

# The Minnesota Crosswalk Law

## Key Elements (MS 169.21)

When traffic control signals are not in place or in operation, a driver must stop when a pedestrian is in the crosswalk. **Effective September 1, 2000:** A vehicle that is stopped at a crosswalk will be allowed to proceed once the pedestrian has completely crossed the lane in front of the stopped vehicle.

A pedestrian must not enter a crosswalk if a vehicle is approaching. There is not a defined distance that a pedestrian must abide by before entering the crosswalk, but common sense should prevail. The law states: 'No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into a path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield'.

A crosswalk does not have to be marked to be covered by this law. At an intersection, a crosswalk exists from sidewalk to sidewalk, even if lines are not painted on the street.

When a vehicle is stopped at an intersection to allow pedestrians to cross the roadway, drivers of other vehicles approaching from the rear must not pass the other vehicle.

It's unlawful for the driver of a motor vehicle to proceed through a group of school children crossing a street or highway, or past a member of a school safety patrol or adult crossing guard who is directing children across the roadway and who is holding an official signal in the stop position.

Failure to obey the law is a misdemeanor, punishable by up to 90 days in jail, a \$700 fine or both.

Effective September 1, 2000: Cities will be able to designate crosswalks for longer illumination of "Walk" "Don't Walk" signal lights.

## For More Information

Visit these web pages

### Minnesota Safety Council

<http://www.mnsafetycouncil.org/crosswalk>

### Perils for Pedestrians

<http://www.pedestrians.org>

### Think First

<http://www.thinkfirst.org>

### U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Safety Administration

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>



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# Pedestrian Safety Campaign





## Pedestrian Safety Campaign

We live in a motorized society where being a pedestrian can be risky. According to Crash Facts, published by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, nearly three-and-one-half percent of pedestrian crashes result in death, compared to about one-half percent of all other crashes. Pedestrian crashes, defined as crashes in which pedestrians are struck and injured by a motor vehicle, are on the rise.

The number one contributing factor cited in pedestrian crashes is driver inattention or distraction, with failure to yield right-of-way to the pedestrian cited as a close second. In 1996 Minnesota made it a little easier to be a pedestrian by passing a law requiring drivers to stop and yield right-of-way to pedestrians in a crosswalk, marked or unmarked, where there is not traffic control signals in place. (An unmarked crosswalk is defined by the area falling within the boundary of lateral lines if you were to extend the sidewalks across the street or highway.)

**Pedestrians have the right-of-way EVERYDAY!**

**It's not just Minnesota Nice...IT'S THE LAW!**

# Tips to help keep pedestrians safe

## Pedestrians

- Make sure that motorists can see you. Wear fluorescent clothing during daylight hours and, if walking when it's dark, make sure you have a flashlight and retroreflective material.
- Know what traffic control signals mean. Do not enter a crosswalk while the "Don't Walk" signal is flashing. Be alert to turning vehicles even if the "Walk" signal is on.
- Walk against the flow of traffic. This enables you to see any oncoming traffic. Walking in the same direction as traffic forces you to rely only on your hearing to warn you of approaching vehicles. This also makes you slightly less visible to drivers.
- Joggers are pedestrians too. Joggers should run on sidewalks or pathways; it is considered **ILLEGAL** to run on roadway pavement if alternatives are available. When no alternative is available, joggers should run facing traffic.

## Drivers

Be aware that Minnesota law requires you to stop for pedestrians in any crosswalk, marked or unmarked where there are no traffic controls present.

- Follow all posted speed limits. When near schools, the speed limit is usually lower than that of surrounding roadways. In residential areas, be alert for children who may be playing near the street. Children often dart out.
- Be extra careful around school buses. When red lights are flashing you must stop. Wait a few extra minutes after the bus is gone to make sure there are not children present.
- Elderly pedestrians may not be able to cross quickly or hear you approaching. Give older adults plenty of time to cross the street.
- Be alert when turning corners. If the car in front of you stops at a corner, be prepared for the possibility of pedestrians crossing.

Pedestrian injuries can be prevented. When pedestrians and cars mix, the pedestrian always loses. Take care to be a defensive pedestrian and a pedestrian-alert driver.