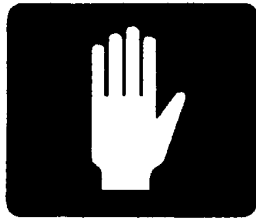


What You Need
To Know About

Pedestrian Signals



TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION
CITY OF LAWRENCE

Pedestrian Signals

Many years ago when traffic volumes were much lower than they are today, pedestrians could take their cues from the same traffic lights as motorists. Life is more complicated today, so it shouldn't be surprising that questions are frequently asked about pedestrian signals which were introduced to improve pedestrian safety.

- *Why do they always change before I get across the street?*
- *Why do some intersections have them and others don't?*
- *Pedestrian signals used to say "walk or don't walk." What do those new symbols mean?*

Why are pedestrian signals available at some intersections and not at others?

Many of the older traffic signals in Lawrence were installed when traffic volumes were much lower and pedestrians could cross safely without separate pedestrian signals. However, it is currently the policy of the City to install pedestrian signals (if feasible) at all new and reconstructed traffic signal installations. In addition, pedestrian signals have been added to existing traffic signals as a part of the City's *Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvement*

Why are the words "walk" and "don't walk" being replaced by symbols?

Transportation engineers world-wide are moving toward the use of symbol signs in place of word signs because they are easier for people to comprehend in a shorter amount of time. Easily recognized symbols also accommodate people who can't read English.

In the case of pedestrian signals, both "word" and "symbol" signs are currently in use. Here's what they mean:



"Walk" or walking pedestrian symbol means that it is your turn to cross, but it doesn't mean it is SAFE to cross.

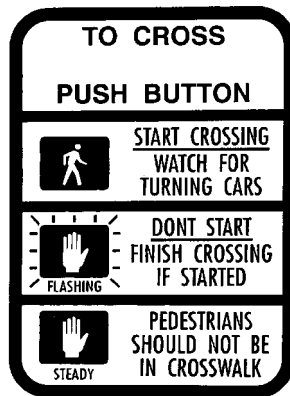


A flashing or steady "Don't Walk" or an upraised hand symbol means it's too late to begin crossing. Don't enter the street, but finish crossing if you have already started.

Why does it always say "don't walk" before I've completed crossing the street?

The flashing "Don't Walk" or upraised hand is a warning to people

who have not yet entered the intersection that it's too late to safely cross the street before the traffic signal changes allowing vehicles to proceed. Signals are timed to allow plenty of time for pedestrians who have already started walking to safely complete crossing the street.



Is it really necessary for me to push a button to activate the pedestrian signal? Can't I just wait for the

Where buttons are available to pedestrians, it's because the traffic signal is timed for vehicles, not for people on foot. If you don't activate the pedestrian signal by pushing the button, the traffic light may not give you enough time to safely cross the street. You only need to push the button once for it to be activated.

Can I count on a safe crossing if I carefully follow the pedestrian signals?

The pedestrian signals assign your legal rights in the intersection, however, it is important to be cautious when crossing busy intersections.

The following suggestions are offered in the interest of safety.

ALWAYS follow these steps when crossing a street:

- Before crossing, stop at the curb, edge of the road, or corner before proceeding.
- **Look left-right-left**, and if it's clear, begin crossing, looking over your shoulder for turning vehicles.
- Cross intersections defensively.
- When crossing the street, regardless of the availability of signals, cross as quickly as possible. Minimize your time in the roadway.
- Continue to check for traffic while crossing. You have the legal right to be there, but that doesn't protect you from the carelessness of some motorists.



Citizen Concern

The City takes our role in solving traffic problems very seriously, yet the ultimate burden of safety rests with you, the motorists and pedestrians in Lawrence. Due to the number of citizen requests per year, we cannot always investigate your request as quickly as we would like to. However, we will respond after carefully evaluating your request. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, REQUESTS OR SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING TRAFFIC, PLEASE CALL THE TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION AT 832-3034.