

Bicycle and Pedestrian Traffic Regulations

Summary

| Motorist Responsibilities | Regulation |
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| Crosswalk definition | Any intersection of two or more roadways is a legal crosswalk, whether marked or not. Pedestrians have the same rights in marked crosswalks as in unmarked crosswalks. |
| Crosswalk without signals | The driver of a vehicle shall stop and give right of way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection. |
| Blocking a crosswalk | A motorist may not park or stop in a crosswalk. |
| Sidewalk | Pedestrians have the right of way on the sidewalk. Parking on the sidewalk is prohibited. When driving over the sidewalk at an alley or driveway, stop for pedestrians. |
| Right turn on red | Vehicles turning right on red must yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk |
| Turn on green | A pedestrian who has begun crossing on the walk signal shall be given the right-of-way by the driver of any vehicle to continue to the opposite sidewalk or safety island, whichever is nearest. |
| Bikes lanes | Bike lanes are reserved for bicycles and use by other vehicles is prohibited. |
| Cars passing cyclists | A person driving a motor vehicle shall exercise due care by leaving a safe distance, but in no case less than three feet, when overtaking and passing a bicycle |
| Speed | Speed must be controlled to avoid colliding with any person or vehicle, including bicyclists, on the street. The duty of all persons is to use due care. |
| Exercise due care | Drivers shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrians or bicyclists and shall give any audible signal when necessary. Extra precaution is required for children and any obviously confused, incapacitated or intoxicated person. |



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| Bicyclist Responsibilities | Bicyclists traveling on roadways have all the general rights and duties of drivers of vehicles |
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| Where to ride | Ride with the flow of traffic as closely as practical to the right-hand curb or edge of roadway or left-hand curb on one-way streets. Full lane use allowed when traveling at the normal speed of traffic, passing, preparing for a turn, avoiding hazards, traveling in a lane 11 feet wide or less, avoiding a mandatory turn lane and when necessary for the bicyclist's safety |
| Restricted road | Prohibited from interstate and controlled access highways as marked |
| Passing cars | Allowed to pass on left or right, in the same lane or changing lanes, or pass off road |
| Dooring | No person shall open any door of a vehicle unless it is safe to do so and can be done without interfering with moving traffic. |
| Bicycling two abreast | Allowed when it does not impede traffic. May not ride more than two abreast. |
| Use of bike lanes and paths | Not required |
| Cycling on sidewalks | Must yield to pedestrians. Allowed in the city with the exception of the central business district (bounded by Massachusetts Ave. NW, 2nd St NE-SE, D St SE/SW, 14th St NW, Constitution Ave and 23rd St NW) |
| Audible warning devices | A bell or other device that is audible from at least 100 feet away |
| Helmets | Mandatory for any operator or passenger under 16 years of age. Strongly recommended for all others. |
| Lights at night | Each bicycle, when in use at night, shall be equipped with a lamp on the front which shall emit a steady or flashing white light visible from a distance of at least five hundred feet to the front and with a red reflector on the rear which shall be visible from all distances from fifty feet to three hundred feet to the rear. May be worn by the operator. |



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| Pedestrian Responsibilities | Regulation |
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| Pedestrian control signals | Pedestrians facing a “WALK” signal may proceed across the roadway in the directions of the signal and shall be given the right-of-way by the drivers of all vehicles. No pedestrian shall start to cross the roadway in the direction of a “DON’T WALK” or “WAIT” signal. |
| Stop - controlled or uncontrolled intersection | Pedestrians may cross the roadway within a marked or unmarked crosswalk. However, no pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb, safety platform, safety zone, loading platform or other designated place of safety and walk or turn into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield. |
| Crossing at spots other than crosswalks | If a pedestrian crosses a roadway at any point other than in a marked crosswalk, or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, the pedestrian shall yield the right of way to any vehicle. |
| Pedestrians on roadways | Where sidewalks are provided, it shall be unlawful for any pedestrian to walk along and upon an adjacent roadway. Where sidewalks are not provided, any pedestrian walking along and upon a street or highway shall, when practicable, walk only on the left side of the roadway or its shoulder facing traffic, which may approach from the opposite direction. |
| Diagonal crossing | No pedestrian shall cross a roadway intersection diagonally unless authorized by official traffic control devices. |

Bicycle and pedestrian regulations are available online at www.dcreg.dc.gov under Title 18. Listing of some bicycle regulations taken from <http://www.waba.org/resources/laws.php>.