

CHARACTER SIZE

The viewing distance chart below specifies the size of the type appropriate to the distance at which the proposed sign is to be viewed. Type sizes are calculated to meet the U.S. DOT-FHWA Standards for visual acuity.

The table is used for signs read from approaching automobiles, and incorporates reaction time and advanced sign placement location into the formula. This is used primarily for directional signs. The type size is calculated from the height of the initial capital letter.

This table is only to be used for comparative purposes and general reference. All letter sizes are calculated for people with a minimum visual acuity of 20/40, in compliance with FHAS (Federal Highway Administration Standards).

Operating Speed (MPH)	Detection & Recognition Time (Seconds)	Viewing Distance (Feet)	Letter Size (Inches)	*Sign Placement Distance Single Lane (Feet)
0 - 20	3	90	4	400 / 900
21 - 25	3	110	4	500 / 900
26 - 30	3	135	6	600 / 900
31 - 35	3	155	6	725 / 900
36 - 40	3	180	9	875 / 1300
41 - 45	3	200	9	1000 / 1300
46 - 50	3	220	9	1100 / 1300
51 - 55	3	250	12	1250 / 2600
56 - 60	3	275	12	1400 / 2600
61 - 65	3	300	12	1550 / 2600

*minimum distance / desired distance

SIGN COLOR

Viewer response time is a function of target value and legibility. In turn, these factors are dependent on contrast between the legend and the background color of the sign and on the contrast between the sign and the environment. The primary factors in obtaining a high target value are the size of the panel used and the color of the sign background.

SIGNATURE

HIGH TARGET VALUE

LIGHT TEXT ON DARK BACKGROUND

STREETSCAPES

LOWER TARGET VALUE

LIGHT TEXT ON DARK BACKGROUND