

SIGNALING ON ITALIAN ROADS

Signposts are essential on the roads, especially when driving in a country other than what we are used to. Italian roads are generally well signposted, the asphalt is extremely well maintained and presents no major problems for those who drive there. It is worth remembering that if you intend to drive in Italy, it is essential to carry IDP, International Driving Permit, as well as your driver's license and passport. Remember that the laws in Italy are strict and are for everyone: tourists and locals. My advice for those who are going to rent a car on Italian soil is: respect the signs, permitted speeds and always be equipped with the documents we have just mentioned. **The signposts in Italy are divided by colors, just like in other countries in the world, and each color is specific to certain categories.**

THERE ARE SIX MAIN CATEGORIES OF COLORS



Green background sign – it will always indicate a highway or its direction; It has white letters.



Blue background sign - used to indicate extra urban roads. It also presents the writings in white.



White background sign - used in urban areas and also to indicate hotels, stadiums and airports; they are written in black letters.



Yellow background signs - these are temporary signs and indicate deviation due to works on the track; they also have black letters.



Brown background signs - indicate tourist, artistic and historical points, in addition to indicating city names, camping sites, recreation areas and ecological areas (such as waterfalls, parks, etc.). The letters on the plates are white.



Black background signs – they are used to indicate industrial areas, artisanal product areas and shopping centers in the urban periphery. The letters are yellow.

OBS: The signs that indicate the road identification have a green background if they indicate European routes or highways, while those with a blue background indicate for state, regional or provincial roads or suburban roads;

OTHER SIGNS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS:



Notification of urban intersection - with white background and black letters, it shows an arrow that goes ahead and another that indicates an exit to an exit of the highway.



Warning of a rotating urban intersection - also with white background and black letters, it shows the approach of a roundabout on the road and it indicates the possible directions in the various branches of the exit with accesses on the right and on the left. TIP: BE CAREFUL WITH PREFERENCES! If in doubt, STOP and wait before proceeding.



Notification of extra urban intersection - with blue background and written in white, it shows the approach of an intersection on an extra urban road and it indicates the directions for exits.



Crossroads warning with extra urban canalization - with a blue background and white letters, it indicates an intersection on the left and or right. TIP: Be careful when entering, there are not always signal lights.



Interstate intersection for the highway branch - Green sign with white letters, it shows the approach of an exit on a highway and indicates the directions.



'Bridge' warning over several exits on a highway - can be in various colors and indicate distances, highways and exits.

SPECIFIC SIGNS



Highway indication



Highway connection



Tunnel/ International highway connection (Traforo Internazionale)



State Road (Strada Statale)



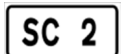
It identifies a new ANAS road (Azienda Nazionale Autonoma Delle Strade - National Autonomous Road Company)



Regional road (Strada Regionale)



Provincial road (Strada Provinciale)



Extra-urban Municipal road (Strada Comunale)



European road (Strada Europea)

DISTANCE MILEAGE SIGNS

The signs indicating the regressive distances to the cities are shown below; always remembering that such signs are presented in different colors (according to the information they pass ... remember the colors of the signs at the beginning of the post? So!) and they also have Roman numbers in some cases.



ITINERARY INDICATION

They are signs that indicate exits, mainly, for tourist points. It indicates the locations accessible through the indicated exit and it is located before each exit to advise on secondary locations and points of public, tourist or geographic interest reachable from that exit. It contains no more than five lines of inscriptions and all of them are related to urban, tourist or geographic locations and are presented in the colors indicated at the beginning of this post.



LOCAL AND LOCALITY SIGNAGE

How do we know when we enter a city? And how to know when we left? Italians have thought of everything! Unlike many cities in the world that have huge signs with 'welcome' or 'goodbye!', Italy has opted for something more discreet. (NOTE: yes! There are some cities that have those huge signs, but on the road, it's usually the small ones that do the job!)



White with black writing, the sign indicates the beginning of the inhabited center of a city.



It shows the start of a smaller city as a fraction or remote location of the municipal concentric. ATTENTION: when this sign appears, the speed limit is 50 km / h and it is not allowed to use acoustic signals (horn, for example!). So stay tuned!



The red stripe on the sign indicates the end of an inhabited center and may or may not be accompanied by the confirmation sign that shows the distance from the locations shown there. ATTENTION: the end of the inhabited center does NOT mean the END of the LOCAL TRAFFIC RULES, as a maximum speed of 50 km / h!

The following signs indicate the beginning and end of the province and region; according to the colors it indicates if it is the end by the highway and / or by regional roads.



THE SIGNS THAT INDICATE HIGHWAY AND LOCATION ARE:



It indicates highway



It indicates distance from the indicated cities.



It indicates the direction to reach some point of interest, in this case, even the police.

And how are street names shown in cities? The plates are white with black writing. ATTENTION: the white arrow with the blue background indicates that this is an one-way route!



TOURIST SIGNS

As we already said, the plates are brown with white writing. It is also used to indicate the beginning of a municipal area and graphs of, for example, indication of rivers, lakes, among others, such as hotel services, tourist information center and their distances from the point where you are! (NOTE: The white sign with black writing, in this case, indicates the pedestrian area and the name of the River Arno).



DRIVING SIGNS

These are signs that indicate hospital, police station, tunnels, speed limit, among others. Let's see what they are?



Hospital - avoid honking when you see this sign.



CROSSWALK - Watch out for this sign! Not all places have traffic lights, especially in smaller cities; All over Europe, pedestrians have the **PREFERENTIAL** and not stopping for them to pass may result in a fine, especially if you are caught in the act! If you approach a crosswalk and someone is waiting to cross, stop and let the pedestrian cross, okay?



School bus stop area



It indicates place to stop in case of emergency. There is usually a phone number for you to call for assistance.



Pedestrian area. Drive carefully



Dead ends



Recommended speed and end of the recommended speed section.



Beginning of an exclusive area for motor vehicles and end of an exclusive area for motor vehicles.



Tunnel and maximum height allowed



Residential area and end of the residential area.



EXCLUSIVE area for pedestrians. Below the pedestrian sign, exceptions are shown: wheelchair users, guards, police officers and delivery carts operated by one person.



End of pedestrian area



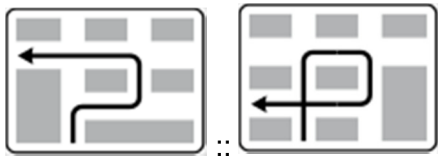
ZTL - Limited Traffic Areas - Watch out for those areas! It is **FORBIDDEN** to travel by car. Below the sign are the exceptions: wheelchair users, guards, police officers and couriers.



Start of zone with maximum controlled speed and end of zone with maximum controlled speed.



Area with cyclists. The sign with the red triangle is generally used on roads.



The signs show an obligation to make a U-turn or go in another direction, indicating that it is forbidden to make the conversion on the main road where you are. WATCH OUT!



It indicates the variation of the return sign on the left and it is used to indicate the presence of a building under or overlapping a road with separate paths to allow the return in the original direction. On highways the signs are green with a white design.



Stop area. On highways the sign is green with white design and, in some places, there is the SOS area for emergencies.



Indication of the lanes' directions. Note that the secondary drawings indicate which types of vehicles can drive in certain lanes and what are the maximum speeds allowed.



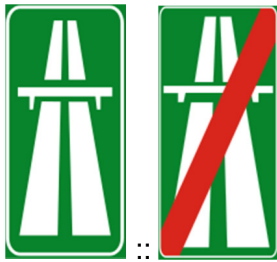
The tracks will join soon.



Other tracks will be available soon.



Pre-indication of the start of a highway.



Start and end of the highway.



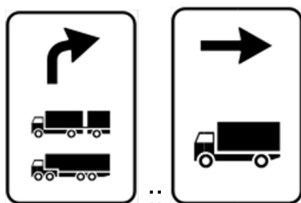
Pre-indication of the start of an extra urban road.



Start and end of extra urban road.



One-way. (Senso unico)



Indication of detour suggestions for specific vehicles.



Indication of maximum permitted speeds; they are usually at the entrance to Italian highways.



Roads open for traffic; the signs with secondary drawings indicate, respectively, MANDATORY use of snow chains and ADVISED use of snow chains. TIP: Avoid driving when it is snowing. It is not an impossible mission, but for those who are not used to it, it can end up being complicated. The roads are slippery and minor accidents are, unfortunately, quite common; so it's better to avoid!



Roads closed and / or open for traffic to a specific location, with mandatory and / or advised use of snow chains.

OTHER USEFUL SIGNS



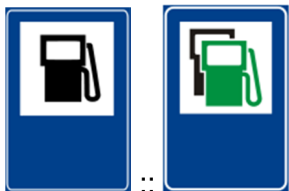
Hospital



Mechanic or location for car assistance



Public telephone



Gas station



Bus stop



Tram Stop (Bonde)



Tourist information center



Hostel



Picnic area



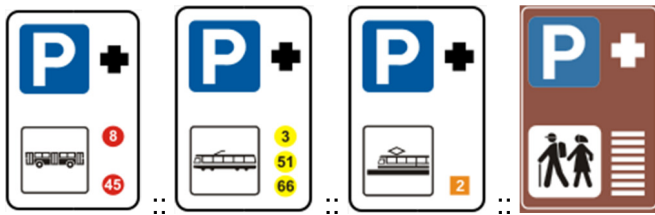
Camping area



Radio information about roads - Indicates the frequency of waves on which they can receive useful news for road traffic.



Hotel, bar and restaurant, respectively



The **P** with a blue background indicates parking. Accompanied by secondary drawings, they indicate (respectively in order): parking with access to buses, parking with access to tram, parking with access to metropolitan or railway lines and parking with access, on foot, to tourist attractions.



Transport of passenger vehicles by train.



Transport of passenger vehicles by train with space for rest.



Transport of passenger vehicles by ship. In Italy some 'ferries' carry out the service, mainly to go to the main islands like Sardinia and Sicily.



Indication of taxi rank. TIP: if you need a Taxi, take it **ONLY** at these points, as the cars here are registered! Do not take clandestine taxis or that of drivers who charge very cheap for a trip!



It indicates specific area, recommended or suitable for receiving trailers.



Service area. These are usually areas where restaurants, bars, mechanics and gas stations are located. On highways the distance between these centers is about 40 km.

CONCLUSION

By following the basic rules and knowing at least the basics of signage, you will have no problem with Italian road law.