

CHAPTER FOUR

Traffic Signs and Signals

Traffic signs control traffic flow, making streets and highways safer for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. These signs, which are posted by the Indiana Department of Transportation and local governments, use colors, shapes, written messages, and symbols to help drivers quickly understand the information. Understanding these signs is necessary to obtain an Indiana driver's license.

Traffic Sign Colors

The background color of a traffic sign helps to identify the type of information displayed on the sign. There are seven common colors used for signs.

Red Traffic Signs

Red traffic signs require drivers to take immediate actions to avoid threats to traffic safety. A “Wrong Way” sign is an example of a traffic sign with a red background.



Yellow or Fluorescent Yellow-Green Traffic Signs

Yellow or fluorescent green traffic signs prepare drivers for specific road conditions and hazards ahead, and alert drivers to nearby school zones.

A “Slippery When Wet” sign is one example of a traffic sign with a yellow background.

A “Pedestrian Crossing” sign is an example of a traffic sign with a fluorescent green background.



White Traffic Signs

White traffic signs display traffic regulations that drivers must obey such as speed limits, as well as helpful information such as state highway markers. A “No Turn On Red” sign is an example of a traffic sign with a white background.



Orange Traffic Signs

Orange traffic signs warn drivers of conditions ahead due to highway construction and maintenance projects. A “Flagger Ahead” sign is an example of a traffic sign with an orange background.



Green Traffic Signs

Green traffic signs indicate directions, highway entrances and exits, and distance to upcoming destinations. A sign showing distances is an example of a traffic sign with a green background.



Blue Traffic Signs

Blue traffic signs display traveler information to drivers. A sign showing information about amenities at an upcoming exit is an example of a traffic sign with a blue background.



Brown Traffic Signs

Brown traffic signs indicate nearby parks and recreational areas. A sign showing a nearby state park is an example of a traffic sign with a brown background.



Traffic Sign Shapes

The shape of a traffic sign also indicates the type of information displayed on the sign. There are eight common shapes used for traffic signs.

Circular Traffic Signs

Circular traffic signs alert drivers of upcoming railroad crossings.



Three-Sided Traffic Signs

Traffic signs with three sides of equal length warn drivers to slow down when approaching an intersection and to be prepared to come to a complete stop.



Pennant-Shaped Traffic Signs

Pennant-shaped traffic signs are posted on the left-hand side of two-way roads to warn drivers not to pass other vehicles on the left.



Square Traffic Signs

Square traffic signs display regulations that drivers must obey. Signs that warn drivers to avoid certain actions will often have a symbol surrounded by a red circle with a red diagonal bar. A “No Left Turn” sign is an example of a square traffic sign.



Rectangular Traffic Signs

Rectangular traffic signs display traffic regulations that drivers must obey such as speed limits, as well as helpful information such as state highway markers. Rectangular signs are often posted with pennant-shaped signs to warn drivers not to pass other vehicles, or to pass other vehicles with care. A “Speed Limit” sign is an example of a rectangular traffic sign.



Diamond-Shaped Traffic Signs

Diamond-shaped traffic signs warn drivers of upcoming road conditions and hazards. A “Divided Highway Ends” sign is an example of a diamond-shaped traffic sign.



Five-Sided Traffic Signs

Five-sided traffic signs warn drivers that they are entering an area near a school in which children may be crossing the road.



Eight-Sided Traffic Signs

Eight-sided traffic signs warn drivers to stop and yield the appropriate right-of-way at an intersection.



Warning Signs

Warning signs prepare drivers for upcoming road conditions and hazards. The following signs are some examples of Indiana’s warning traffic signs.



Added Lane



Bicycle Crossing



Buggy Warning



Cattle Crossing



Crossroads Ahead



Curve Ahead



Deer Crossing



Detour In 1,000 Feet



Divided Highway



Farm Machinery



Fire Station



Lane Ends



Lanes Shifting



Low Clearance



Low Shoulder



Merging Traffic

Warning Signs (continued)



Narrow Bridge



Narrow Bridge



Pedestrian Crossing



Playground Warning



Prepare To Stop



Sharp Turn Slow Down



Side Road



Slippery When Wet



Steep Downgrade



Stop Ahead



"T" Intersection



Traffic Signal



Two-Way Traffic



Winding Road



Watch For Ice On Bridges



Yield Ahead

Highway Construction and Maintenance Signs

Construction zones pose dangers both for drivers and for construction workers. Orange highway construction traffic signs warn drivers to be careful when approaching construction zones.



Detour



Detour Ahead



Fines Double In Work Zones



Flagger Ahead



Flagger Ahead



Right Lane Closed



Road Work Ahead



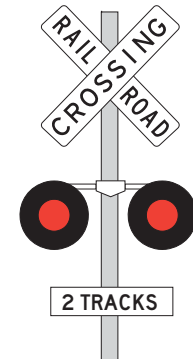
Work Crew Ahead

Railroad Signs

Railroad traffic signs alert drivers of upcoming railroad crossings.



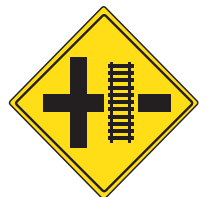
Railroad Crossing



Railroad Crossing



Railroad Crossing



Railroad Crossing

School Zone Signs

Yellow, five-sided traffic signs warn drivers that they are entering an area near a school in which children may be crossing the road.



Pedestrian Crossing



Pedestrian Crossing



Pedestrian Crossing



School Bus Stop Ahead

Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem

A slow moving vehicle emblem has an orange fluorescent center and red reflective borders, and indicates a slow-moving vehicle which cannot exceed 25 miles per hour.



Slow Moving Vehicle

Speed Advisory Signs

Speed advisory traffic signs may accompany some warning signs.



Speed Advisory At Exit



Speed Advisory At Roundabout



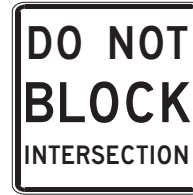
Speed Advisory On Ramp



Speed Limit Ahead

Traffic Regulation Signs

Traffic regulation signs regulate traffic speed and movement and display rules which drivers must obey. The following signs are some examples of Indiana's traffic regulation signs.



Do Not Block Intersection



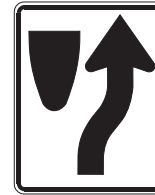
Do Not Enter



Do Not Pass



Emergency Stopping



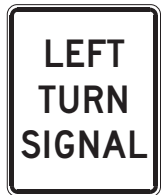
Keep Right



Left Lane Must Turn Left



Left On Arrow Only



Left Turn Signal



Left Turn Yield On Green



Limited Parking



Minimum Speed



Multiple Turns



No Left Turn



No Parking



No Parking Any Time



No Right Turn

Traffic Regulation Signs (continued)



No Trucks



No Turn On Red



No U-Turn



One Way



One Way



Reduced Speed Ahead



Reserved Parking



Restricted Lane



Right Lane Must Turn Right



Right Lane Only



Slower Traffic Keep Right



Speed Zone Ahead



Airport



Bus Station



Posted Distances



Highway Exits



Stop



Stop Here On Red



Tow-Away Zone



Turn Left Or Go Through



Interstate



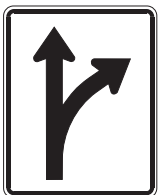
Mileage Indicator



State Road



US Highway



Turn Right Or Go Through



Two-Way Left Turn



Wrong Way



Yield

Supplemental Plaques

Supplemental plaques are sometimes added to the bottom of stop signs to indicate which directions in the intersection must stop.



4-Way



All Way

Traffic Guidance Signs

Traffic guidance signs provide drivers with information about the type of road they are traveling, upcoming highway entrances and exits, and distances to various destinations. The following signs are some examples of Indiana's traffic guidance signs.

Driver Services and Recreation Signs

Driver services and recreation signs provide drivers with information about nearby amenities, parks, and recreational areas.



Accommodations Available



Amenities Available



Bike Trail



Boat Ramp



Camping Site



Food Services Available



Fuel Services Available



Handicap Parking



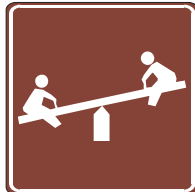
Handicap Parking



Historical Marker



Hospital



Playground



Rest Area



Road / Weather Information



State Park



Telephone Available

Traffic Signals

Traffic control devices such as stop lights and signs are used to control traffic flow and indicate right-of-way at intersections and pedestrian crossings.

Driving Straight Through an Intersection

A green light means go. If you are facing a green light, you have the right-of-way and may drive through an intersection, as long as the intersection is clear of other vehicles and pedestrians.

A yellow light means slow. If you are facing a yellow light, your right-of-way is ending.

A red light means stop. Traffic entering an intersection from other directions have the right-of-way. If you are facing a red light, you may not enter an intersection until the light facing you turns green and the intersection is clear.

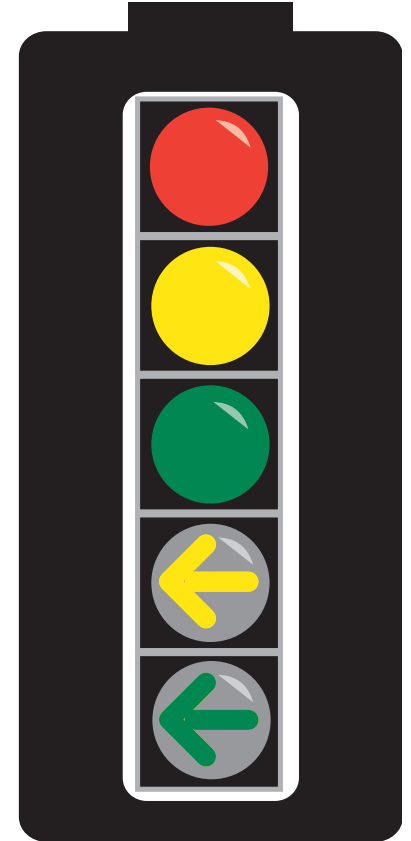
Turning Through an Intersection

If you are facing a green arrow displayed with a red or green light, you have the right-of-way and may turn through an intersection, as long as the intersection is clear. Drivers who are not facing a green arrow must stop.

If you are facing a yellow arrow displayed with a red or green light, your right-of-way is ending.

If you are facing a green light displayed without an arrow, you may turn through an intersection as long as the intersection is clear and you yield the right-of-way to all oncoming traffic. Only one vehicle at a time may move into an intersection to turn left.

If you are facing a yellow light displayed without an arrow, your right-of-way is ending.



If you are facing a red light displayed without an arrow, your right-of-way has ended. If you are in the middle of an intersection when your right-of-way ends, you may turn once oncoming traffic has stopped. If you are facing a red light, you may not enter an intersection until the light facing you turns green and the intersection is clear.

To turn right through an intersection with a red light you must come to a full stop, check to make sure that there are no vehicles or pedestrians in the path of your turn or about to enter the path of your turn, and use the correct lanes.

You may turn left through an intersection with a red light if you are turning from a one-way street to a one-way street. You must also come to a full stop, check to make sure that there are no vehicles or pedestrians in the path of your turn or about to enter the path of your turn, and use the correct lanes.

Red Flashing Lights

A red flashing light at an intersection is equivalent to a stop sign and means that you must come to a complete stop before entering the intersection.

If you are facing a red flashing light at an intersection at which cross-traffic is not required to stop, you may proceed only when the intersection is clear and you will not interfere with the right-of-way of cross-traffic.

If you are facing a red flashing light at an intersection at which all traffic is required to stop, you may proceed only after you have stopped and yielded the right-of-way to any vehicle that is already in the intersection, any vehicle that stopped before you and is entering the intersection, and any vehicle that arrived at the same time as you and is to your right.

Yellow Flashing Lights

A yellow flashing light at an intersection means that you should slow down and use caution when traveling through the intersection. Cross-traffic is required to yield the right-of-way to you. However, you should watch for other vehicles or pedestrians attempting to cross the intersection.

Approaching a Red Light or Stop Sign

If you are approaching a red light, you must stop at the solid white stop line. If there is no stop line, you should stop before entering the crosswalk on your side of the intersection. If there is no crosswalk, you should stop before entering the intersection.

If you are approaching a stop sign, you must stop at the solid white stop line. If there is no stop line, you should stop parallel to the stop sign or before entering the intersection.

Approaching a Yield Sign

A yield sign indicates that a driver must slow down when approaching an intersection and be prepared to come to a complete stop if a vehicle or pedestrian with the right-of-way is approaching from another direction. If you are approaching a yield sign, a vehicle approaching from another direction with the right-of-way should not have to brake to avoid a collision with you.

Approaching an Intersection with No Signal

If you are approaching an intersection with a non-operating signal, you should stop before entering the intersection. After stopping, you should yield the right-of-way to cross-traffic and then proceed with caution.

Before entering a street from an alley or driveway, you should stop and yield the right-of-way to other vehicles.

Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian signals alert pedestrians when they may safely cross a street or intersection.

Pedestrian signals display the word "WALK" or a symbol of a person walking when pedestrians may safely cross a street or intersection. At some intersections, there is a button near the base of the pedestrian signal or stop sign that may be pushed to activate the walk signal.

Pedestrian signals display the words "DON'T WALK" or a symbol of a raised hand when it is not safe for pedestrians to cross a street or intersection. The words or symbol flash to alert pedestrians that the time in which to safely cross the street or intersection is ending.



Walk



Walk



Don't Walk



Don't Walk