



Street Department

901 N. Nelson
Spokane, WA 99202

Informational Handouts

Pedestrian Safety

What are the major types of pedestrian traffic collision?

The major crash types most often associated with pedestrian collisions are:

- Pedestrians darting out mid-block in front of a vehicle.
- Running from one side of the intersection to the other.
- A vehicle turning from one street onto another.
- Pedestrian crossing a multi-lane street.
- Vehicles backing up.

What can a pedestrian do to prevent pedestrian crashes?

Walk Defensively - Be prepared for the unexpected. Don't let cars surprise you even if a motorist does something wrong like running a stop sign or red light, or making a sudden turn.

Walk Facing Oncoming Traffic - When there are no sidewalks, walk near the curb or off the road, if necessary.

Cross Streets at Intersections Whenever Possible - Look in all directions before entering the street. Be especially alert to a vehicle that may be turning right on a red signal. If there are marked crosswalks, use them but do not assume that you are completely safe in a marked crosswalk. Don't cross at mid-block locations because "jaywalking" is dangerous and in some cases against the law.

At Intersections, Look for the Sign or Signals - They will help you to cross safely. Use pedestrian push buttons for crossing protection at signalized intersections that have pedestrian indications. The lighted "WALK" (or walking person symbol) and "DONT WALK" (or hand symbol) signals are meant for pedestrian. If the "DONT WALK" is blinking while you are crossing the street in that direction, continue to quickly and carefully complete the crossing. If there are no pedestrian indications, watch the traffic signals. When there are only STOP or YIELD signs, or no traffic control signs, then look in all directions and only cross when traffic has cleared.

Be Careful in Parking Lots - Pedestrians are supposed to have the right-of-way in parking lots but many drivers don't wait for pedestrians. Parking lots can be more hazardous than streets. On streets the direction of traffic is usually known but in parking lots vehicles might be moving in all directions, including backwards.



Street Department

901 N. Nelson
Spokane, WA 99202

Informational Handouts

Avoid Dangerous Moves - Any movement a pedestrian makes that drivers are not expecting could be dangerous. When leaving a school bus, wait a second before crossing. Drivers don't always stop for unloading school buses; so you stop, look all ways, and then cross when it is safe to do so. Don't step into traffic from between parked cars since this is a sure way of surprising drivers.

Keep Your View of Traffic Clear at All Times - A pedestrian needs to be able to see vehicles around him. Don't block your view with packages, umbrellas, or other objects.

After Dark, Wear Light Colored or White Clothes - Drivers can see you better if you wear light colored or white clothes. Better yet wear reflective clothing or carry a lighted flashlight and swing it back and forth to improve your chances of being seen by drivers. In spite of the relatively small percentage of pedestrian travel occurring at night, more than one-third of pedestrian collisions occur during dark conditions. While you may be able to see a vehicle with its headlights on for a mile or more, the driver may not see you until the last hundred feet or so if you are wearing white clothing. In some cases this is not adequate distance for the driver to react until it is too late. And if you are wearing dark clothing the driver may never see you.

Don't Drink and Walk - Most people have heard this refrain when referring to drivers, but it is also true for pedestrians. In 37 percent of all fatal collisions involving pedestrians 16 years of age and older, the pedestrian had a blood alcohol level above that required for a driver to be charged with drunk driving.

Following all these tips as a pedestrian will greatly improve your chances of safely walking your estimated lifetime average of 75,000 miles.

If you have any questions about Pedestrian Safety, please contact the City of Spokane, Traffic Operations Division at 232-8800.