

California Driver Handbook - Laws and Rules of the Road

Right-of-Way Rules

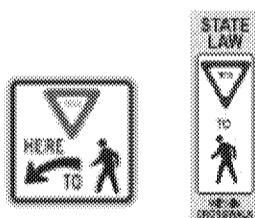
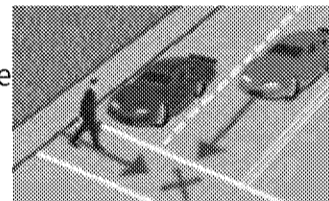
General Information

Never assume other drivers will give you the right-of-way. Respecting the right-of-way of others is not limited to situations such as yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks, or watching carefully to ensure the right-of-way of bicyclists and motorcyclists. Yield your right-of-way when it helps to prevent collisions.

Pedestrians

A pedestrian is a person on foot or who uses a conveyance such as roller skates, skateboard, etc., other than a bicycle. A pedestrian can also be a person with a disability using a tricycle, quadricycle, or wheelchair for transportation.

- If you approach a pedestrian crossing at a corner or other crosswalk, even if the crosswalk is in the middle of the block, at a corner with or without traffic signal lights, whether or not the crosswalk is marked by painted lines, you are required to exercise caution and reduce your speed, or stop if necessary, to ensure the safety of the pedestrian.
- Do not pass a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk. A pedestrian you cannot see may be crossing the street. Stop and proceed when all pedestrians have crossed the street.
- Do not drive on a sidewalk, except to cross it to enter or exit a driveway or alley. When crossing, yield to all pedestrians.
- Do not stop in a crosswalk. You will place pedestrians in danger.
- Remember, if a pedestrian makes eye contact with you, they are ready to cross the street. Yield to the pedestrian..
- Allow sufficient time to cross the street for:
 - Older pedestrians
 - Disabled pedestrians
 - Pedestrians with young children
- Obey signs pertaining to pedestrians. Examples include::



Important: Blind pedestrians rely on the sound of your vehicle to become aware of your vehicle's presence, and the sound of the pedestrian signal to know when they are able to safely cross the street. It is important that you stop your vehicle within 5 feet of the crosswalk. Drivers of hybrid or electric vehicles must remain especially aware that the lack of engine or electric motor noise may cause a blind pedestrian to assume there is not a vehicle nearby. Follow this cue:

- When a blind person pulls in their cane and steps away from the intersection, this gesture usually means for you to go (additional information regarding blind pedestrians can be found here).

Crosswalks

A crosswalk is the part of the roadway set aside for pedestrian traffic. When required to stop because of a sign or signal, you must stop **before** the stop line, crosswalk, stop sign, or signal. You must yield to pedestrians entering or in a crosswalk. Not all crosswalks are marked. If there is a stop line before the crosswalk, the stop line must be obeyed first. **Pedestrians have the right-of-way in marked or unmarked crosswalks.** Although pedestrians have the right-of-way, they also must abide by the rules of the road. If you approach a crosswalk while driving, you are required to exercise caution and reduce your speed to safeguard the safety of the pedestrian. You may need to stop to ensure the safety of the

pedestrian, as outlined in CVC §21950. Crosswalks are often marked with white lines. Yellow crosswalk lines may be painted at school crossings. Some crosswalks have flashing lights to warn you that pedestrians may be crossing. Look for pedestrians and be prepared to stop, whether or not the lights are flashing.

Intersections

An intersection is any place where one line of roadway meets another roadway. Intersections include cross streets, side streets, alleys, freeway entrances, and any other location where vehicles traveling on different highways or roads join each other.

- At intersections without “STOP” or “YIELD” signs, slow down and be ready to stop. Yield to traffic and pedestrians already in the intersection or just entering the intersection. Also, yield to the vehicle or bicycle that arrives first, **or** to the vehicle or bicycle on your right if it reaches the intersection at the same time as you.
- At “T” intersections without “STOP” or “YIELD” signs, yield to traffic and pedestrians on the through road. They have the right-of-way.
- When you turn left, give the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching that are close enough to be dangerous. Also, look for motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
Safety suggestion: While waiting to turn left, keep your wheels pointed straight ahead until it is safe to start your turn. If your wheels are pointed to the left, and a vehicle hits you from behind, you could be pushed into oncoming traffic.
- When you turn right, be sure to check for pedestrians who want to cross the street and bicyclists riding next to you.
- On divided highways or highways with several lanes, watch for vehicles coming in any lane you cross. Turn either left or right only when it is safe.
- When there are “STOP” signs at all corners, stop first and then follow the rules listed above.
- If you have parked on the side of the road or are leaving a parking lot, etc., yield to traffic before reentering the road.

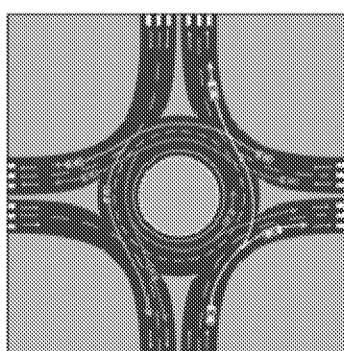
Roundabouts

A roundabout is an intersection where traffic travels around a central island in a counter-clockwise direction. Roundabouts do not have bicycle lanes, so traffic must share the road. Vehicles or bicycles entering or exiting the roundabout must yield to all traffic including pedestrians:

When you approach a roundabout:

- Slow down as you approach the roundabout.
- Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the roadway.
- Watch for signs and/or pavement markings that guide you or prohibit certain movements.
- Enter the roundabout (heading to the right) when there is a big enough gap in traffic to merge safely.
- Travel in a counter-clockwise direction. Do not stop or pass.
- Signal when you change lanes or exit the roundabout.
- If you miss your exit, continue around until you return to your exit. For roundabouts with multiple lanes, choose your entry or exit lane based on your destination as shown in the graphic. For example, to:
 - Turn right at the intersection (blue car), choose the right-hand lane and exit in the right-hand lane.
 - Go straight through the intersection (red car), choose either lane, and exit in the lane you entered.
 - Turn left (yellow car), choose the left lane, and exit.

Multiple and single lane roundabout



On Mountain Roads

When 2 vehicles meet on a steep road where neither vehicle can pass, the vehicle facing downhill must yield the right-of-way by backing up until the vehicle going uphill can pass. The vehicle facing downhill has the greater amount of control when backing up the hill.

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