

Purpose: This lesson addresses the laws, regulations and conventions for operating a motor vehicle around pedestrians. It is designed to help students become more aware of the actions they must take to interact more safely with pedestrians.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will understand traffic laws as they relate to interactions with pedestrians.
2. Students will understand the definition of a crosswalk and be able to recognize instances where a crosswalk may exist without road markings or traffic signals.
3. Students will have a concise set of rules about necessary laws and regulations that relate to interaction with pedestrians.
4. Students will understand their rights and responsibilities as pedestrians.

Materials:

- Course outline
- “What I expect...” reproducible (student version)
- “What I expect...” reproducible (teacher version)

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Introduction (2 minutes)

As a motorist, you will never be in a place where you’re only interacting with other vehicles. As you drive through cities and towns, you have to deal with bikers, walkers, children at play, animals running across the road, construction and so much more.

Today we will be talking about sharing space with one specific part of the “non-motorized” population: pedestrians.

Brainstorming Session (8 minutes)

To get you started, we’re going to do some brainstorming about the different expectations motorists and pedestrians have about each other when they’re traveling using these different modes of transportation.

While there are no right or wrong answers at this time, we’ll be discussing which of your expectations are legitimate based on traffic laws and accepted conventions, and which might need to be thought about in other ways.

Have students take about 5 minutes to complete the “What I expect...” reproducible.



Go over Worksheets (5-10 min)

Now we are going to discuss some of the expectations you came up with, paying particular attention to the responsibilities you have as the operator of a motor vehicle.

Let's first start with the things you, as a motorist, expect of a pedestrian. We're just taking ideas right now, and then we'll discuss which expectations actually mirror the laws and which are assumptions that you might need to think about differently.

Split a chalkboard in half, or have two sheets of chart paper you can write on. On the first section of paper, create a list of student suggestions for what motorists expect from pedestrians. After students have shared all their ideas for this topic, create a similar list of expectations pedestrians have of motorists.

The completed teacher version of the worksheet is meant to show some examples students may put on their lists. While examples provided are all reasonable expectations, they are not all based on the law, as indicated on the sheet.

Students may also have expectations that are unreasonable (such as "pedestrians let me turn when I'm in a hurry"). Simply put all brainstorming ideas on the list and discuss unreasonable expectations later, crossing them off the list at that time.

(If you'd rather not add unreasonable expectations to the list, be sure to provide reasons why they are unreasonable and to cite the applicable laws associated with their ideas.)

Laws/Expectations (10-15 min)

Once both lists are complete, use the most current edition of *Illinois Rules of the Road* and accompanying excerpts from compiled statutes to determine which laws and statutes relate to the various expectations students provided.

Two strategies exist for going over the compiled lists:

1. Go through a predetermined list of laws and rules, and indicate which expectations are related to specific laws and whether or not the expectation is appropriate.
2. Take items on the list one by one, using each as a springboard to look at whether or not such instances are covered by current laws.

Note that some of the expectations listed, such as using a turn signal, may not be specific to motorist interaction with pedestrians.

Regardless of which strategy is used, it would be good to have a predetermined list to refer to so that all regulations related to pedestrian interaction with motorists are covered.

Pedestrian Road Crossings (5 min)

Because of recent clarifications to crosswalk laws, it may be beneficial to explain a bit more about the related laws.

Definition of crosswalk: There are several kinds of crosswalks, all of which may not be evident simply by looking at them.

- **Signalized:** These are crosswalks at stop signs and traffic signals.
- **Unsignalized:** These are crosswalks that don't have a stop sign or traffic signal. They are also referred to as "mid-block crosswalks."
- **Marked:** These are the crosswalks you can see. Painted lines on the road designate their location.
- **Unmarked:** Not all crosswalks are marked with paint. The law is filled with jargon, but simply put, a crosswalk is present whenever a sidewalk leads into the street.

Illinois drivers must come to a complete stop for pedestrians in any of those crosswalks: marked, unmarked, signalized or unsignalized.

Additionally, when traffic officers are present:

- Motorists must always yield to and obey traffic directions given by police or other traffic officers, including making turns or yielding pedestrians as instructed.

Wrap-Up (5 min)

While we have discussed specific laws and regulations you need to follow in relation to pedestrians interacting with you on the roadway, there are a few easy things to remember:

1. *Following the general rules for operating a motor vehicle (using turn signals, stopping behind indicated lines at intersections, not texting, etc.), will give you a great start.*
2. *Illinois law requires drivers to come to a complete stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk, regardless of crosswalk type. This also applies to executing a turn.*
3. *If you always yield to pedestrians crossing the roadway, you can't go wrong.*
4. *Motorists are required to act with care to avoid crashes with pedestrians. It is your obligation to watch out for more vulnerable users. Kids DO dart out in traffic in the middle of the block, regardless of its legality. Senior citizens may not always be able to reach or access a legal crosswalk, so they will cross where they can. In these and other situations, you are the one in the position to help avoid an injury or save a life.*

Pedestrians are a fact of life. As a motorist, you're never operating in a car-only bubble. As the operator of a vehicle weighing anywhere from 3 to 12 thousand pounds, you're in a position both to do the greatest harm and to prevent a tragedy. Being ready to stop and avoid pedestrians, whenever and wherever they present themselves, is part of your responsibility as a safe, mature and conscientious driver.



Pertinent Laws/Rules of the Road

Disclaimer: The following excerpts may not reflect the most current legislation adopted by the State of Illinois. These documents are provided for informational purposes only. These documents should not be relied upon as the definitive authority for legislation.

Illinois Statutes

625 ILCS 5/. Sec. 11-1002. Pedestrians' right-of-way at crosswalks.
(new language through HB 43, changes effecting July 2010)

(a) When traffic control signals are not in place or not in operation the driver of a vehicle shall stop and yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling, or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger.

625 ILCS 5/. Sec 11-1003.1. Drivers to exercise due care.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this Code or the provisions of any local ordinance, every driver of a vehicle shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian, or any person operating a bicycle or other device propelled by human power and shall give warning by sounding the horn when necessary and shall exercise proper precaution upon observing any child or any obviously confused, incapacitated or intoxicated person.

625 ILCS 5/. Sec 11-703.
(new language through SB 2951, changes effective January 2011)

(e) A person driving a motor vehicle shall not, in a reckless manner, drive the motor vehicle unnecessarily close to, toward, or near a bicyclist, pedestrian, or a person riding a horse or driving an animal drawn vehicle.

Rules of the Road

Please refer to the most up-to-date version of Illinois Rules of the Road for other information regarding pedestrian right-of-way; traffic signals, walklights and crossings; and other pedestrian-related laws and guidelines.

Legal definition of a crosswalk

Illinois defines crosswalks as "That part of a roadway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs, and in the absence of a sidewalk on one side of the highway, that part of the highway included within the extension of the lateral line of the existing sidewalk to the side of the highway without the sidewalk." (625 ILCS 5/1-113 (a))



What I expect...

... from a pedestrian when I'm driving.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

... from a motorist when I'm walking.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



What I expect...

... from a pedestrian when I'm driving.

- cross only at legal crosswalks (LAW – see additional handout for definition of crosswalk)
- wait for a walk signal, and not cross on a “don't walk” signal (LAW)
- not enter the crosswalk when “don't walk” sign is flashing since they could easily get caught in the middle (LAW)
- walk on the sidewalk if sidewalks are available; walk on the edge of the road in the opposite direction of traffic if no sidewalks are available (LAW)
- look both ways and be aware of cars when crossing the street (CONVENTION)
- won't be talking or texting on their cell phone (CONVENTION)
- not dart out into traffic (LAW)

... from a motorist when I'm walking.

- will stop when I'm using the crosswalks (LAW/CONVENTION – while not every instance can be backed up by specific laws, almost all instances of motorists stopping or yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks are covered in state law, based on the specific circumstances)
- turning cars will let me cross/give me the right-of-way (LAW)
- won't honk at me when I have the right-of-way (CONVENTION)
- won't block crosswalks when they stop at lights or stop signs (LAW)
- will not harass me or drive toward me in a threatening manner (LAW)
- use turn signals to indicate intent to turn (LAW)
- they won't be talking or texting on their cell phone (LAW/CONVENTION depending on locality – texting is a state law, cell phone use in general depends on location)



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