

Outreach

Safety Tips

- Cross intersections carefully.
- When crossing the street, regardless of the availability of signals, cross as quickly as possible. Minimize your time in the roadway.
- Always watch for turning vehicles. Having the legal right of way doesn't protect you from careless motorists.

What is a crosswalk?

A crosswalk is an extension of the road, sidewalk, curb or edge of the shoulder at an intersection. Crosswalks can be either marked or unmarked. A marked crosswalk is any portion of the roadway outlined by white painted markings or a different texture of concrete, such as brick pavers, etc. These markings indicate that a portion of the roadway is designated for pedestrian travel.

How are crosswalks used?

At any crosswalk (marked or unmarked) drivers must yield the right of way to pedestrians, in most states, who are within the crosswalk. Crosswalks are marked mainly to encourage pedestrians to use a particular crossing. Marked crosswalks and associated signing provide visual cues to drivers to be alert for pedestrians.

Where are crosswalks normally marked?

Crosswalks are usually marked at intersections where there is a substantial amount of vehicle and pedestrian travel. Examples of such locations are along school routes and at signalized and four-way stop intersections.

Marking crosswalks encourages crossing at a particular location. For example, school children are guided to a crossing which is usually supervised. Pedestrians are encouraged to use the preferred safer crossing location to avoid crossing where they do not have the right of way.

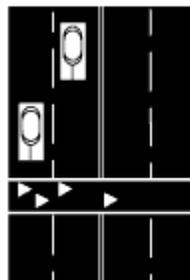
What are mid-block crosswalks?

Occasionally crosswalks are marked at mid-block locations to accommodate greater pedestrian traffic or where there is a substantial distance between corner crosswalks. In these instances the painted lines should be supplemented by signs advising motorists of the crossings. As with crosswalks at intersections, drivers approaching the crosswalk must yield the right of way to pedestrians, in most states.

What causes pedestrian/vehicle accidents at marked crosswalks?

Even though pedestrians have the right of way at marked crosswalks, pedestrian/vehicle accidents do occur. Research suggests that pedestrians may have a false sense of security at marked crosswalks. They may step off the curb into the crosswalk and expect oncoming vehicles to stop. However, drivers sometimes fail to stop.

Another frequent cause of accidents at mid-block crosswalks happens when the driver of a vehicle



nearest the curb stops for a pedestrian who is waiting to cross or who is already in the crosswalk. Then the driver of a vehicle in the lane next to the stopped vehicle may try to pass the stopped vehicle and hit the pedestrian. Pedestrians should be very cautious when crossing in a crosswalk, especially when their visibility is limited by vehicles already stopped at the crosswalk as illustrated.

At all crosswalks, both marked and unmarked, it is the responsibility of pedestrians to be cautious and alert before crossing the street.

Keep in mind...

- While the law assigns pedestrians the right of way if they have appropriately entered a crosswalk, it does not relieve pedestrians of using due care for their safety.
- Any pedestrian entering a roadway outside a crosswalk gives up the right of way to vehicles on the roadway. However, this does not relieve a driver from the duty of exercising care for the safety of pedestrians on the roadway.
- Pedestrians should keep to the right when walking in a crosswalk.
- Drivers of vehicles about to turn into a driveway, alley, garage or private road are required to yield the right of way to pedestrians on sidewalks.
- At intersections where traffic is controlled by signals or a traffic officer, pedestrians must obey the signal and not cross against the stop signal unless specifically directed to go by a traffic officer.
- Pedestrians who have started to cross at a crosswalk on a go signal have the right of way until they reach the opposite curb or place of safety, such as a median.