

Lesson 3: Road Signs

Goal:

This lesson teaches students to read common road signs. Students will not learn every road sign, because there are too many for one lesson, so this lesson introduces the common signs that a driver will see. This lesson assumes that students recognize some signs, such as the stop sign and the speed limit sign.

Road Signs Lesson: Part A

Review

Remember the “Inside the Car” lesson. Review words for the **most important** parts of the car.

Eliciting Prior Knowledge:

For instructors

Discuss road signs. First discuss American road signs that students already know. Then discuss signs in various other countries/home countries of the students. Discuss similarities and differences students have found between signs they are more familiar with and those in the United States.

To be given to students

List the road signs you already know. Describe differences between American road signs and signs from your home country.




Vocabulary:

Here, again emphasize that these are but a small portion of the road signs a driver is likely to interact with on the road. While these are some of the more common signs, there are many more. Note that students can find more signs in a driver’s manual.

Mae gets in her car for a drive. She is driving in a new town, so she pays close attention to the road signs. She first sees a **yield sign**, so she slows down and checks for competing traffic. She lets two cars pass, then turns onto a **one way street**. She comes to a red light and wants to take a right, but sees a **no turn on red sign**. Therefore, she waits for the light to turn green. She enters a **school zone**, where she slows her car to 20 miles per hour, and then prepares to enter a **circular intersection** (a rotary). She pauses at a **railroad**, navigates a **work zone** and takes a short **detour**

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around construction. Finally, she gets on the highway and navigates the **highway signs** toward Northampton.

<p><u>Yield:</u> Slow down and be prepared to stop. Let vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians with the right-of-way go before you proceed. You must come to a complete stop if traffic conditions require it.</p>	 A red equilateral triangle pointing downwards with a white border and the word "YIELD" in red capital letters in the center.
<p><u>One Way:</u> Traffic on this roadway must move only in the direction of the arrow.</p>	 A rectangular white sign with a black border, the words "ONE WAY" in black capital letters, and a black arrow pointing to the right.
<p><u>No Turn On Red:</u> This sign prohibits drivers from making a turn during a red light. In some intersections, turning right while at a red light is allowed but if this sign is present, you must wait for a green light to make any turn.</p>	 A rectangular white sign with a black border, a red circle with a diagonal slash over a black right-turn arrow, and the words "ON RED" in black capital letters at the bottom.

School Zone Ahead:

This sign warns that you are entering a school zone. The speed limit around a school that's in session is 20mph. Slow down and proceed with caution.



Circular Intersection Ahead:

This sign indicates that a circular intersection (such as a roundabout or rotary) is ahead. In a roundabout or rotary, all traffic moves counterclockwise around a central island.



Railroad:

This sign gives advance warning sign for a railroad crossing ahead. These signs are typically placed 350-500 feet ahead of a railroad crossing. Watch out for warning signals and approaching trains. Slow down and prepare to stop.



Work Zone:

This sign indicates that you are entering a work zone. Be aware of workers, work vehicles, or changes to the normal road that may be on the route. Fines are usually increased in work zones, so be aware of your speed.



Maintenance Ahead:

This sign indicates that road construction or maintenance activities are in progress and there are most likely workers on the road. You must slow down, use caution, and if possible, change lanes to keep your distance from the workers.



Detour:

This sign indicates that a route different from the normal one is in use, such as a detour directing traffic down a side street rather than the main road.



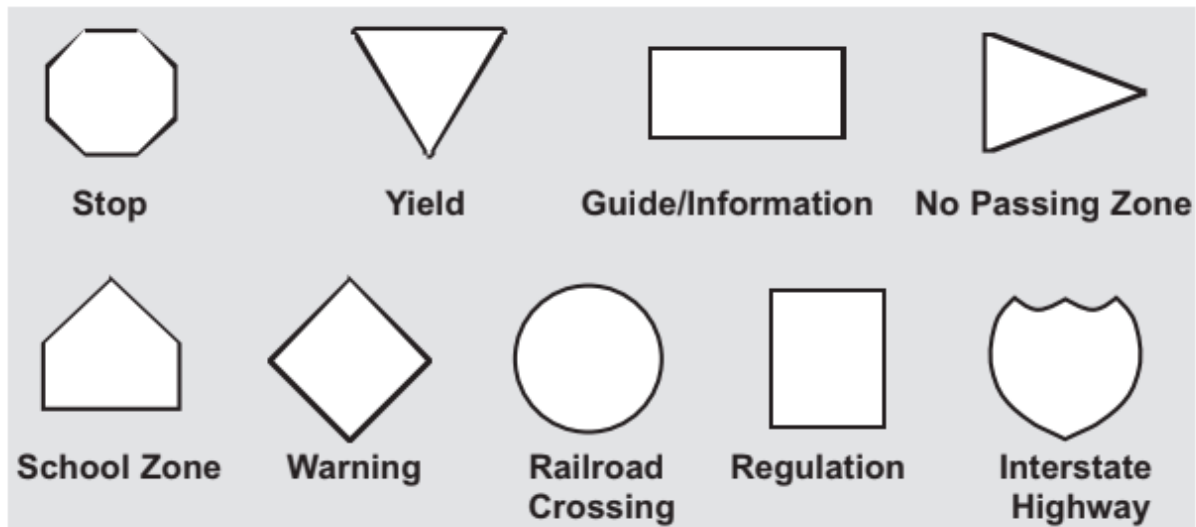
Highway Sign:

This sign indicates that you are approaching an interchange. This sign shows various pieces of information. The left side indicates the road straight ahead continues north, on Interstate 93 towards Quincy. The right side indicates an upcoming exit onto MA Route 24 going east towards Brockton.



Useful signage info:

- a) Red – stop or prohibition
- b) Green – direction, shows you where you can go
- c) Yellow – general warning
- d) Black/white – regulation
- e) Blue – motorist service
- f) Brown – recreational, historic, scenic site
- g) Orange – construction or maintenance warning
- h) Fluorescent yellow-green – school zone, bicycle, pedestrian warning



Road Signs Lesson: Part B

Interactive Activity:

Designed by the UMass Amherst/International Language Institute project on Driving in English. See <https://ili.edu/> for more information and contact rlorimer@umass.edu with questions.

This roleplay activity tests students' knowledge of signs by asking students to respond as if driving.

For students:

Sit in your chair like you are driving.

Your tutor will show you a sign.

First, identify the sign. Then, describe and perform the actions you must take in the car.

(remember to use the vocabulary from the "Inside the Car" lesson!)

For independent studying

If you have time this week, review the traffic signs listed on page 85 of the RMV Driver's Manual: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/drivers-manual/download>. Take a picture of road signs that you see around you this week. What is the name of the sign? What is the action it is describing?

Reflection:

Choose the most important signs. Why are they the most important? Which signs are harder to recognize? How do you connect the sign to your driving action?

Discuss any similarities students see in the signs -- for example, did they notice that road work related signs tend to be orange?

Questions:

Discuss any road signs students may have seen while driving or have questions about that aren't covered here. Remind students that more signs can be seen in the Massachusetts Driver's Manual.