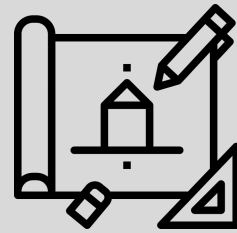


# FIVE STEPS TO A NEW SIGN



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# INTRODUCTION

It is easy to think of your outdoor sign as merely a fixture or part of your facility. But in reality, your sign is much more. It is a marketing tool, serving as a three-dimensional ad for your business. An attractive and attention-getting outdoor sign creates a positive first impression for your business and ensures that people notice your building or store front.

Your sign identifies your business and lets your prospects know about your products and services. Effective signage is crucial in getting prospects to notice your business and also in letting them know they have found you when they are looking for you.

Your sign is one of the first things a potential customer sees, making it one of the most important investments you will make in your business. The purpose of this guide is to make your sign buying process easy by acquainting you with five steps to developing an effective sign:

1

Research Local Ordinances for Signage

2

Determine the Best Placement for Your Sign

3

Decide on the Type of Sign You Want to Install

4

Create a Unique Style and Design

5

Installation and Maintenance of Your Sign

# 1

# RESEARCH LOCAL ORDINANCES FOR SIGNAGE

Before you even start thinking about a concept or design, you need to consult with your local zoning department or county clerk's office to see what is permitted by local ordinances. This varies greatly from community to community. Some areas have restrictions on size, color, lighting, and height of outdoor signs. Restrictions may also vary from one zoning area to another. In some cases, you may be required to mount signage directly on your building or facility. Others may not prohibit businesses from putting up free-standing signs, but may limit the size of the signs that are permissible.

If your facility is part of strip mall or specific development, uniform signage may be required for every business in the complex. To avoid wasting time or money, be sure to check with all parties before getting started with your sign project.

If you are new to the area and are not sure who to consult with, try talking to your business neighbors. In addition to getting the answers you need, you will start building a relationship with your local colleagues, who may provide you with additional insights.

## Did You Know?

A permit or Zoning Certificate of Compliance is required for all signs to control visual clutter and assure signs are safely and accurately installed

Zoning and building permits can be complicated as there are codes that but be followed and formal plans must be submitted, such as:

**Plot Plan** - including distance from sign to structure, location and description of existing and proposed signs, and more

**Sign Illustrations** – including the size and shape of the sign, details of how the sign is attached, anchored, connected, etc., lamp location, and more

**Electrical or Lighting Information** - all electrical signs must be tested and approved, separate electrical permit is also required

**Before any temporary or permanent sign is installed, a permit must be acquired**

# 2

# DETERMINE THE BEST PLACEMENT FOR YOUR SIGN

Once you have a clear understanding of what, if any, sign limitations there are in your area, you can then determine the most optimal placement for your sign.

There is no point in going to the trouble of creating and installing a great sign if it ends up in a place where people do not see it. In that respect, placement of your sign is just as important as its design and style. A well placed sign will generate awareness and interest for your business. Depending on the hours of your business, you may opt for a lighted sign. Lighting on a sign not only increases visibility, it can greatly enhance the overall look of the sign.

In most cases, signs are placed directly outside the business and serve as an invitation to patrons to come inside and see what the business is all about. Your sign may be mounted on an outside wall of the facility or it might be installed as an independent structure. If your business is surrounded by many other businesses, you will want a unique sign that stands apart, yet it should not be in conflict with the aesthetic of the surrounding environment.

Visibility is something to think about as you consider the placement of your sign. Depending on how far your facility or storefront is from the street, a wall-mounted sign may or may not be visible enough to sufficiently promote your business. The size of the lettering you use should also be considered for maximizing visibility. *(We will have more on letter sizing and visibility in STEP FOUR, which focuses on artwork style and design.)*



# 3

## DECIDE ON THE TYPE OF SIGN YOU WANT TO INSTALL

Consideration of your sign's placement goes right along with thinking about the type of sign you want. There are a number of things to consider including the style of your business, the character of the neighborhood, as well as what you wish to accomplish with your sign. Do you primarily need to enhance visibility? Do you want to establish a theme or atmosphere for your business? **The following is an overview of the many different types of outdoor signs that are available:**

### **Pole Mounted Signs**

Highly visible and freestanding, pole signs help to define the skyline of a community. They offer the advantage of clear visibility from afar. Often considered a type of pole sign, pylon signs are typically taller and more substantial.

### **Ground-Pylon Signs**

Ground-pylon signs make a high impact impression and suggest the prominence and permanence of a business. A rugged choice, ground-pylon signs are constructed to withstand the threat of weather and the abuse of outdoor elements.

### **Electronic Message Centers**

Bright and eye-catching, electronic message centers or digital signs are a great choice for attracting attention, promoting purchases or announcing events. Electronic message centers are an exciting and dynamic alternative to conventional static signage, which often go unnoticed by prospective customers, becoming almost part of the scenery. This type of visual display is constantly changing, assuring that electronic message centers are always noticed.

### **What Is the Purpose Of Your Business Sign?**

Typically, signage serves a few common purposes: to promote, identify, provide information, give directions or to raise safety awareness. But it can also do a lot more.

When it comes to your business signage, consider these purposes:

- To **Communicate?**
- To **Market/Advertise?**
- To add **Prestige?**
- To **Entice?**
- To **Direct?**
- To **Inform?**
- To **Entertain?**
- To **Educate?**

# 3

# DECIDE ON THE TYPE OF SIGN YOU WANT TO INSTALL CONT.

## Neon Signs

If you want an attractive sign that gets noticed, neon signs are one of the most recognizable signs available. They are made from glass tubes which are filled with gas and phosphors used in combination to create a brightly-colored light. Neon signs are available in several striking colors and are a great way to get noticed.

## Wall Signs

Wall signs create the look of a business, defining a distinct professional image. They provide an impressive way to identify your facility and brand your business. As a part of the building, wall signs convey a sense of permanency and stability that conveys reliability and trust. Channel letters are a type of wall sign that can be fabricated from metal or plastic. Wall signs can also be designed from logos and applied on storefronts, offices, shopping centers, and other buildings.

## Commercial Awnings

Typically comprised of a lightweight, welded frame over which a fabric or vinyl is attached, awnings can feature your company's name, logo, or a graphic representation of your business. In addition to promoting your business, awnings also provide shelter for those who enter your store, office, or facility.



# 4

## CREATE YOUR ARTWORK STYLE AND DESIGN



For some, designing the look of their business sign is a fun and enjoyable chance to be creative. For others it may seem far more daunting. If you have difficulty in coming up with a design idea, look for inspiration. Make a point to notice the signs in your community. Consider which ones stand out or seem especially memorable. You can also [browse sign images online](#).



When designing your sign, consider it in the context of its environment. Your sign should be very noticeable amidst the distractions that surround it. Contrast and color are important elements that can help you accomplish this in your design. One thing that gets signs noticed is uniqueness. An example of this might be a uniquely shaped sign that relates to your business or products.

Whatever direction you decide to go with your sign design, make sure it quickly communicates your message. Place emphasis on keywords with strong type styles and larger letters. The spacing and flow of the message should be intuitive. Promote fast recognition through the use of graphic design elements in communicating your message.

In selecting your fonts, remember that legibility is crucial. Letters should be clearly distinguishable and easy to read. Trendy, stylized typefaces can be difficult to read, particularly when viewed from a distance. Save the artistic fonts for your logo and go with a more professional typeface for your sign. As mentioned previously, visibility is a crucial factor in sign effectiveness. The following chart will be helpful in determining what the average viewing distance will be for your sign.



# 4

# CREATE YOUR ARTWORK STYLE AND DESIGN CONT.

Letter Height	Maximum Impact Distance	Maximum Readable Distance
3"	30'	100'
4"	40'	150'
6"	60'	200'
8"	80'	350'
9"	90'	400'
10"	100'	450'
12"	120'	525'
15'	150'	630'
18"	180'	750'
24"	240'	1000'
30"	300'	1250'
36"	360'	1500'
42"	420'	1750'
48"	480'	2000'
54"	540'	2250'
60"	600'	2500'



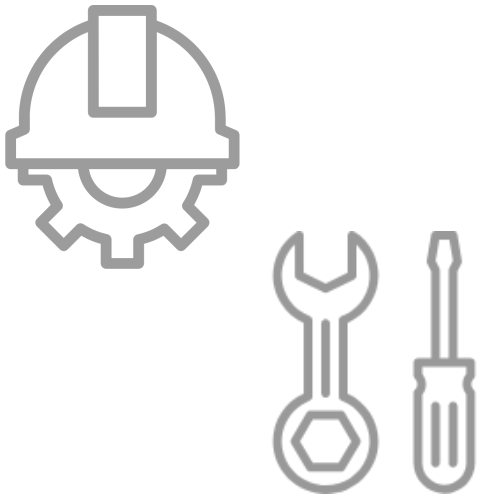


# 5

# INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF YOUR SIGN



The long-term stability, aesthetic value, and safety of your new sign depend on proper installation. A good sign company should provide you with a crew of licensed, insured, and experienced installation professionals to put up your new sign. If you go with a digital display sign or a neon sign, make sure the company you work with is one that is up-to-date on the latest technology and able to provide you on-going support, should your new sign ever need serving.



Consistent maintenance for your sign is essential for keeping up its appearance and extending its service life. This includes proper cleaning. The typical recommendation for sign cleaning frequency is at least once a year. The best time of the year to have your sign cleaned is toward the end of summer, about a month before the time changes. Your scheduled sign cleaning provides an opportunity to change all the lamps in the sign and visually check for other problems so when the holiday seasons come around your sign is clean and bright.



ABC Signs strives to provide its employees with a safe working environment. This responsibility carries over to our installation sites as well.

All ABC Sign crews receive OSHA safety training and are compliant with the appropriate OSHA standards and guidelines.

You can be sure that your sign will be installed by certified professionals who value safety above all else.

# CONCLUSION

ABC Signs offers:

[Awnings](#)

[Electronic Message Centers](#)

[Ground-Pylon Signs](#)

[Interior Signs](#)

[Neon Signs](#)

[Wall Signs](#)

Attentively following these five steps will assist you in getting an effective and attractive sign installed for your storefront, office, or facility. The best way to make these steps simple and worry-free is to enlist the services of an experienced company, who will guide you through the process.



ABC Signs has provided comprehensive sign development and service expertise for [satisfied businesses](#) throughout Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. We offer a wide range of services including custom sign design, fabrication, installation, and maintenance services to meet your needs and budget.

## ABC Signs Advantages

- Serving Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky area businesses for over 40 years
- Family owned and operated
- Extensive training, further education, and aesthetic sign integration
- OSHA trained and certified installation crew
- ABC Signs has a Permit Specialist on staff to assist with permit requirements

[Contact ABC Sign](#) to get your sign project underway!