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# Australian Standard 2342, Part 5—1980

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**THE DESIGN AND USE OF GRAPHIC  
SYMBOLS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION  
SYMBOL SIGNS**

**Part 5—DESIGN OF SIGNS  
INCORPORATING  
SYMBOLS**



**STANDARDS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**  
*Incorporated by Royal Charter*



THE FOLLOWING SCIENTIFIC, INDUSTRIAL, CONSUMER AND GOVERNMENTAL organizations and departments were officially represented on the committee entrusted with the preparation of this standard:

Australian Council of Trade Unions  
Australian Road Research Board  
Australian Tourist Commission  
Confederation of Australian Industry  
Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs  
Department of Productivity  
Ethnic Affairs Commission, N.S.W.  
Electricity Commission of New South Wales  
Flinders University of South Australia  
Industrial Design Institute of Australia, N.S.W. Chapter  
Institute of Technology, Western Australia  
Monash University  
National Association of Australian State Road Authorities  
Railways of Australia Committee  
Royal Australian Institute of Architects  
Sydney College of the Arts  
University of New South Wales  
University of Sydney  
Victorian College of Optometry, University of Melbourne  
Victorian Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs

In addition a Social Worker and a Safety Superintendent of two industrial organizations were coopted to the committee.

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This standard, prepared by Committee MS/3, Public Information Symbols, was approved on behalf of the Council of the Standards Association of Australia on 21 April 1980, and was published on 1 June 1980.

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**AUSTRALIAN STANDARD**

**THE DESIGN AND USE OF GRAPHIC  
SYMBOLS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION  
SYMBOL SIGNS**

**Part 5  
DESIGN OF SIGNS  
INCORPORATING SYMBOLS**

**AS 2342, Part 5—1980**

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## PREFACE

This standard was prepared by the Association's committee on Public Information Symbols. It is intended for reference by those involved in the design and construction of public information symbol signs.

This standard requires reference to the following standards:

- AS 1743 Road Signs
- AS 1906 Retroreflective Materials and Devices for Road Traffic Control Purposes
  - Part 1—Retroreflective Materials
  - Part 4—Fluorescent Materials\*
- AS 2342 The Design and Use of Graphic Symbols and Public Information Symbol Signs
  - Part 1—General Principles
  - Part 2—Method for Determining the Need for a Symbol and for Establishing the Design Criteria
  - Part 4—Principles for the Design of Graphic Symbols\*

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\*In course of preparation.

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**STANDARDS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**

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**Australian Standard**  
**for**  
**THE DESIGN AND USE OF GRAPHIC SYMBOLS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION**  
**SYMBOL SIGNS**

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**PART 5—DESIGN OF SIGNS INCORPORATING SYMBOLS**

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**FOREWORD**

Symbol signs are used, firstly for the following crucial messages—

- to indicate that an activity is prohibited or obligatory;
- to warn of an approaching danger or of a potentially dangerous situation or environment;

and, secondly—

- to indicate the direction to or location of a facility or when and where an activity is permitted.

Consistent use of the symbolic colours and shapes specified in this standard will eventually reduce the teaching and learning process necessary for the effective use of symbol signs to the meaning of the symbol itself.

It should be noted that, although the triangle has been nominated as an acceptable alternative shape to the diamond for warning signs, use of the diamond for this class of sign is recommended for the following reasons:

- (a) The diamond has been proved—
  - (i) to be capable of accommodating a symbol 17 percent larger than can a triangle of equal area; and
  - (ii) to have a recognition range of 10 percent longer than that of the triangle.
- (b) Consistent use of the diamond will avoid possible risk of misinterpretation.

Use of the triangle is therefore to be discouraged but, should it be adopted as the more appropriate of the two for use in a particular environment, then it must be used consistently by those organizations or persons responsible for symbol signs in that environment.

**NOTE:** This inconsistency in the standard was agreed to as road sign research indicates that the colour code has proved to be more efficient than the shape in the visual separability it provided. See Zuniga, Jose M. (International Road Federation) International Effort Towards Uniformity on Road Traffic Signs, Signals and Markings—Highway Research Record No 299, Washington DC. 1969, pp 1-17.