

VISUAL PLANNING INFORMATION for Signs & Banners

Lettering Readability

Large, block letters can be seen at great distances easily. When readability is the most important consideration, choose a small number of block letters on only one or two lines. Obtain the visual distance of various letter heights using the chart below.

Artwork Readability

If readability from a distance is not the prime consideration, than artwork or your logo can add an exciting touch. Obtain the visual distance by measuring the total height of your image using the chart below. If your image is detailed, use the height of the letter or most recognizable detail.

Visual Distance Chart

Letter Height	Maximum Impact	Maximum Readability
3"	30'	100'
4"	40'	150'
6"	60'	200'
8"	80'	350'
9"	90'	400'
10"	100'	450'
12"	120'	525'
15"	150'	630'
18"	180'	750'
24"	240'	1000'
30"	300'	1250'
36"	360'	1500'
42"	420'	1750'
48"	480'	2000'
54"	540'	2250'
60"	600'	2500'

This information was compiled from a variety of sources including Sign Builder Illustrator magazine, Jan./ Feb. 1999 issue.

Ranking Color Legibility

1. Black on Yellow
2. Black on White
3. Black on Orange
4. Yellow on Black
5. White on Black
6. Orange on Black
7. Blue on White
8. White on Green
9. Green on White
10. Red on White
11. White on Red
12. Red on Green
13. Green on Red

These are color combinations typically used for signage. A study by the Pennsylvania Traffic Institute at Pennsylvania State University found that yellow lettering has better recognition and legibility. Using color combinations with high contrast and what is aesthetically appealing is the best rule of thumb. What catches your attention as you drive around town? What color combination hurts your eyes? Have fun becoming a master of sign sleuthing!



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