



Blade Sign Design Checklist

A blade sign gets a single glance from someone already on foot, at an angle, often from almost underneath it. Work through this list before you approve a design, and use it again at every location that gets the same sign.

BRAND _____	LOCATION / ADDRESS _____	DESIGN VERSION _____	REVIEWED BY / DATE _____
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1 ONE THING TO READ

DECIDE THIS FIRST

- | | NOTES |
|--|-------|
| ☐ The sign carries one thing: your logo or your name
Not the wall sign shrunk down. Tagline, phone number, website and service lists turn into clutter at walking pace. | _____ |
| ☐ If your mark is recognized on its own, the mark carries the sign
A familiar symbol can do the work of the full name on a small panel. | _____ |

2 DESIGNED FOR THE ANGLE

READ FROM BELOW AND TO THE SIDE

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ☐ Bold letterforms and simple marks
Fine script and hairline strokes disappear when the sign is read at an angle. | _____ |
| ☐ High contrast: dark on light or light on dark
Two mid-tones that look great on a screen do not carry from the sidewalk. | _____ |
| ☐ A finished edge
People see the side of the sign almost as much as the face. A deeper cabinet or a clean edge looks deliberate. | _____ |
| ☐ Both faces checked
Most blade signs are double-sided. Lettering in a logo cannot always simply be mirrored on the second face. | _____ |

3 SIZED TO THE STREET

CODE SETS THE CEILING

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ☐ Within what the city allows for projecting signs
Size limits vary by city. Confirm them before the design is final. | _____ |
| ☐ Within what the facade and wall behind it can support
A sign too large for the facade looks like it belongs on a different building. | _____ |
| ☐ Sized for the real reading distance
A busy downtown sidewalk is read far closer than a road with fast traffic. | _____ |



4 PLACED WHERE PEOPLE ALREADY LOOK

SURVEY FROM THE SIDEWALK

- ☐ **Mounted close to the entrance**
The sign and the door should read as one thing.
- ☐ **Clear of trees, awnings, light poles and neighboring signs**
A great blade sign hidden behind a street tree will not get read.
- ☐ **High enough to clear the sidewalk, low enough for the eye line**
Comfortable clearance for people walking under it, still where someone on foot is looking.
- ☐ **Under the canopy in covered walkways**
Where shoppers can actually see it.
- ☐ **Sidewalk photos taken in both directions**
They tell you more about placement than an elevation drawing will.

5 BRACKET AND LIGHTING

DECIDE BEFORE DESIGN IS FINAL

- ☐ **A bracket that suits the building and the brand**
Decorative scroll, clean steel arm or chains each say something different. It is part of the design, not a line to value-engineer.
- ☐ **Lighting chosen, if you are open after dark**
It changes how the sign is built, the electrical work at the wall, and sometimes the permit. Check the one that applies:

☐ **Internally lit**

LEDs inside the cabinet light the face, or just the logo and letters.

☐ **Halo lit**

Letters or a logo stand off the face with light glowing behind them.

☐ **Externally lit**

A fixture aimed at the sign. Suits historic districts and traditional designs.

☐ **Non-illuminated**

Clean and economical for daytime businesses or districts that limit lighting.

CHECK THE DISTRICT FIRST

Some districts restrict internally lit signs. Confirm before anyone falls in love with a design.

BEFORE YOU APPROVE

Sign-off: this blade sign

- ☐ Has one clear thing to read
- ☐ Fits what your city allows and what your facade can carry
- ☐ Has a bracket that suits the building
- ☐ Works as a standard you could repeat at the next location: one approved design with defined sizes, mounting options and lighting versions
- ☐ Reads at an angle and from both directions
- ☐ Sits near the door, clear of trees and awnings
- ☐ Has lighting planned if you are open after dark

APPROVED BY

DATE

Planning blade signs for more than one location?

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