

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

WHAT ARE THEY?

Pedestrian crossings give an environment for pedestrians to cross the road safely.

There two main types of pedestrian crossings

Uncontrolled crossings

Controlled crossings

UNCONTROLLED CROSSINGS (ZEBRA CROSSINGS)

You have probably used a zebra crossing many times as a pedestrian and with the black and white stripes making them very distinct you can spot them easily. On the approach as a pupil you will need to be able to pick up some more visual clues which as a pedestrian you may ignore. Let's have a look at the following picture:



You can see the black and white posts with the yellow beacon on top (Belisha Beacons). This is probably the first thing that will alert you that there is a Zebra crossing ahead. You do need to be on the look-out for these crossings, because there aren't any traffic lights to tell us when to give way or stop. It's the actions of any pedestrians that determine this. You need to be alert of any activity around it in plenty of time before you get there.

You will also see the zig - zag lines, which mean you must not park and must not overtake the leading motor vehicle, especially one that has stopped at the crossing.

ROUTINE AT THE UNCONTROLLED CROSSING

When you see these clues and recognise there's a zebra crossing ahead, you need to carry out the appropriate parts of the **MSPSL** routine (Mirrors Signal Position Speed Look).

MIRRORS - Check your mirrors. Understand what is behind you and what is alongside you.

Not appropriate to give a **SIGNAL**.

Not appropriate to change your road **POSITION**.

SPEED – ease off the gas to give yourself a chance to see what is happening around the crossing.

LOOK - Scan the area around the crossing and on both sides of the road.

You must give way to pedestrians who have begun to cross the road, and should be prepared to give way to anyone close to the crossing, especially those with pushchairs or wheel chair users.

AT THE CROSSING

If the pedestrian is almost fully across the road, depending on the circumstances, you may only need to slow down on the approach, but not actually stop. If the crossing doesn't have a central refuge, you must give way to anyone crossing from either side of the road, but if it does have a refuge, you treat this as two separate crossings and give way to pedestrians crossing from the left to the centre and from the centre to the left.



Should you have to stop, make sure the car is secure and avoid creeping forwards or revving the engine because this intimidates the pedestrians; you **MUST NOT** wave or invite a pedestrian to cross the road as this can lead them into danger. These basic rules apply to all types of crossings.

When to proceed

You may drive on once the pedestrians are safely across. If you are in a busy area and queuing in traffic, make sure you have enough space beyond the crossing so that you do not stop on the crossing itself.

CONTROLLED CROSSINGS

Recognising the different types of crossings with traffic lights can seem to be a bit tricky to begin with, but there are some visual clues that can help. On the approach look for the 'pedestrian crossing' warning signs - this tells you it's not just a junction ahead. Look for the zig - zag lines; look for yellow or black boxes on the traffic light post - this is what you use as a pedestrian to tell the light to change and of course look for pedestrians waiting to cross. Also, there will be a 'STOP' line.

The most common pedestrian controlled traffic light crossing is the pelican crossing. This is for pedestrians only and is the only traffic light to have a flashing amber phase following red. This flashing amber means you must give way to anyone still crossing, even if there is a central refuge, but you can proceed if the crossing is clear. All the other lights - green, steady amber and red - have the same meaning as they do elsewhere, so you must react and deal with these as you would any other traffic light.



There are some variations of controlled crossings. These are Toucan, Puffin, and Equestrian.

The reason why you need to know the difference is so that you can anticipate the specific potential dangers and act properly at them.

Puffin crossings are pedestrian, user - friendly, intelligent crossings and are usually found on wide busy main roads. They took similar to pelican crossings but these have sensors that provide an added safety feature of detecting if a pedestrian is crossing and holds the light on red. This is followed by the normal traffic light sequence of red and amber; and then green.

Toucan crossing is easy to remember as two can cross. This is because it is designed for pedestrians and cyclists. The added danger is that cyclists travel quicker than pedestrians and therefore if you don't pick up on the clues when approaching and widen your observations they could catch you out, especially if they

make a late dash to get across the road. Look out for clues such as round signs with a blue background showing a cyclist and pedestrian sharing the pavement.

Equestrian (or Pegasus) crossing is found where there are bridle ways for horse and riders. These can be recognised on the approach through warning signs showing horse and riders, fencing around the crossing and the boxes with the control button are mounted much higher up the post than at pedestrian crossings. This is so that the rider can easily reach them. You need to be able to recognise these crossings so that you can adjust your driving. Horses can easily be spooked and cross in front of you even if your lights are on green.

Whatever types of crossing you are approaching you must remember that whoever is using them is far more vulnerable to danger than you are as the driver. Even if a pedestrian is crossing outside of the boundaries of a crossing, you must still ensure that you give them time and room to cross safely.

ROUTINE AT THE CONTROLLED CROSSING

When you see these clues and recognise there's a controlled crossing ahead, you need to carry out the appropriate parts of the MSPSL routine.

MIRRORS - Check your mirrors. Understand what is behind you and what is alongside you.

Not appropriate to give a **SIGNAL**.

Not appropriate to change your road **POSITION**.

SPEED – ease off the gas to give yourself a chance to see what is happening around the crossing.

LOOK - Scan the area around the crossing and on both sides of the road. If there are pedestrians waiting to cross, be prepared for the traffic lights to change to red.