

4. Pedestrian Safety

Crosswalks

Pedestrians have the right-of-way at both marked and unmarked crosswalks.

Unmarked Crosswalks — These are extensions of sidewalks across a road at an intersection. No markings or signs are required. However, precaution should be taken at all times.

Marked Crosswalks — These include crosswalks at intersections controlled by traffic lights, school crosswalks and pedestrian crosswalks.

As a Driver

You must stop and yield the right-of-way to pedestrians who are about to cross, unless they are on the opposite side of a divided highway separated by a median. A double solid line is not a physical separation.

- It is illegal to pass traffic ahead of you that is slowing down or stopped for pedestrians.
- Proceed only when the pedestrians have safely crossed the street or have safely reached the median of a divided roadway.
- No parking or stopping is allowed within three metres of a crosswalk.
- All pedestrians have the right to use school crosswalks.

Crosswalk Signs



School
Crosswalk
Sign



Pedestrian
Crosswalk
Sign

As a Pedestrian

The Walking Figure

This indication permits you to **leave the curb** and enter the roadway. For reasons of efficiency, this indication is only displayed for a relatively short period of time.



The Orange Hand

This indication immediately follows the Walking Figure indication. The Orange Hand provides sufficient time for those pedestrians **already in the roadway** (pedestrian clearance interval) to complete their crossing. At certain intersections the orange hand may flash during the interval provided for pedestrians to complete their crossing and clear the roadway. Pedestrians facing the Orange Hand indication must not begin to cross the roadway, as there may not be sufficient time to do so safely.



When pedestrians are in a crosswalk facing either the Walking Figure or the Orange Hand indication, they have the right-of-way over all vehicles. However, if the vehicle operator does not yield the right-of-way, the pedestrian will come off second best in any resulting collision. Regardless of the pedestrian signal displayed, the safest practice is for the pedestrian to be sure that all approaching vehicles are stopped before proceeding into or across the roadway. In particular, even if cross-street traffic is stopped, pedestrians should check for turning vehicles.

The length of the pedestrian clearance interval is based upon average walking speed. Consequently, pedestrians must cross the roadway as quickly as possible.

Pedestrian Push Buttons

At many intersections controlled by traffic signal lights, pedestrian activity is intermittent. For reasons of intersection operating efficiency, the Walking Figure indication will not be displayed automatically during each signal cycle. To ensure that the Walking Figure indication is displayed and to provide sufficient clearance time to cross the entire roadway, the pedestrian must activate the correct push button. Signs with arrows pointing in the direction of the crosswalk are provided to indicate which push button is associated with each crosswalk.



Pedestrian Safety Tips

The pedestrian signals give you certain rights while you are in an intersection. However, they will not protect you from careless motorists. It is therefore important to be cautious when crossing busy intersections and to follow these safety tips:

- Do not leave the curb unless you are sure that approaching vehicles on the cross street have stopped or will stop.
- Cross the street as quickly as possible.
- Always watch for turning vehicles.
- Do not leave the curb when the Walking Figure is not displayed.
- Always activate the pedestrian push button if there is one present.
- Do not cross at places where a Pedestrian Prohibited sign is posted.



Pedestrian
Prohibited

Pedestrian Corridors

These feature large, illuminated overhead signs, with alternating flashing amber lights on top. Large rectangular bars are painted on the crossing.

As a Driver

- It is illegal to pass traffic ahead of you that is slowing down or has stopped for pedestrians.
- Make sure the pedestrians have safely crossed the street or have safely reached the median of a divided roadway before proceeding.
- No parking or stopping is allowed within 15 metres of a pedestrian corridor.



It is illegal to pass traffic that has slowed down or stopped for a pedestrian.

As a Pedestrian

- You should signal your intention to cross a pedestrian corridor by pushing the control button to activate the warning lights (if available) and also by extending your arm forward. Do not begin to cross unless traffic has stopped or is a safe distance away.

Blind Persons

Whenever you see a blind person near a roadway, drive carefully and be prepared to stop. Often, a blind or partially blind person will raise their cane when uncertain of crossing the street safely. That is your signal to **stop** and give them the right-of-way. Learn to recognize a guide dog by its special harness which allows the person to hold on firmly. Don't startle the animal by racing your engine or honking your horn.

If you drive a hybrid vehicle there may be no sound from your engine to let a blind person know that you are nearby. Exercise extreme caution in this situation.



Watch for members of the school safety patrol. Children are near the roadway.

School and Playground Areas

You must drive slowly and be prepared to stop suddenly when a child is on or near a road, or close to a school or playground. It is illegal to **pass** another moving vehicle in a school area, within 15 minutes of either the opening or closing of classes or at any time when children are on the school grounds or near the road.

Watch for school safety patrols because they indicate that children are nearby. The patrols are easily recognized by their high visibility vests and flags. They play an extremely important role in directing children across streets.