Sign Planner
ADA Sign Guidelines

QUICK REFERENCE · UPDATED NOVEMBER 2026

REFERENCES

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, §703 Signs
ada.gov/law-and-regs/design-standards/2010-stds

Guide to the ADA Standards, Ch. 7 Signs
access-board.gov/ada/guides/chapter-7-signs

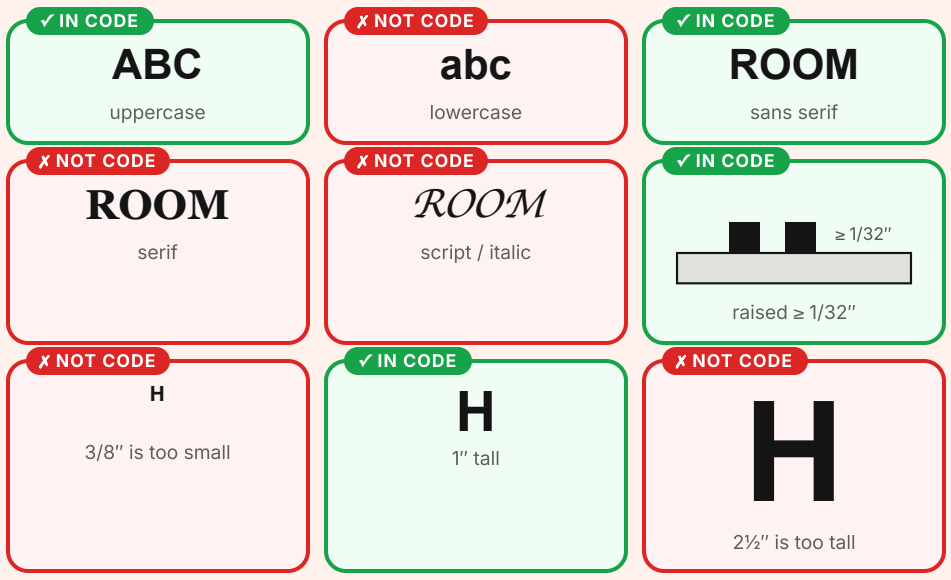
California Building Code 11B-703.7.2.6 (restroom symbols, California only)
corada.com/documents/2022CBCPG/11b-703-7-2-symbols

RAISED CHARACTERS

Which signs: permanent rooms and spaces (§216.2)

1. Letters are **raised 1/32″ minimum** above their background. §703.2.1
2. Letters are **uppercase**. §703.2.2
3. **Sans serif**. No italic, oblique, script or highly decorative styles. §703.2.3
4. The width of "O" is **55% to 110%** of the height of "I". §703.2.4
5. Character height is **5/8″ minimum to 2″ maximum** (1/2″ minimum when a separate visual copy is provided). §703.2.5
6. Stroke of "I" is **15% of the height** maximum. §703.2.6

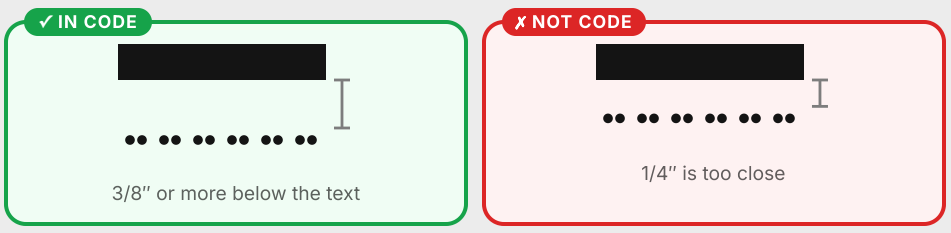
EXAMPLES

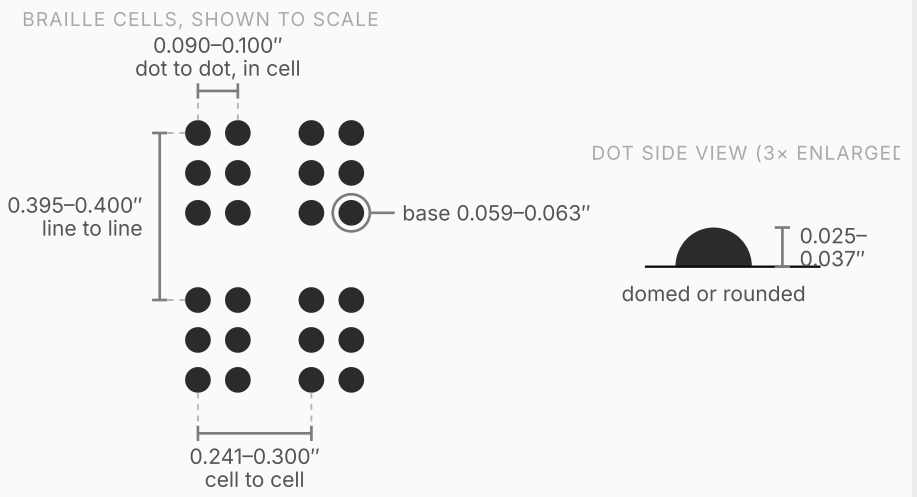


BRAILLE

Duplicates the raised text

1. Braille is **contracted (Grade 2)**. §703.3
2. Dots are **domed or rounded**: base 0.059–0.063″, height 0.025–0.037″. Table 703.3.1
3. Dot spacing: **0.090–0.100″** within a cell, **0.241–0.300″** cell to cell, **0.395–0.400″** row to row. Table 703.3.1
4. Use the capital indicator **only** before the first word of a sentence, proper nouns and names, single letters, initials and acronyms. §703.3.1
5. Braille sits **below the text**; with several lines, below all of them. §703.3.2



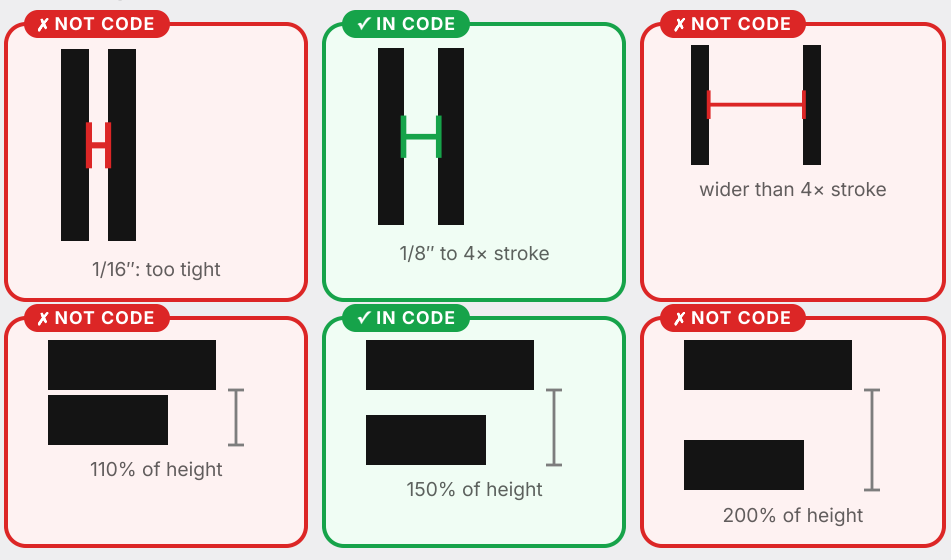


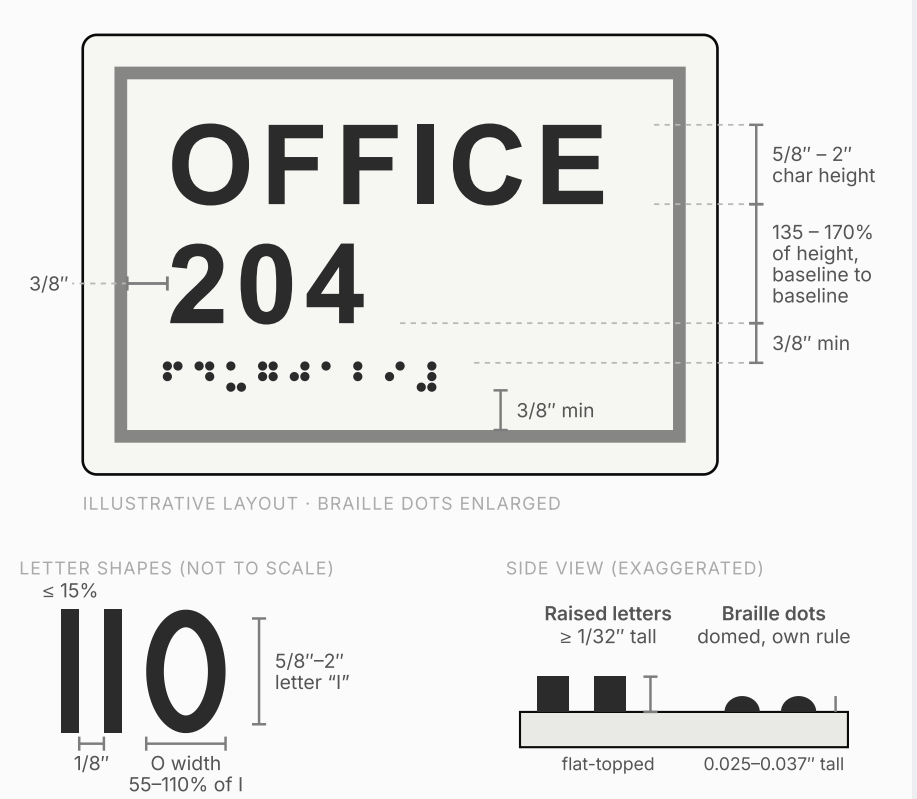
SPACING: CHARACTERS, LINES & BORDERS

1. Between letters: **1/8″ minimum** to **4× the stroke width** maximum, measured between the closest points, excluding word spaces. §703.2.7
2. Between lines: baseline to baseline is **135% to 170%** of the character height. §703.2.8
3. Braille is **3/8″ minimum** from other tactile characters and from raised borders and decorative elements. §703.3.2
4. Raised characters are **3/8″ minimum** from raised borders and decorative elements. §703.2.7

Plaque edge: the ADA sets no margin from raised text to the edge of a plain plaque. Any other margin is a shop habit or a local rule.

EXAMPLES

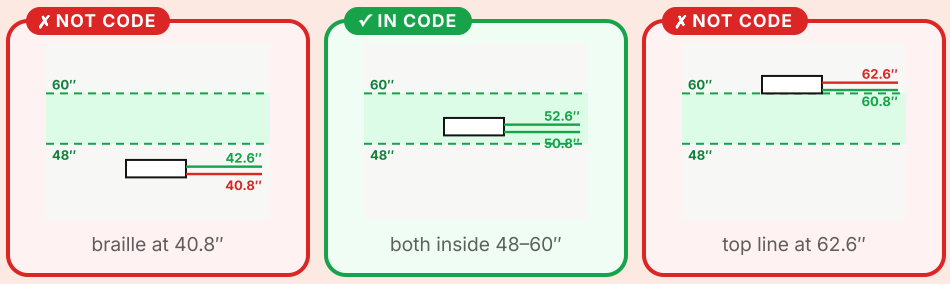




MOUNTING HEIGHT

1. **48″ minimum** to the baseline of the **lowest tactile character** (the bottom of the braille). §703.4.1
2. **60″ maximum** to the baseline of the **highest tactile character** (the top line of raised text). §703.4.1

EXAMPLES (HEIGHTS ABOVE THE FINISHED FLOOR)



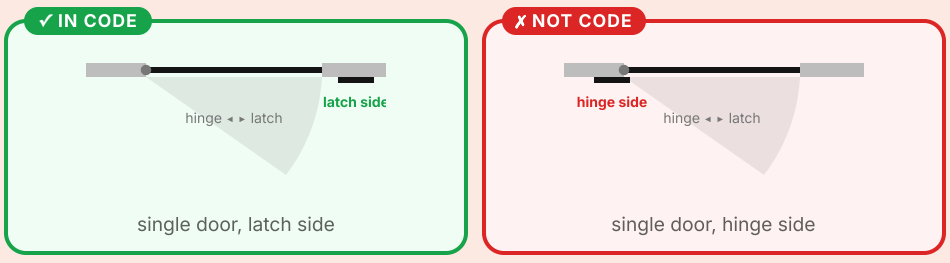
MOUNTING LOCATION

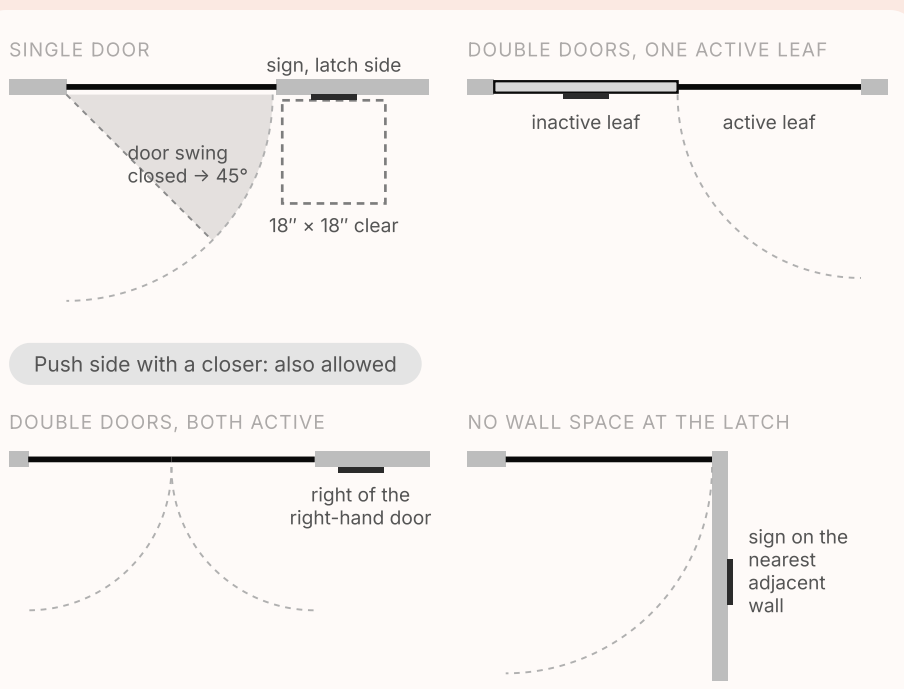
Top-down views

1. **Single door:** alongside, on the **latch side**. §703.4.2
2. **Double doors, one active leaf:** on the **inactive leaf**. §703.4.2
3. **Both leaves active:** right of the right-hand door. §703.4.2
4. **No wall space** at the latch: the nearest adjacent wall. §703.4.2
5. **18″ × 18″ clear floor space** centered on the text, beyond the door swing (closed to 45°). §703.4.2
6. Allowed on the **push side** of a door with a closer and no hold-open. §703.4.2

The ADA gives no fixed distance from the door frame to the sign. Location is set by the latch side and the clear floor space.

EXAMPLES

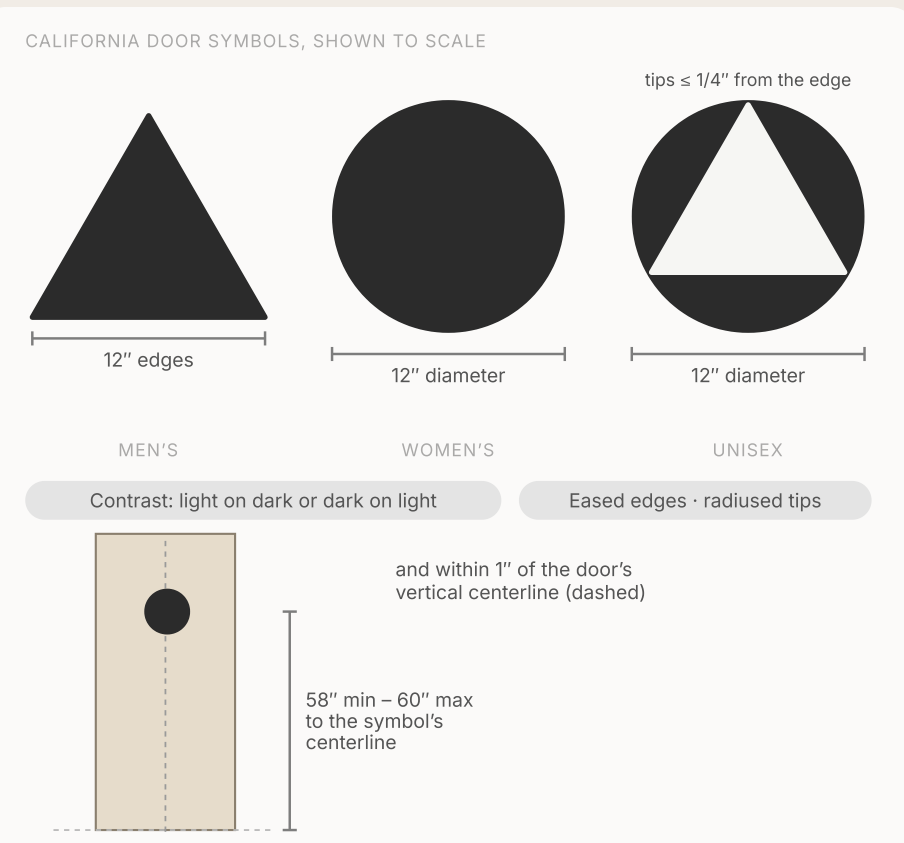




RESTROOM DOOR SYMBOLS

California only · not a federal ADA rule

1. **Men’s:** equilateral triangle, 1/4″ thick, 12″ edges, vertex up. 11B-703.7.2.6.1
2. **Women’s:** circle, 1/4″ thick, 12″ diameter. 11B-703.7.2.6.2
3. **Unisex:** 12″ circle with a 1/4″ thick triangle (vertex up) inscribed, tips 1/4″ maximum from the circle’s edge. 11B-703.7.2.6.3
4. Symbols **contrast** with the door (and the unisex triangle with its circle). 11B-703.7.2.6.1–.3
5. Edges eased 1/16″ minimum or chamfered 1/8″ maximum; vertices radiused **1/8″ to 1/4″**. 11B-703.7.2.6.4
6. Mounted **58″ to 60″** to the symbol’s centerline, within 1″ of the door’s vertical centerline. 11B-703.7.2.6
7. Gender pictograms are optional, not a requirement. Advisory



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More information, interactive drawings and a drag-to-test mounting height demo:
signplanner.org/blog/ada-sign-requirements

Build code-checked sign layouts in the Sign Layout Generator. Free for 3 days, no credit card required.

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Summary of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and California Building Code Chapter 11B for general information, not legal advice. State and local codes can be stricter; confirm requirements for your project with the authority that has jurisdiction. © Sign Planner · hello@signplanner.org