

Signs and safety



Background

Safety signs give a specific message to those who may be exposed to hazards in the workplace. The message may be to **prevent accidents**, signify **health hazards**, indicate the location of **safety and fire protection** equipment, or for giving guidance and instruction in an **emergency**.

The Australian standard covering safety signs regulates the design and use of safety signs. There are seven categories of safety signs identified by colour and shape:



Prohibition signs – these are signs that indicate something that you must not do. They are made up of a red circle border with a line through it, a white background and black symbol.



Mandatory signs – these signs tell you that you must wear some special safety equipment. They are made up of a blue solid circle and white symbol.



Restriction signs – these signs tell of a limitation placed on an activity or use in the area concerned. They are made up of a red circular border, no crossbar, and a white background.



Hazard warning signs – these signs warn you of a danger or risk to your health. They are made up of a yellow triangle with a black border and a black symbol.



Emergency information signs – these signs show where emergency safety equipment is kept. They are made up of a green solid rectangle with a white symbol or text.



Fire signs – these signs tell you the location of fire alarms and firefighting facilities. They are made up of a red solid rectangle with white text.



Danger hazard signs – these signs warn of a particular hazard or hazardous condition that could be life-threatening. They have the word **DANGER** in white on a red background, a black border and black text.



Dangerous goods signs (also known as Hazardous chemicals signs) are defined in the Australian dangerous goods code. They are used to indicate what is in a tank or package and how it needs to be stored and transported.

Overview of the unit

In this unit, students look at different types of safety signs. They match up signs with their meanings, categorise signs according to their type and purpose and look at signs that they might find in a particular workplace. They will also survey an area of their school, looking at existing safety signs and recommend signs that could increase safety.

There are four activities in this unit:

- Activity 1: matching safety signs
- Activity 2: types of signs
- Activity 3: signs in the workplace
- Activity 4: signs at school

Purpose of the unit

- To develop an understanding of different signs that are used in workplaces to help people to work safely
- To develop literacy skills
- To develop teamwork skills

Resource requirements

Activity sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity sheet 1: matching safety signs• Activity sheet 2: grouping signs• Activity sheet 3: signs around the school
Other material or resources	<p>WorkSafe - Attributes of safety signs</p> <p>http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Go to Safety & Prevention → Health & Safety Topics</p>
Facilities and equipment	<p>Projector and laptop</p> <p>Access to the internet – Google Images</p> <p>Colour printer to print off cards with signs</p>

Assessment & curriculum alignment

The activities in this unit are designed to **support** student learning but may also be used for assessment purposes. The activities support the learning outcomes listed in the table below but **may not cover all the elements**. If the activities are to be used as assessment tasks, teachers should **check the relevant curriculum document**, e.g. the VCAL Curriculum Planning Guides, to ensure all the elements are covered and the activity is consistent with the unit purpose statement.

While documentation from undertaking the activities in this unit can be collected to build a portfolio of evidence to be used for the assessment of relevant learning outcomes, students will need to demonstrate competence of a learning outcome on more than one occasion and, wherever possible, in different contexts, to ensure the assessment is consistent, fair and equitable.

	VCAL Foundation	VCAL Inter-mediate	VCAL Senior
Activity 1	Work Related Skills 1, LO 2.		This unit could be used as an introduction at this level.
Activity 2	Work Related Skills 1, LO 2.		
Activity 3	Work Related Skills 1, LO 2. Literacy Skills, R&W, LO3.	This unit could be used as an introduction at this level. Work Related Skills 1, LO 2.	
Activity 4	Work Related Skills 1, LO 2. Literacy Skills, R&W, LO2.	Work Related Skills 1, LO 2.	

Activity 1: Matching and grouping safety signs

In this activity, students consider different signs that they might see in a workplace and why they are used. Students then match pictures of safety signs with the message of the sign.

What to do

Ask students to think about different safety signs that they have seen around their school, workplace, or community and identify where they saw the sign and what the message of the sign was. If there is time, students could take pictures of safety signs that they see outside school.

If students are unfamiliar with safety signs or unable to take photos, you may wish to show students a range of different safety signs using Google Images and discuss the message of each sign.

Discuss the purpose of safety signs, why they are important, and where they might be found.

Divide students into small groups and provide them with the cards in Activity sheet 1. You will need to provide a copy for each group with the cards cut up.

Ask students to match each of the signs with the written message.

When students have completed the task, discuss the different signs and where they might be found in the workplace.

Student roles and responsibilities in relation to the activity

Contribute to class discussions.

Listen to the views of others.

Work collaboratively.

Level of teacher support

Facilitate discussion.

Provide support with matching signs.

Provide support appropriate to the level of VCAL the students are working at.

Cut up cards and laminate them if you are likely to use them with other groups.

Assessment

This is a learning activity. This activity could be used to support the learning outcomes as indicated in the table on page 3.

If the activity is to be used as an assessment task, teachers should check the relevant curriculum document, e.g. the VCAL Curriculum Planning Guides, to ensure all the elements are covered and the activity is consistent with the unit purpose statement.

Activity 2: Types of signs

In this activity, students look at different types of safety signs.

Students group cards with safety signs into different types and think about why they chose to group certain cards together. Students then consider the official categories for safety signs and discuss the purpose of different types of safety signs.

What to do

Provide students with cards from Activity sheet 2. Divide students into groups and ask them to sort safety sign cards into different types. Students may wish to take into account the colour, shape, message or other attributes of the sign. Stress to students that the purpose of this task is for them to think about different types of safety signs and that there are no right or wrong answers.

Once students have sorted signs, get each group to explain what categories they sorted the cards into and what was common about the signs in each category.

Discuss the safety sign categories below and ask students to sort the cards into these categories.

- Danger
- Dangerous goods/hazardous chemicals
- Emergency and exit
- Personal protective equipment (Mandatory)
- Prohibition
- Fire
- Hazard warning

Encourage students to reflect on the purpose of each category of sign.

Student roles and responsibilities in relation to the activity

Contribute to class discussions.

Listen to the views of others.

Work collaboratively.

Level of teacher support

Facilitate discussion.

Provide support with grouping signs.

Provide information about different types of signs.

Provide support appropriate to the level of VCAL the students are working at.

Assessment

This is a learning activity. This activity could be used to support the learning outcomes as indicated in the table on page 3.

If the activity is to be used as an assessment task, teachers should check the relevant curriculum document, e.g. the VCAL Curriculum Planning Guides, to ensure all the elements are covered and the activity is consistent with the unit purpose statement.

Activity 3: Signs in the workplace

In this activity, students work in groups to choose signs that they think might be found in a particular workplace and consider how the signs might be used.

What to do

Divide students into groups and allocate a different type of workplace to each group. Types of workplaces could include: building site, shop, warehouse, office, kitchen, or other type of workplace that students are familiar with.

Using the sign cards provided in Activity Sheet 2, ask students to choose three signs that might be found in this type of workplace.

Ask students to consider why they chose each sign, where it might be displayed and why it is needed. Students should record these details on Activity sheet 3.

E.g. Warehouse



Why chosen: Often forklifts are used in a warehouse to move goods around.

Where it might be displayed: In areas where forklifts are operating and people might walk.

Why it is needed: People can get hurt if hit by a forklift.

Ask each group to share the signs that they have chosen.

Student roles and responsibilities in relation to the activity

Contribute to class discussions.

Listen to the views of others.

Work collaboratively.

Think about and discuss how different safety signs are used.

Level of teacher support

Facilitate discussion.

Provide support with choosing safety signs and considering how they are used.

Provide support appropriate to the level of VCAL the students are working at.

Assessment

This is a learning activity. This activity could be used to support the learning outcomes as indicated in the table on page 3.

If the activity is to be used as an assessment task, teachers should check the relevant curriculum document, e.g. the VCAL Curriculum Planning Guides, to ensure all the elements are covered and the activity is consistent with the unit purpose statement.

Activity 4: Signs around the school

In this activity, students identify safety signs around their school and recommend signs that could be placed in particular areas to make their school safer.

What to do

Divide students into groups and allocate an area of the school to each group e.g. classrooms, outdoor area, toilets, office area, gym etc.

Ask students to identify some of the safety issues in their area.

Have each group survey their area. Ask them to identify existing safety signs and think about whether any new signs could be displayed to improve safety. Students may wish to go through the cards provided in Activity sheet 2 or design their own sign.

Students should write their results on Activity sheet 4.

Extension

Have students carry out this activity in a shopping centre. Students could use a map of the shopping centre to plot where existing signs are and where additional signs could be placed to improve safety.

Student roles and responsibilities in relation to the activity

Contribute to class discussions.

Listen to the views of others.

Work collaboratively.

Think about and discuss how different safety signs are used.

Level of teacher support

Facilitate discussion.

Provide support with identifying safety signs and choosing appropriate safety signs.

Provide support appropriate to the level of VCAL the students are working at.

Assessment

This is a learning activity. This activity could be used to support the learning outcomes as indicated in the table on page 3.

If the activity is to be used as an assessment task, teachers should check the relevant curriculum document, e.g. the VCAL Curriculum Planning Guides, to ensure all the elements are covered and the activity is consistent with the unit purpose statement.



If you are hurt,
this is where
you should go.



Don't smoke
here.



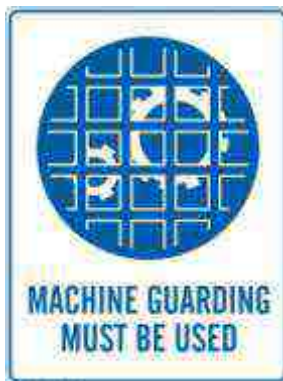
Don't go in here.



These chemicals are dangerous.



This gas could catch on fire.



Don't use this machine without a safety guard.



You must wear gloves.



You must wear eye protection.



You must wear a hard hat in this area.



You should go here if there is an emergency.



Watch out for forklifts in this area.

	<p>If there is an emergency, leave the building here.</p>
	<p>Don't use your mobile here.</p>
	<p>Don't use the lift if there is a fire.</p>
	<p>Don't put your hands here.</p>



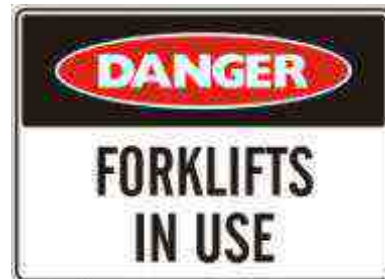
The scaffolding isn't ready to be used.



Be careful. The floor is slippery.



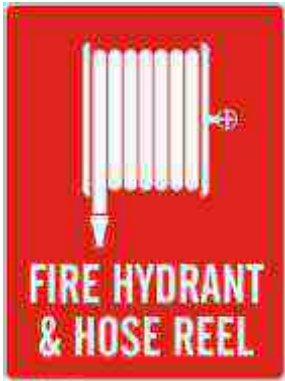
There are dangerous amounts of electricity here.



NO EXIT

**EMERGENCY
EXIT ONLY**




	
	
	
	





Signs in the workplace

Type of workplace:

Sign	Why did you choose this sign?	Where might this sign be placed?	Why is this sign needed?
<p>e.g.</p> 	<p>e.g.</p> <p><i>Often forklifts are used in a warehouse to move goods around.</i></p>	<p>e.g.</p> <p><i>In areas where forklifts are operating and people might walk.</i></p>	<p>e.g.</p> <p><i>People can get hurt if hit by a forklift.</i></p>
1.			
2.			
3.			

Area of school: _____

What are the major safety issues in this area?

Are there any safety signs already in this area?

Safety Sign	Location

What signs could be put up in this area to improve safety?

Safety Sign	Location