

HELP SHEET FOR TEACHERS

Napo's Best Signs for Safety: Lesson One – Danger/Prohibition signs

Best signs story

The first film in the Napo series provides a basic introduction to health and safety signs and symbols found in the workplace. It is designed to provide a useful guide for new employees and a valuable refresher for other workers. Different workplace situations are shown where safety signs are important. This film is suitable for all sectors and all levels of employees but especially for young people in training or work experience.

The film is designed to inform the audience about safety signs at work, to promote the importance of respecting the signs, and to learn and identify the meaning of the signs through their form and colour. There are several sketches. Each sketch concerns a work situation where Napo is confronted by the signs that come to life to teach him their meaning and the importance of safety. The sequences show what happens if the signs are disobeyed, and the technical and organisational obstacles against the efficient working of the signs.

EC Safety Signs Directive

The EC Safety Signs Directive (92/58/EEC) on the provision and use of safety signs at work was introduced to encourage the standardisation of safety signs throughout the EU Member States so that safety signs, wherever they are seen, have the same meaning.

The regulations require employers to provide specific safety signs whenever there is a risk that has not been avoided or controlled by other means, e.g. by engineering controls and safe systems of work. Where a safety sign would not help to reduce that risk, or where the risk is not significant, there is no need to provide a sign.

They require, where necessary, the use of road traffic signs within workplaces to regulate road traffic; require employers to maintain the safety signs which are provided by them; and to explain unfamiliar signs to their employees and tell them what they need to do when they see a safety sign.

The Regulations apply to all places and activities where people are employed.

Key terms of the Act

- Safety and health signs: information or instructions about safety and/or health at work by means of a signboard, a colour, an illuminated sign or acoustic or hand signal, or a verbal communication
- Verbal communication: a predetermined spoken message communicated by a human or artificial voice
- Hand signal: a movement or position of the arms or hands for guiding persons who are carrying out manoeuvres which constitute a hazard or danger



This lesson covers the following categories of signage:

Danger – Warning signs

Warning sign – a sign giving warning of a hazard or danger (e.g. danger: electricity)

Intrinsic features:

- Triangular shape
- Black picture with at least 50% yellow background



General danger



Drop



Low temperature



Overhead load



Industrial vehicles



Danger: Electricity

Prohibitory signs

Prohibition sign – a sign prohibiting behaviour likely to increase or cause danger (e.g. no smoking)

Intrinsic features:

- Round shape
- Black pictogram on white background, red edging and diagonal line
- Red part to take up at least 35% of the area of the sign



No smoking



Naked flames forbidden



No access for pedestrians



Do not extinguish with water



No access for unauthorised persons



No access for industrial vehicles



The second lesson of Napo's Best Signs for Safety introduces mandatory signs, emergency signs and fire action notices.