

SINGAPORE STANDARD

# **Guide for wayfinding signage in public areas**



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### **Guide for wayfinding signage in public areas**

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## Foreword

This Singapore Standard was prepared by the Working Group appointed by the Technical Committee on Liveability within Homes and Community under the direction of the Silver Industry Standards Committee.

Aimed at improving wayfinding experiences of public space users, this Guide focuses on generic guidelines encompassing common public environments with general considerations of the needs of the elderly. For industries and environments with more specific requirements, the Guide can be used as a basis to expand into a specific set of signage guidelines or manual tailored to meet the needs in these contexts.

While the Guide describes proven implementation best practices, it is neither a comprehensive manual nor a replacement for signage consultants, as each signage environment has its unique condition that requires further expertise knowledge and experience to work around.

In preparing this standard, reference was made to the following publications:

1. ISO/IEC Guide 71 : 2001 Guidelines for standards developers to address the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities
2. ISO 28564-1 : 2010 Public information guidance systems – Part 1: Design principles and elements requirements for locations plans, maps and diagrams
3. ISO 7001 : 2007 (2013) Graphical symbols – Public information symbols
4. ISO 22727 : 2007 (2013) Graphical symbols – Creation and design of public information symbols – Requirements
5. SS 531 : Part 1 : 2006 (2013) : Code of practice for lighting of work places – Part 1: Indoor
6. The international pictograms standard by Todd Pierce (1996)
7. Land Transport Authority – Transit signage design guideline manual (2000)
8. Building and Construction Authority – Code on accessibility in the built environment (2013)

Acknowledgement is made for the use of information from the above publications.

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## Guide for wayfinding signage in public areas

### 0 Introduction

With rising life expectancy and demographic shifts towards an ageing population, the number of elderly users accessing public spaces will increase. While spatial planning is the key component of wayfinding strategies, signage plays a major role in supporting navigation through spaces. This Guide aims to improve the quality of signage elements to better address the wayfinding needs of Singapore's ageing population.

The following urban and societal trends highlight the importance of effective signage strategies:

- (a) Increasing emphasis on social integration as an important component of well-being, the ease of wayfinding in public spaces is an enabler for the elderly to maintain an active lifestyle.
- (b) With rising longevity, more elderly people will need to travel for work, leisure and access goods and services. Shifting household demographics (smaller household sizes, more elderly living alone) means that some of the elderly travel and navigate public spaces independently.
- (c) Increasing cultural diversity among elderly users of public spaces accompanying the arrival of travelers and new residents warrants that signage information should be intuitive and inclusive.
- (d) Increasing population and building density. In heavily built up and complex environments, there may be limited lines of sight to buildings. New building developments may affect line of sight to signs of existing buildings.
- (e) Increasing number of connected interior spaces with complex layouts that can be challenging for location recognition and wayfinding.
- (f) Increasing prevalence of social media. Examples of poorly-implemented signage can be easily disseminated, leading to liability and reputational risks.

The focus of this Guide is to address the needs of the elderly. However, guidelines looking only at this user group without considering other segments of the population would not be appropriate or feasible. Therefore an inclusive approach based on Universal Design principles, which target as wide a range of users as possible, was adopted to develop signage best practices applicable to the elderly and other public space users.

While this Guide is primarily directed towards signage consultants and designers, it can also be used by wayfinding stakeholders in the planning and evaluation of signage implementation.

### 1 Scope

This Guide describes wayfinding signage principles and elements for pedestrians, with specific consideration to requirements for the elderly. It is applicable to wayfinding signage in most indoor and outdoor public spaces.

Practices described in this Guide are generic references and can be adapted to fit specific conditions in each environment.

It is not applicable to the following:

- (a) Safety signs, including fire safety signs;

- (b) Emergency evacuation signs;
- (c) Signs for persons with disabilities;
- (d) Road and carpark signs;
- (e) Areas subject to a regulation which may differ with regard to certain points of this Guide.

## **2 Normative reference**

The following referenced document is indispensable for the application of this standard. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

SS 508 : Part 1      Graphical symbols – Safety colours and safety signs, Part 1: Design principles for safety signs in workplaces and public areas