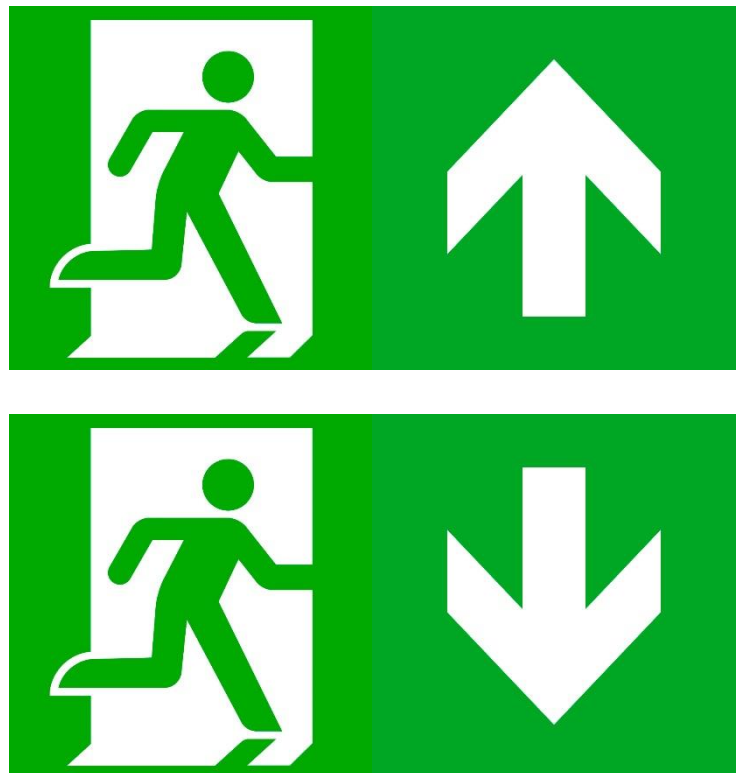


Door signs in escape and rescue routes



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Lighting Division

Door signs in escape and rescue routes ^{1, 2}

The question of whether doors in escape and rescue routes should be marked with an "arrow up" or (as has been practised up to now) with an "arrow down" sign, is currently the subject of debate in the market.

This discussion was triggered by the publication of DIN ISO 16069: 2019-04, "Graphical symbols - Safety signs - Safety way guidance systems" and of DIN SPEC 4844-4:2019-04, "Graphical symbols - Safety signs - Part 4: Code of practice for the use of safety signs" and various associated publications.

The following points should be noted here:

- No standard or regulation in Germany currently requires an "arrow up" sign for doors in escape and rescue routes.
- The scope of DIN ISO 16069 includes low-mounted guidance systems (see DIN ISO 16069, section 1, Scope) but not high-mounted emergency and safety lighting components (according to DIN EN 1838).
- High-mounted components include escape signs provided above doors or mounted beneath the ceiling in accordance with DIN EN 1838 and DIN ISO 16069. The meaning of directional signs/arrows specified in DIN ISO 16069, Figure 1, cannot therefore be transferred to high-mounted escape signs.
- DIN SPEC 4844-4: 2019-04, now superseded by DIN/TR 4844-4: 2020-07, "Graphical symbols - Safety colours and safety signs - Part 4: Code of practice for the use of safety signs" is not an established standard, merely a non-binding, informative guideline (see www.din.de for the significance and validity of a DIN SPEC or DIN/TR).

Other aspects to be considered:

- The European standardisation body responsible for emergency lighting, CEN/TC 169, has rejected the adoption of ISO 16069 as an EN standard.
- The DIN Standards Committee NA 058-00-16 for emergency lighting also rejects the "arrow up" sign above doors in escape and rescue routes.
- The "arrow down" sign above doors in escape and rescue routes has been used in the market for decades and people are familiar with its meaning and safe use (see Figure 1).
- According to DIN EN 1838 (see Figure 1), the "arrow down" sign above doors in escape and rescue routes emphasises and points towards the door to be used and not away from it, as is the case with the "arrow up" sign (see Figure 2).

¹ "Emergency exits" also count as "doors in escape and rescue routes" in accordance with the Technical Regulations for Workplaces ASR A2.3 and the DIN EN 1838 standard.

² This document replaces the ZVEI information leaflet "Escape direction signs" from February 2016.

- The "arrow up" sign above doors leading to stairwells can cause people to go the wrong way within the stairwell. Some of those escaping might go upstairs, others downstairs (see Figure 2).
- There is neither an obligation to replace the signs nor any transition period for doing so, meaning that use of the "arrow up" sign in existing buildings would lead to contradictory arrow directions. Signs on doors in escape and rescue routes would then no longer be clear in their meaning.
- A uniform changeover to the "arrow up" sign in existing buildings/properties would lead to high replacement costs for the operator but with no improvement in safety levels.

Summary:

In light of these aspects, the ZVEI Lighting Division recommends retaining the existing practice of marking doors in escape and rescue routes with "arrow down" signs.



Fig. 1
Existing door sign in escape and rescue routes. People escaping have clearly understood the meaning of the arrow above the door and reacted correctly.
Source: Inotec

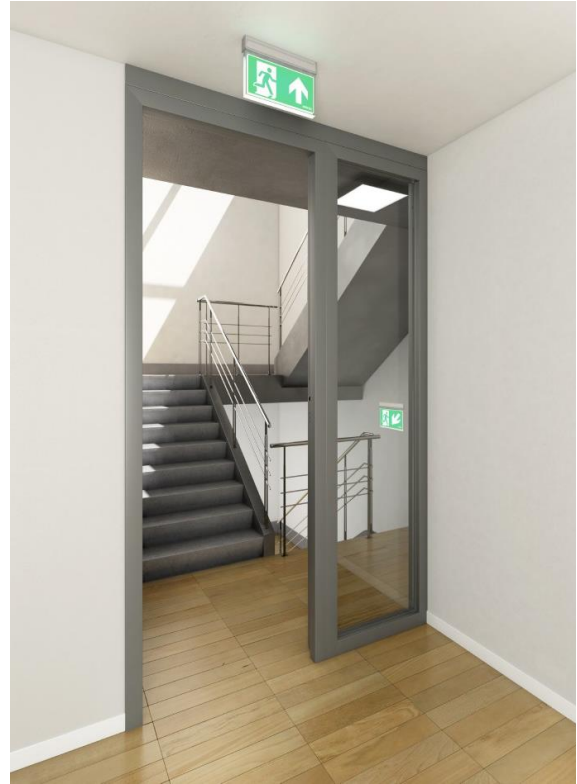


Fig. 2
Sign according to Figure 1 of DIN ISO 16069. Contradictory directional signs which are simultaneously visible in front of and behind the door could cause those escaping to go the wrong way.
Source: Inotec



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