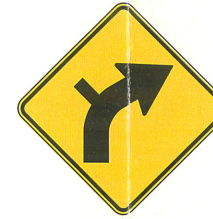
HAIRPIN CURVE AHEAD\* (W1-11)



VERY SHARP (270 DEGREE) CURVE AHEAD\* (W1-15)



SHARP CURVE TO RIGHT (W1-8)



INTERSECTION WITHIN CURVE AHEAD (W1-10)



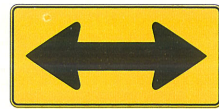
CROSS ROAD AHEAD (W2-1)



Y INTERSECTION AHEAD (W2-5)



T INTERSECTION AHEAD (W2-4)



T INTERSECTION (W1-7)



CIRCULAR INTERSECTION AHEAD\* (W2-6)



SIDE ROAD (LEFT) (W2-2)



SIDE ROAD AT ANGLE (RIGHT) (W2-3)



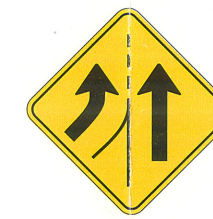
ENTERING ROADWAY MERGE (RIGHT)\* (W4-1a)



ENTERING ROADWAY ADDED LANE (RIGHT)\* (W4-3a)



MERGING TRAFFIC (FROM RIGHT) AHEAD (W4-1)



ADDED LANE (FROM LEFT) (W4-3)



HILL (W7-1)



HILL WITH GRADE (W7-1b)



TRUCK ROLLOVER WARNING FOR SHARP CURVE\* (W1-13)



ADVISORY SPEED, TRUCK ROLLOVER WARNING FOR SHARP CURVE\* (W1-13a)



EMERGENCY RAMP FOR RUNAWAY TRUCKS ON STEEP DOWNGRADE (W7-4c)



LOW CLEARANCE AHEAD (W12-2)



TRUCK CROSSING (W11-10)



DEER CROSSING (W11-3)



CATTLE CROSSING (W11-4)



FARM MACHINERY CROSSING (W11-5)



SNOWMOBILE CROSSING (W11-6)



FIRE STATION (W11-8)



YIELD AHEAD (W3-2a)



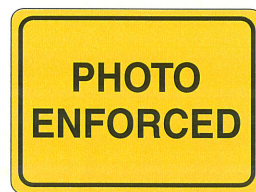
SIGNAL AHEAD (W3-3)



EMERGENCY SIGNAL CONTROLLED BY AN APPROACHING EMERGENCY VEHICLE (W11-12p)



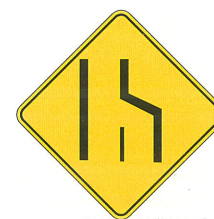
STOP AHEAD (W3-1a)



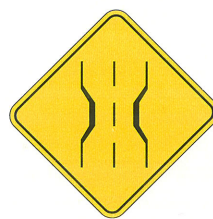
TRAFFIC LAWS ENFORCED BY CAMERA\* (W16-10)



SLIPPERY WHEN WET (W8-5)



LANE REDUCTION RIGHT LANE ENDS\* (W4-2)



ROAD NARROWS\* (W5-1a)



DIVIDED HIGHWAY AHEAD (W6-1)



TWO WAY TRAFFIC (W6-3)



NO PASSING ZONE (W14-3)



ADVISORY SPEED (W13-1)



ADVISORY SPEED ON EXIT RAMP (W13-3)



ADVISORY SPEED ON DECELERATION LANE FOR EXIT (W13-2)



ADVISORY TURN SPEED (W1-9)

\* This sign was anticipated for inclusion in the 2003 edition of the MUTCD at the time of this printing.

# Railroad and Light Rail Transit Grade Crossing Signs



RAILROAD  
CROSSING AHEAD  
(W10-1)



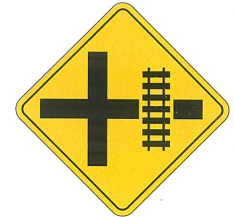
RAILROAD  
CROSSBUCK  
(R15-1)



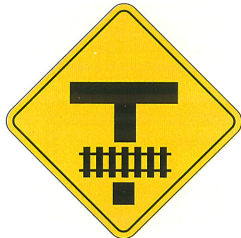
DO NOT PASS  
STOPPED TRAINS  
(R15-5)



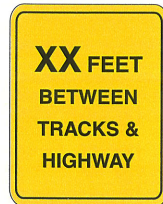
LOW GROUND  
CLEARANCE  
ON TRACK  
(W10-5)



HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSING  
ON SIDE ROAD TO RIGHT  
(W10-2)



(W10-11)  
LIMITED VEHICLE STORAGE SPACE  
BETWEEN INTERSECTION AND TRACKS



(W10-11a)



LIGHT RAIL  
ONLY LANE  
(R15-4a)



NO LEFT TURN  
ACROSS TRACKS  
(R3-2a)



DO NOT DRIVE  
ON TRACKS  
(R15-6)



LIGHT RAIL  
TRANSIT STATION  
AHEAD  
(I-12)



LIGHT RAIL  
VEHICLE  
APPROACHING  
(W10-7)



DIVIDED  
HIGHWAY  
TRANSIT RAIL  
CROSSING  
(R15-7)

TO REPORT STALLED  
VEHICLE ON TRACKS OR  
OTHER EMERGENCY  
CALL 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX  
AND REFER TO  
CROSSING #XXX-XXXX  
ON STREETNAME RD

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION  
SIGN FOR VEHICLE  
STALLED ON TRACKS  
(I-13)



LOOK BOTH WAYS  
AT TRACK  
(R15-8)



NO TRAIN HORN  
(W10-9)



NO SIGNAL  
AT TRACKS  
(W10-10)

# Temporary Traffic Control Signs



WORKERS  
AHEAD  
(W21-1a)



FLAGGER  
AHEAD  
(W20-7a)



UTILITY WORK  
AHEAD  
(W21-7)



SHOULDER  
WORK  
(W21-5)



RIGHT SHOULDER  
CLOSED  
(W21-5a)



RIGHT  
TWO LANES  
CLOSED  
(W20-5A)



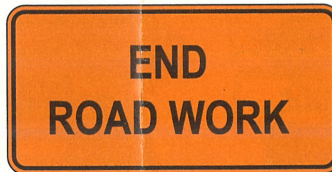
EXIT CLOSED  
(E5-2a)



DETOUR  
(M4-10)



ROAD WORK  
NEXT FIVE MILES  
(G20-1)



END ROAD WORK  
(G20-2a)



SLOW TRAFFIC AHEAD  
(W23-1)

# Regulatory Signs



STOP  
(R1-1)



MULTI-WAY STOP  
(R1-3)



YIELD  
(R1-2)



DO NOT ENTER  
(R3-1)



NO LEFT TURN  
(R3-2)



NO U TURN  
(R3-4)



NO U TURN  
OR LEFT TURN\*  
(R3-18)



NO TRUCKS  
(R5-2)



NO PARKING  
(R8-3a)



HAZARDOUS  
MATERIALS  
PROHIBITED\*  
(R14-3)



REVERSIBLE LANE CONTROL  
(R3-9d)



REVERSIBLE LANE AHEAD  
(R3-9g)



END REVERSIBLE  
LANE  
(R3-9i)



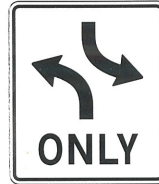
STRAIGHT  
AHEAD ONLY  
(R3-5a)



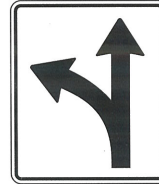
RIGHT  
TURN ONLY  
(R3-5)



INTERSECTION  
LANE CONTROL  
(R3-8)



TWO WAY  
LEFT TURN ONLY  
(R3-9a)



LEFT OR  
THROUGH  
(R3-6)



DIVIDED HIGHWAY  
(R6-3)

MANDATORY MOVEMENTS IN LANES AT AN INTERSECTION



U-TURN YIELD TO  
RIGHT TURN\*  
(R10-16)



SPEED LIMIT,  
METRIC\*  
(R2-1)



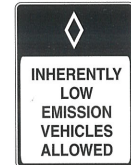
RESERVED FOR  
HANDICAPPED  
PARKING  
(R7-8)



HOV LANE  
AHEAD  
(R3-12)



TRUCK WEIGHT  
LIMIT  
(R12-5)



PROPERLY LABELED  
AND CERTIFIED LOW EMISSION  
VEHICLES ARE PERMITTED IN  
HOV LANE, REGARDLESS OF  
NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS\*  
(R3-10b)



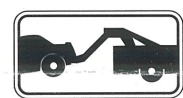
TRAFFIC SIGNAL  
CONTROLLED BY  
AN APPROACHING  
EMERGENCY VEHICLE  
(R10-13)



TRAFFIC LAWS  
ENFORCED BY CAMERA\*  
(R10-19)



ONE WAY  
(R6-1)



TOW-AWAY ZONE  
FOR PARKING VIOLATIONS  
(R7-201a)

\* This sign was anticipated for inclusion in the 2003 edition of the MUTCD at the time of this printing.

# Guide Signs



INTERSTATE  
ROUTE MARKER  
(M1-1)



U.S. ROUTE  
MARKER  
(M1-4)



STATE ROUTE  
MARKER  
(M1-5)



NATIONAL FOREST  
ROUTE MARKER  
(M1-7)



COUNTY  
ROUTE MARKER  
(M1-6)



NATIONAL SCENIC  
BYWAYS MARKER\*  
(D6-4)



HURRICANE  
EVACUATION ROUTE  
(EM-1)



DESTINATION DISTANCE  
SIGN  
(E7)



INTERCHANGE  
ADVANCE EXIT SIGN  
(E1-1)



INTERCHANGE  
EXIT SIGN  
(E5-1a)



NAMED HIGHWAY  
(M1-10)



PARK & RIDE  
(D4-2)



MILE  
MARKER  
(D10-3)



ROADWAY  
IDENTIFICATION  
AND MILE MARKER\*  
(D10-7)



ROADWAY  
IDENTIFICATION  
AND MILE MARKER  
MEASURED TO  
ONE-TENTH OF A MILE\*  
(D10-8)



DIAGRAMMATIC GUIDE SIGN



ROADWAY JUNCTION  
(M2-2)



MUST EXIT LANE  
(E11-1)



COLOR-CODED GUIDE SIGNS. THE COLORED SQUARES AID ROADWAY USERS IN DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN MULTIPLE, POTENTIALLY CONFUSING DESTINATIONS.\*

\* This sign was anticipated for inclusion in the 2003 edition of the MUTCD at the time of this printing.

# Motorist Services and Recreation Signs



TENT CAMPING  
(D9-3)



FOOD  
(D9-8)



LODGING  
(D9-9)



TELEPHONE  
(D9-1)



HOSPITAL  
(D9-2)



EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL SERVICES  
(D9-13)



INFORMATION  
(D9-10)



HANDICAPPED  
ACCESSIBLE  
FACILITY  
(D9-5)



GAS  
(D9-7)



DIESEL FUEL  
(D9-11)



ALTERNATIVE FUEL,  
COMPRESSED  
NATURAL GAS  
(D9-11a)



ALTERNATIVE  
FUEL, ELECTRIC  
VEHICLES\*



TRAVELER  
INFORMATION  
CALL 511  
(D12-5)



REST AREA  
(D5-2)



BATHROOMS  
(RM-140)



DRINKING WATER  
(RG-050)



PICNIC AREA  
(RM-120)



LITTER BARREL  
(RG-130)



LAUNDRY  
FACILITIES  
(RA-060)



AUTO MECHANIC  
(RM-100)



MOTOR HOME  
FACILITIES  
(RM-200)



HIKING TRAIL  
(RL-100)



ALL-TERRAIN  
VEHICLE TRAIL (RL-170)



SWIMMING AREA  
(RW-130)



BOAT LAUNCH  
AREA (RW-080)



FISHING PIER  
(RW-160)



FERRY SERVICE  
(RM-030)



WINTER RECREATION  
AREA (RS-090)



CROSS-COUNTRY  
SKI TRAIL (RS-040)



SNOWMOBILE  
TRAIL (RS-070)



PARKING  
(D4-1)



# Pedestrian and Bicycle Signs



NO PEDESTRIANS  
(R9-3A)



NO BICYCLES  
(R5-6)



NO HITCHHIKING  
(R9-4a)



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN  
DETOUR\*  
(M4-9a)



YIELD HERE  
TO PEDESTRIANS\*  
(R1-5)



PEDESTRIAN  
CROSSWALK  
(R9-8)



SIDEWALK CLOSED  
AHEAD, CROSS HERE  
(R9-11)

— PEDESTRIAN DETOUR SIGNS —



INTERSTATE  
BICYCLE ROUTE  
MARKER  
(M1-9)



BICYCLE ROUTE  
MARKER  
(M1-8)



BICYCLE ROUTE  
(D11-1)



NO PARKING,  
BIKE LANE  
(R7-9a)



BICYCLE  
PARKING  
(D4-3)



VEHICLES ENTERING  
RIGHT TURN LANE MUST  
YIELD TO BIKES  
(R4-4)



BICYCLISTS  
YIELD TO  
PEDESTRIANS  
(R9-6)

— BICYCLE GUIDE SIGNS —



BICYCLISTS LEFT,  
PEDESTRIANS RIGHT  
(R9-7)



BIKE LANE  
AHEAD\*  
(R3-17 and R3-17a)



BIKE LANE  
ENDS\*  
(R3-17 and R3-17b)



PEDESTRIAN PUSH  
BUTTON/PEDESTRIAN  
SIGNAL MEANINGS  
(R10-3b)



WITH PEDESTRIAN  
COUNTDOWN TIMER\*  
(R10-3e)

PEDESTRIAN SIGNAL EDUCATION PLAQUES



SLIPPERY  
WHEN WET  
(BICYCLE)  
(W8-10 and W8-10p)



HILL  
(BICYCLE)  
(W7-5)



HANDICAPPED  
CROSSING  
(W11-9)



PEDESTRIAN  
CROSSING  
(W11-2)



PLAYGROUND  
AHEAD  
(W15-1)



BICYCLE CROSSING WARNING,  
SHARE THE ROAD  
(W11-1 and W16-1)



BICYCLE  
CROSSING  
(W11-1 and W16-7p)



SCHOOL  
CROSSWALK  
AHEAD  
(S1-1 and W16-9p)



SCHOOL  
CROSSWALK  
(S1-1 and W16-7p)

\* This sign was anticipated for inclusion in the 2003 edition of the MUTCD at the time of this printing.