

How road signs evolved / short history of roadsigns

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As a person interested in history and **antrophology**. Just recently on [my last trip to Romania](#) as I travelled a very interesting question popped up in my mind - How it happened that RoadSigns we use on every street highway and practically everywhere on the road came to be. Interestingly now with the standartization of road signs often the most popular road signs are used as a basis for development on other popular prohibit or allowance signs, we read on airports public institutions, pubs and mostly everywhere.

So in short I did a short research on Road Sign History, just to find out once again that the ancients, were wiser than we think. The first road signs probably came to existence with the existence of humanity, however officially, there was no standartization of using signs to point on road locations travellers before it was introudced in the Roman Empire. In Rome a pillars on the roads were placed to point to major road arteries leading to Rome and various important empire city centers.

During the middle ages, milestones pillars were no longer used, but for practical reasons wooden markers placed across european cities instructed tradesman and travellers to major city important centers and were

used to show a general road direction leading to nearby city.

The wooden signs practice had been in use until the first modern road signs erected on a wide scale designed for riders of 'high' and ordinary bicycles in the late 1870 and 1880s. The modern road signs as we know it today however emerged as a result of the first *International Road Congress* meeting that occurred in Rome in 1908.

On the meeting a four standard pictures were selected to note the basic for road signs further development. The need for the meeting was the large increase of roads across European artery cities. The road signs developed on the meeting were *bump, curve, intersection and railroad crossings*. The invention and adoption of cars and the boom of the car producing industry quickened the need for international road sign standard. The intensive work on international road signs that took place between 1926 and 1949 eventually led to the development of the European road sign system as we know it. The signs were quickly spread to America and in 1960, the road signs become universal in America and almost everywhere all around the developed and developing world.

As of today 2012 it can be said road signs exist all around the civilized world. Though most of road signs are identical across all countries around the world today still some road symbols varies from country to country. I remember seeing some very unique road signs during my travelling through Serbia, 2 years ago.