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## The Rules of the "Road"

Many pedestrian fatalities and injuries are caused by the way people cross the street and their misinterpretation of various traffic control devices such as pedestrian crossing signals. To improve the safety of both drivers and pedestrians, pedestrians are subject to traffic laws—just like drivers:

- You must obey any traffic control device unless otherwise directed by a police officer.
- You must always use the sidewalk when it is available.
- Walk on the shoulder or the LEFT side of the roadway FACING traffic when sidewalks are not available. This will allow you to see and monitor oncoming vehicles.
- When crossing the roadway at any point other than within a marked or unmarked crosswalk, you MUST YIELD the right-of-way to the vehicles already on the roadway.
- Always obey the pedestrian crossing signals.

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## Tips for Crossing the Roadway

### Stop – Look - Listen

• **Always STOP at a safe spot visible by drivers.** Stay away from the sidewalk edge. Stay on the sidewalk until the road is clear of moving vehicles from all directions.



• **LOOK left, right, and left again before stepping off the sidewalk.**

Extend and wave your arm to be visible. If you are crossing in front of a stopped vehicle, make sure that the driver sees you. Also, stop at the edge of the stopped vehicle and keep looking in all directions as you cross. Watch out for turning vehicles and cars passing the stopped vehicles.

• **If you must walk behind a vehicle, make sure it is not backing up.** LISTEN for the sound of engines or check if the backup lights are on. Take similar precautions when walking in a parking lot.



## Traffic Engineering

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## Safety Tips for Pedestrians



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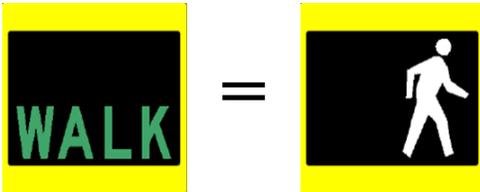
# Crossing A Street at a Signalized Pedestrian Crossing

## Pedestrian Button

Wherever a pedestrian signal has a push button, you **MUST** push the button once to activate the pedestrian signal to have enough time to safely cross the street. If you do not push the button, the traffic controller assumes there are no pedestrians who want to cross the street and does not stop traffic. This is done to reduce the pollution caused by stopping vehicles when there are no pedestrians needing to cross the street.

## The Green WALK

The **WALK** signal indicates that it is safe to start crossing the street. Before crossing, look left, look right, and then look back left again to ensure it is safe to cross the street. Be sure to search for right- and left-turning vehicles.



You will probably not have time to get across the street on the green walk indicator—this is the way the signals are supposed to work. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (Section 4E.10 of the MUTCD, available at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov>) suggests a minimum of 4 to 7 seconds of walk time before switching to **FLASHING DONT WALK**.

The total amount of time to cross the street is known as the “pedestrian clearance time.” This

time begins when the **FLASHING DONT WALK** is indicated. The amount of time needed to clear the pedestrians through the intersection is based on an average pedestrian walking speed of 4.0 feet per second.

For example, on a four-lane roadway, approximately 48 feet across, there would be four to seven seconds of **WALK**, followed by 48 ft / 4 feet per second = 12 seconds of flashing **DONT WALK**.

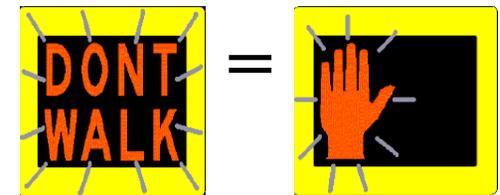
Pedestrians are expected to cross on a flashing **DONT WALK** because if there were 4-7 seconds of **WALK** (letting people know to start walking, also called “perception-reaction time”), another 12 seconds of **WALK** (to let people walk through the intersection), plus another 12 seconds of flashing **DONT WALK** (to let pedestrians clear out of the intersection), there would be a total of 28-30 seconds of crossing time every cycle. This would cause more vehicles to sit idling, producing greenhouse gasses and wasting fuel. More importantly, when motorists see an empty crosswalk, they become more likely to run red lights—the most dangerous traffic event.



San José’s infamous no-pedestrian crossings

## Flashing DONT WALK

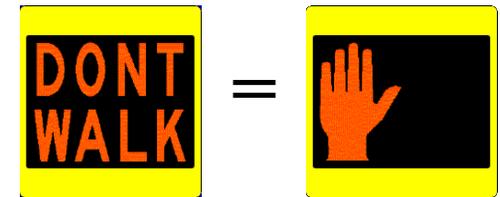
The flashing **DONT WALK** signal indicates that it is no longer safe to start crossing the street—**don’t start crossing!** However, you should **NOT** stop crossing the street. If you have already left the curb or shoulder, you should complete crossing. **Do not turn back!**



The flashing **DONT WALK** signal directly compares to the yellow traffic signal indication. Don’t enter the intersection if you can avoid it!

## Steady DONT WALK

The steady **DONT WALK** means pedestrians are not permitted to cross. Push the pedestrian button if there is one and wait for the **WALK** signal.



### Remember!

**Time to start:** green **WALK**

**Time to walk:** flashing **DONT WALK**

**Time to stop:** steady **DON’T WALK**