

SAFETY SIGNS



The "fatal four"

The "fatal four" of all incidents on construction sites make up 58% of all fatalities. The "fatal four" include: falls, being caught between objects, electrocution and being struck by an object. It is necessary to improve safety on workplaces in order to avoid these common incidents with suitable prevention measures. Construction sites inevitably pose many safety risks, but the fatal four are responsible for most incidents.

Safety signs must be used whenever a hazard or danger cannot be avoided adequately or reduced in another way. Before installing safety signs an employer should examine whether the hazard can be avoided or reduced by collective precautions (precautions that protect everybody) or safer ways of doing the work.

A signboard is a sign that provides information or instructions using a combination of shapes, colours and symbols but excludes information in writing. The symbols or pictograms on a signboard are intended to be understood, independently of the language ability of the worker viewing it.

Some colours and shapes are conventionally used on safety signboards:

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|---|
| Red | for prohibition | ○ | Discs for prohibitions and instructions |
| Yellow | for caution | △ | Triangles for warnings |
| Green | for positive action | □ | Squares and rectangles for emergency and information signs. |
| Blue | for mandatory actions | | |







■ **PROHIBITION SIGNS** are quite easy to understand.

1  Match each of the following signs, given in jumbled order, with its explanation.

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| a.  | No smoking | d.  | No unauthorized entry |
| b.  | No pedestrian access | e.  | Do not extinguish with water |
| c.  | Do not touch | f.  | Not drinking water |

■ **FIRE FIGHTING AND RESCUE SIGNS** are essential in case of fire or potential fire.










2  Match each of the following signs, given in jumbled order, with its explanation.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| a.  | Fire hose reel | d.  | Emergency exit |
| b.  | Fire extinguisher | e.  | First Aid box |
| c.  | Extinguisher location boards | f.  | Direction to take |

3  **Talk to your partner and in turns explain the meaning of the symbols with complete sentences.**









E.g.: *This symbol tells you where the fire hose reel is.* → e.

■ **MANDATORY SIGNS** are signs which give employers information about what they have to do.

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| a.  | Mandatory goggles | f.  | Protective gloves required |
| b.  | Mandatory safety helmet | g.  | Protective clothing required |
| c.  | Mandatory ear protection | h.  | Face shield required |
| d.  | Respirators required | i.  | Wear safety harness |
| e.  | Protective footwear required | | |

4  **Look back at the symbols for a minute and then cover their explanations. In turns try to explain to your partner what each symbol means.**

■ **WARNING SIGNS** warn workers against potentially risky places, materials and situations.

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| a.  | Danger high voltage | e.  | Halt! Emergency stop |
| b.  | Suspended loads | f.  | Operations end |
| c.  | Inflammable substances | g.  | Stumble danger |
| d.  | Operations start | h.  | Sudden drop |

drop: *caduta*
 to extinguish: *spegnere*
 extinguisher location board:
indicatore del mezzo di estinzione
 face shield: *protezione del viso*
 fire hose reel: *lancia antincendio*

gloves: *guanti*
 goggles: *occhiali (di protezione)*
 harness: *imbragatura*
 helmet: *casco*
 load: *carico*
 mandatory: *obbligatorio*


pedestrian: *pedone*
 sign: *cartello*
 stumble: *inciampo*
 warning: *avvertimento*



i.  Vertical distance

j.  Back

k.  Forward

l.  Harmful or irritating substances

m.  Right

n.  Left

o.  Lower

p.  Lift

q.  Stop

r.  Halt

 **5 Listen to the recordings and say which symbols each one refers to by writing the letter in the box provided.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.



Scaffold-related accidents

An estimated 2.3 million construction workers, or 65% of the construction industry, work on scaffolds. Protecting these workers from scaffold-related accidents may prevent some of the 4,500 injuries and over 60 deaths every year – Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS), 2003 and 2004 data for the private sector. In a recent BLS study, 72% of workers injured in scaffold accidents attributed the accident to either the planking or the support giving way, or to the employee slipping or being struck by a falling object.



forward: *avanti*
to lower: *abbassare*
to lift: *sollevare*