

## Premium Quality Wayfinding Signage in Brass, Stainless Steel and Aluminium



When designers specify superior quality interior wayfinding signage, they often choose metals such as stainless steel. Your client may be a hotel or a developer, looking for signage that impresses and makes a statement of quality. For these projects, etched stainless steel is a good choice for sleek modern signage, and brass is a timeless product for traditional interiors.

Architects and designers will often specify unrealistic designs because they do not understand signage, and because they are spending somebody else's budget. This guide is intended to help you steer your client towards designs that will work well, so that the job will go smoothly and profitably for you, and to a realistic budget for your client. Occasionally there are projects with generous budgets for which the truly exotic will work, but these are rare. For most projects, to prevent wasted time, it is best if you can meet with the client at an early stage, and advise them using your expertise as a sign designer, what will be the best way forward to success.



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### Etched Stainless Steel.

Most of the wayfinding signage that we manufacture is 1.5mm satin stainless steel, etched and infilled one colour, fixed using screws with decorative caps that match the stainless steel. It is very popular for apartment projects, and has a lot of benefits compared to other options. We can make large amounts of this type of sign in a short time, which means the price is reasonable, and delivery times are short, both important considerations. It is practical too, the satin finish making it easy to read, and screw fixing means fitting is quick, and the signs can be removed for decorating purposes, something to bear in mind for hotels and the common areas of apartments which need to be maintained in good order.

Some designers like the appearance of mirror polished stainless steel, but do bear in mind that it is often too reflective for interior wayfinding signage, making the signs difficult to read. If you need to match polished chrome fittings but do not want the reflections, we can apply a subtle satin finish to the background, leaving a polished border.

You may come across some exotic specifications for stainless steel wayfinding signage. Architects like to specify thicker stainless steel. This has implications for price and speed of delivery. We can etch up to 2mm stainless steel sheet very efficiently then cut into finished signs. Thicker stainless steel has to be cut first, then each plate individually handled, and its edges protected during the whole process. It becomes slow and expensive.

Hidden fixings are another favourite, and there are various methods using studs or adhesives, but stud fitting becomes slow, and they are not removable for decorating. Stand-off fixings are also best avoided, especially in corridors, because they will snag on bags and clothing.



Chemical Etching and Digital Anoprinting for the Sign Trade.

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### Etched Brass.

Brass signage will always remain popular for traditional hotel interiors, and it can be fashionable for modern apartment developments too. Like stainless steel, polished signs should usually be avoided because of reflections which make the signs difficult to read. Polished brass can work in larger hotel spaces however. A satin background with polished border will match polished fittings while reducing reflections.

An advantage for manufacturing brass signage is that we can process sheets up to 3mm thick then cut into finished signs, which allows for effects such as the example on the right. This emulates traditional cast signs, but with much sharper detail and without the limitations for graphics imposed by the casting process. Room and apartment numbers work particularly well in this style.

Brass does of course have maintenance issues, but in protected environments such as hotels or apartments this shouldn't be a problem. We can lacquer brass signs for indoor use, but again you should avoid polished brass, because sooner or later, somebody will decide to give it a good clean with metal polish, and this destroys the lacquer. If it has a mainly satin finish, people tend to leave it alone, and an occasional clean with furniture polish is all that is required to keep it in good order.

Traditional brass signs are often requested on wood bases. This can be done, but please bear in mind that having a large number of wooden backing boards made will add a lot of time, and in reality, ordering of wayfinding projects almost never allows time for this. In addition to brass, we also stock bronze and copper which can be used in exactly the same way as brass.



Satin brass with polished border.



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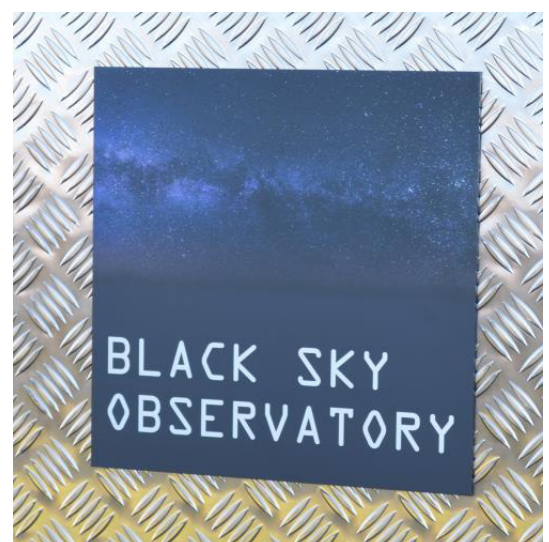
### Anoprinted Aluminium.

Anoprinted aluminium has two very attractive properties for interior wayfinding signage; durability and design.

For more challenging environments such as schools, student accommodation, and social housing, anoprinted aluminium offers an extremely robust product, requiring minimal maintenance. The graphics are created inside the hard anodised surface so cannot be worn away or scraped off, and because the surface is smooth anodised aluminium, cleaning is easy, usually no more than a wipe with a damp cloth. Compared to direct surface printing which is very easily removed, and presents a very uneven and difficult surface to clean, it is far superior, offering much better long-term value for money.

It is a full-colour process, so adding colour for any type of graphic design does not add complexity or cost. This is useful where branding or colour-coding of zones may be required. There is no white, so images blend seamlessly into the surface, but white effects can be produced by introducing a grey tint to the background of the signs.

In addition to excellent physical durability, anoprinted aluminium is also very stable in harsh environments. We have specifications that we use for extreme locations such as marine, swimming pool areas, even in saunas. Some industrial environments will also suit anoprinted aluminium such as clean rooms, medical environments, or in zones that are subjected to high temperatures. The surface will not be affected by water, oils, solvents, or even paint stripper.



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### Useful Information.

#### **Safety.**

Our stainless steel and anoprinted aluminium internal wayfinding signage has been certified to BS 476: Part 6: 1989 + A1: 2009 – Fire Propagation, and BS 476: Part 7: 1997 – Surface Spread of Flame, by an industry-leading independent test company.

#### **Design.**

The largest panels that we like to etch in stainless steel or brass are 800 x 600mm. The largest panels we like to anoprint into aluminium are 950 x 970mm. We can occasionally offer plates larger than this but please check at the design stage.

We have no fixed dimensions that we have to work to. This means that you can set simple design themes, then make each plate to suit the amount of information required. This is more simple and a lot quicker than having to work to fixed dimensions such as are required for slat systems for example.

Always let us know where the signs are going. Environments such as pool areas, saunas, or outdoor areas may require special consideration and we can advise on this.

#### **Quotations.**

Once you have established your design, you can pop your ideas over to us and we will advise if we envisage any problems with design or manufacture before you produce all the individual artworks. To quote a project for you, we just need a list of estimated dimensions and quantities. We usually reply to all such enquiries within an hour.

#### **Environmental.**

Stainless steel, brass, and aluminium are excellent materials to use from an environmental perspective. Not only do they contain a large recycled content, at end-of-life they are highly likely to be recycled again. Also, they are long-life products, so will not require early replacement, which also helps with the environment. We work to very high standards of environmental responsibility, recycling pretty much everything that we can, and selecting materials from sustainable supply chains