

Smooth Operator:

Safe Driving Around Pedestrians and Bicyclists



Welcome!

Agenda

- ❖ What is Watch for Me CT?
- ❖ Driving safely around pedestrians
- ❖ Driving safely around bicycles
- ❖ Common crashes and how to avoid them



Watch For Me CT

Watch for Me CT is a comprehensive program aimed at **reducing the number of injuries and fatalities** as a result of traffic **crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists** in Connecticut.



Watch For Me CT

It is funded by the **Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)** and managed in partnership with **Connecticut Children's Injury Prevention Center**.

The program was adopted in 2017, after a one week period in December 2016 with 9 serious crashes involving pedestrians, resulting in 8 fatalities.



Same road. Same rules.
Same rights.



Don't be a **ninja**.
Be visible at night.



Be **Visible**.
Use lights and reflectors





**Give cyclists 3 feet.
It's the law.**



**In CT you can cross the
double yellow line to give
riders the space they need.**



Share the road



Graphic: Bike Walk CT

**Expect bicyclists,
walkers, runners
and others on the
road.**



You know me, I ride a bike.

"More people would find the joy we know if they were encouraged to try it."
Dr. Tim Anderson
Dentist,
team
Rio member,
rides an
old Fuji
and more.



WE ARE ALL PEOPLE

You know me, I ride a bike.

We are one
community of
cyclists, motorists,
and pedestrians.
Travel safe today.

Barbara Liebler
Mother,
small business
owner.
Rides a
recumbent.



You know me, I ride a bike.

We are one community of
cyclists, motorists, and
pedestrians.
Travel safe today.



Dr. Bradley
Abrahamson
Physician,
cycling coach,
road racer.

Photography by
PHOTO DE NOVO



BICYCLE
AMBASSADOR
PROGRAM

Why is this important?

- ❖ In the U.S., more than **6,000 pedestrians and 800 bicyclists are killed** in traffic crashes each year. Hundreds of thousands more are injured.
- ❖ In Connecticut, around **1,500 pedestrians and 550 bicyclists are hit** by cars each year.
- ❖ Of those, about **60 pedestrians and 5 bicyclists die** due to their injuries.



Let 'Em Walk, Let 'Em Live: Driving Safely Around Pedestrians



What is a crosswalk?

A crosswalk is the part of the road that connects sidewalk to sidewalk, from the corner curb to the sidewalk on the other side of the street, or any portion of a highway distinctly marked as a crossing for pedestrians.

Every intersection is a crosswalk, even if it's not marked with paint.

Cars must yield to people in crosswalks.

As soon as a person steps off of the curb they are in the crosswalk.



WHAT IS A CROSSWALK?



**MARKED
CROSSWALKS**



**UNMARKED
CROSSWALKS**



**MID-BLOCK
CROSSWALK**

**Under Connecticut state law, drivers must yield to pedestrians
in crosswalks – even if the crosswalk is not marked.**

WatchforMeCT.org



Crosswalk Dos and Don'ts

Do not stop in a crosswalk. Stop well back from the crosswalk so other drivers can see the pedestrians crossing and you have a safety cushion in case you are rear-ended and pushed forward.

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.

If a pedestrian makes **eye contact** with you, they are ready to cross the street. Yield to the pedestrian.

Be patient, especially with disabled pedestrians. Let them complete the crossing before you proceed. Stop for blind people even if they aren't crossing in a crosswalk, it's the law.

Sometimes there will be **yield lines**, or “shark's teeth,” to show the driver where to stop.

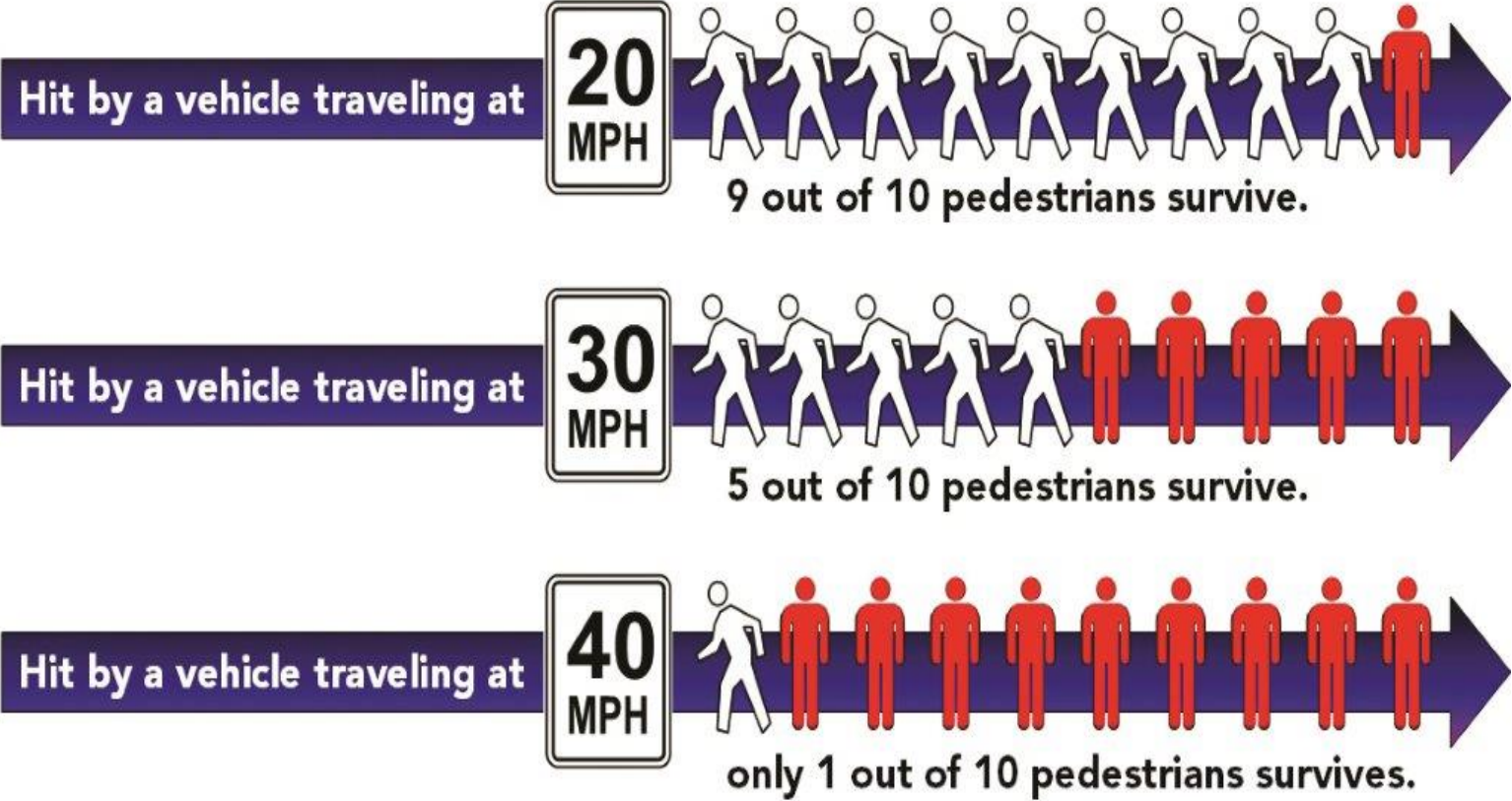


YIELD LINES,
OR “SHARK’S
TEETH”
SHOW YOU
WHERE TO
STOP



Slow down: Speed kills

Obey all speed limits.



Avoid distracted driving, aggressive driving, and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

76% of all distraction-affected crashes in 2013 did not involve the use of a cell phone.

Rather, the driver was distracted for any number of reasons, including:

talking to passengers

applying make-up

eating

daydreaming

reaching for something



Drive out  **DISTRACTION[®]**



Move over for stopped emergency vehicles

Emergency responders, as well as roadway and utility workers, are exposed to **roadway risks** once they exit their vehicles.

Every year in the U.S., **crashes that could have been prevented by drivers moving over** claim the lives of 60 tow truck operators, 275 highway workers, 12 police officers, and 5 firefighters.

Motor vehicle occupants are also at risk if they exit their vehicle in or beside the roadway due to a collision, mechanical breakdown or other reason. **9 people have died on our highways this year.**

Slow down and move over a lane if possible for vehicles stopped in or on the side of the road.



Two Wheels, Same Road: Driving Safely Around Bicyclists

BICYCLES ARE VEHICLES

- Bicycles are **considered vehicles** on the road, and should act and be treated as such.
- A bicycle is a vehicle and is required by law to **follow ALL rules of the road**. Cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers.
- Cyclists should **never** be expected to use the **sidewalk**. Riding on sidewalks is prohibited in many Connecticut towns.



Where to expect cyclists



Expect cyclists in the travel lane.

- Cyclists may ride in or near the middle of the travel lane when it's not safe to ride on the far right side of the road.
- This is called **"taking the lane"** and is legal.
- Let them ride **as far to the right as they judge to be safe**. Give them space to avoid hazards like potholes, debris and drain grates.



WHY BICYCLISTS “TAKE THE LANE”

- Because riding on **sidewalks** is sometimes illegal and usually **unsafe**
- To **prevent** being **buzzed** or side swiped, especially if the lane is too narrow to share
- To **trigger light** or signals
- If there is **debris** or other hazards near the edge of the road



- To prepare for a **left-hand turn**
- To **be more visible** and to increase motorist awareness
- To avoid the **door zone**
- It is often the **safest place**



BIKE LANES





WHAT IS A SHARROW?



Shared lane markings or “sharrows” guide bicyclists to the best place on the street to ride and help motorists expect to see and share the lane with bicyclists.



www.seattle.gov/transportation



SHARROWS



Keeping cyclists safe



- **Be vigilant at intersections.** For left turns, yield to oncoming cyclists. For right turns, always check for cyclists behind you to avoid cutting them off. Assume cyclists are traveling straight unless they signal otherwise or are in a turn lane.
- **Signal your turns and look both ways** before changing lanes, turning, and at driveways.
- **Expect the unexpected** around curves and over hills where visibility ahead is limited.
- **Mind the door zone.** Check for approaching cyclists before opening your car door.

Door Zones



HOW TO AVOID DOORING A CYCLIST:

**Open Door with Opposite Hand
The “Dutch Reach”**

Try it!



WHEN PASSING A BICYCLIST

- Treat bicyclists as you would **any other slow-moving vehicle**.
- **Don't blast your horn** when approaching cyclists; startling them could cause an accident.
- Don't pass a cyclist if you're immediately **turning right**; you may cause a crash.

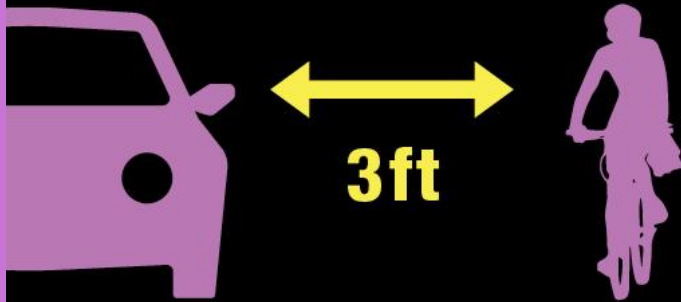


Pass with care!



WHEN PASSING A BICYCLIST

**GIVE BIKES
3 FEET!**



When passing bicyclists, give them
3 feet of room. **IT'S THE LAW!**

WatchforMeCT.org

Give 3 feet!

- Give cyclists **at least 3 feet** of space between your vehicle and them - **it's the law** since 2008.
- If you don't have enough space to give 3 feet, **DO NOT PASS!**
- **You may cross the center line to allow 3 feet if it's safe.** Vehicles may overtake and pass pedestrians, bicycles, and other obstacles even in a marked no-passing zone, provided such overtaking and passing may be conducted safely, with adequate sight distance and without interfering with oncoming traffic.
- If there is oncoming traffic, **slow down and wait to pass** until traffic clears.
- Return to your lane when the **bicyclist is in your mirror** so you know you won't cut them off.



What we teach cyclists

- Be predictable and alert
- Ride on the right, with traffic
- Control or “take the lane” when appropriate
- Obey stop signs, lights, right-of-way rules
- Signal turns and stops
- Ride single file, or up to 2 abreast (not impeding traffic)
- Use lights and reflectors at night



www.pedbikeimages.org /Laura Standt

Expect the unexpected!



Know the
hand signals

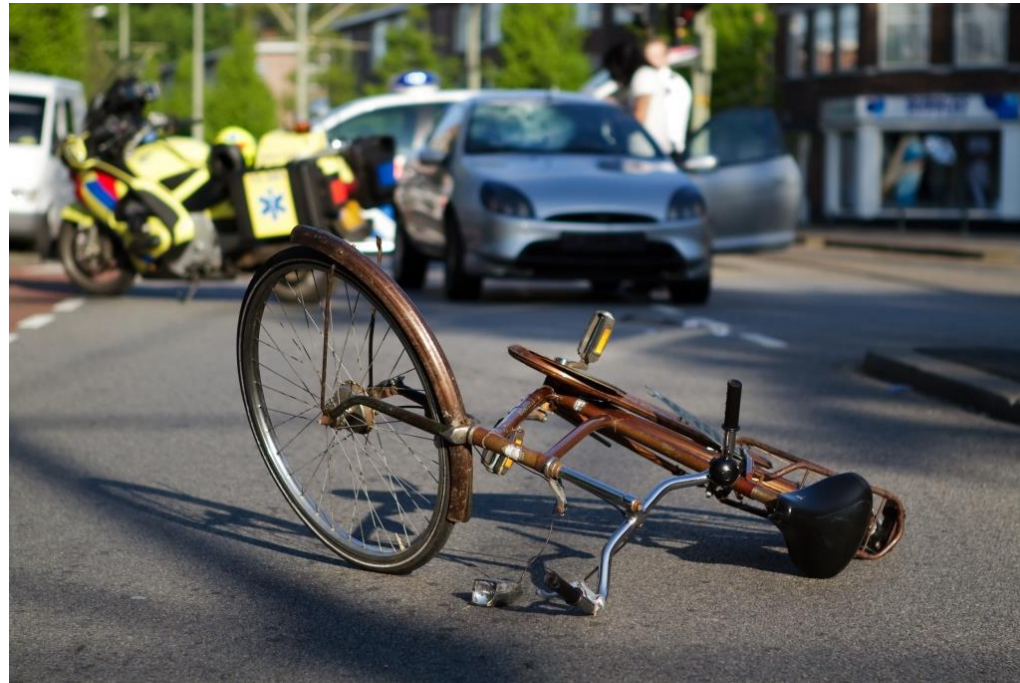
BICYCLIST HAND SIGNALS



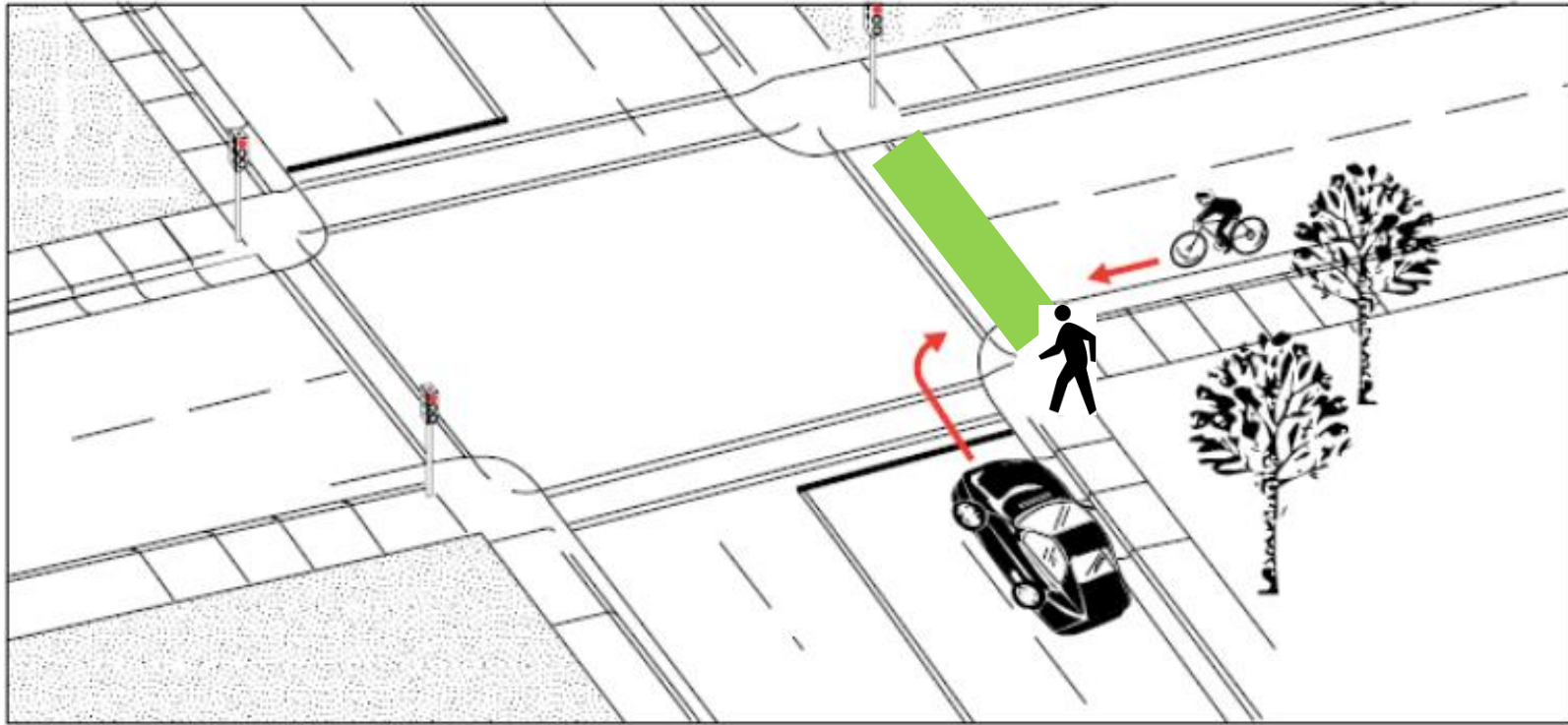
WatchforMeCT.org

Common Crashes and How to Avoid Them

In most crashes
BOTH road users
could have done something different to prevent a crash



Common crashes: Right Angle

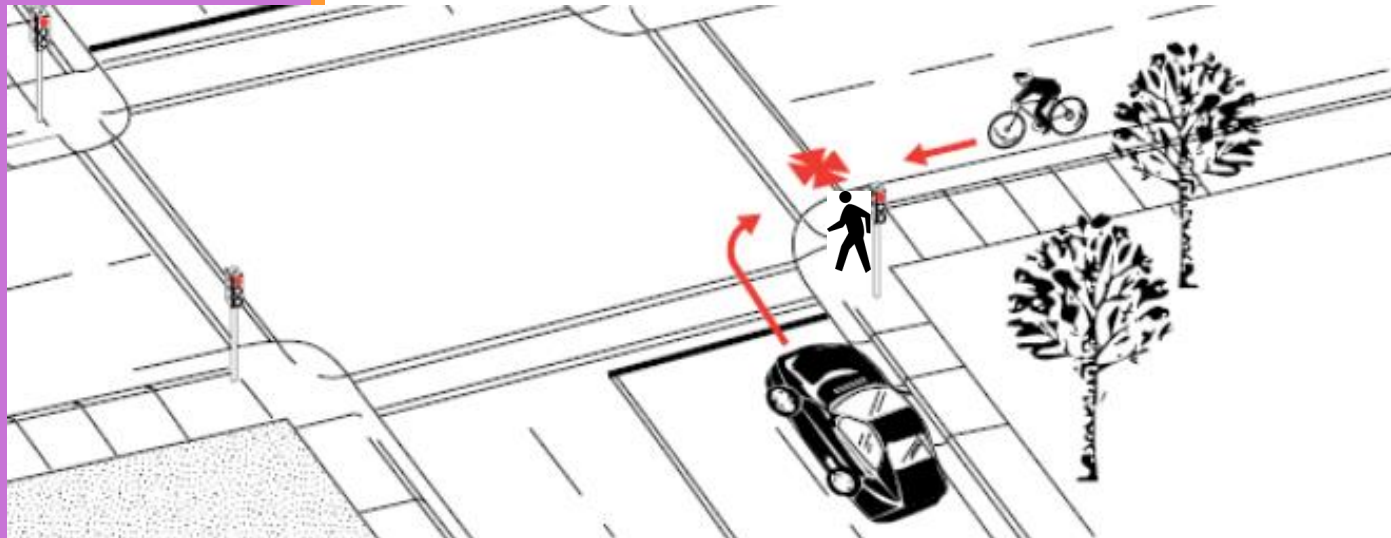


- ▶ Greater than 50% of bike/car crashes are “Right Angle”
- ▶ More than half of these involve a bicyclist incorrectly riding against traffic

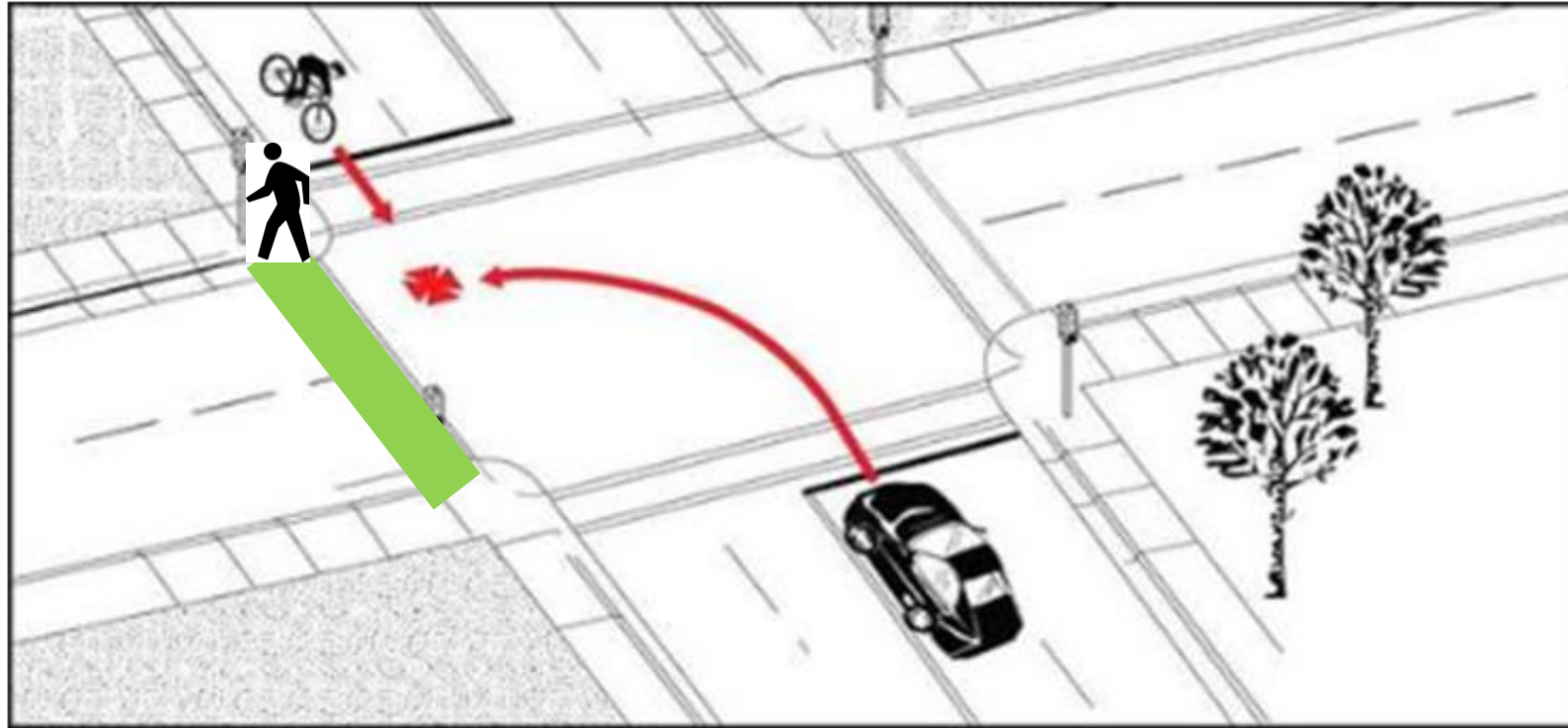


AVOID A RIGHT ANGLE CRASH

- **Look left and right** at all driveways and intersections before proceeding
- Check for **bicyclists and pedestrians**
- When you're a cyclist, **always ride on the right**, with traffic



Common crashes: Left Cross

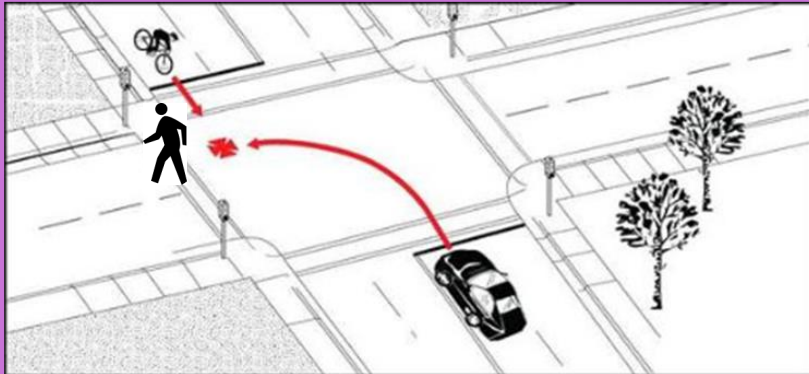


- ▶ 15% of bike/car crashes are “Approach Turn” (also called Left Cross)
- ▶ Almost half (49%) result in a serious injury

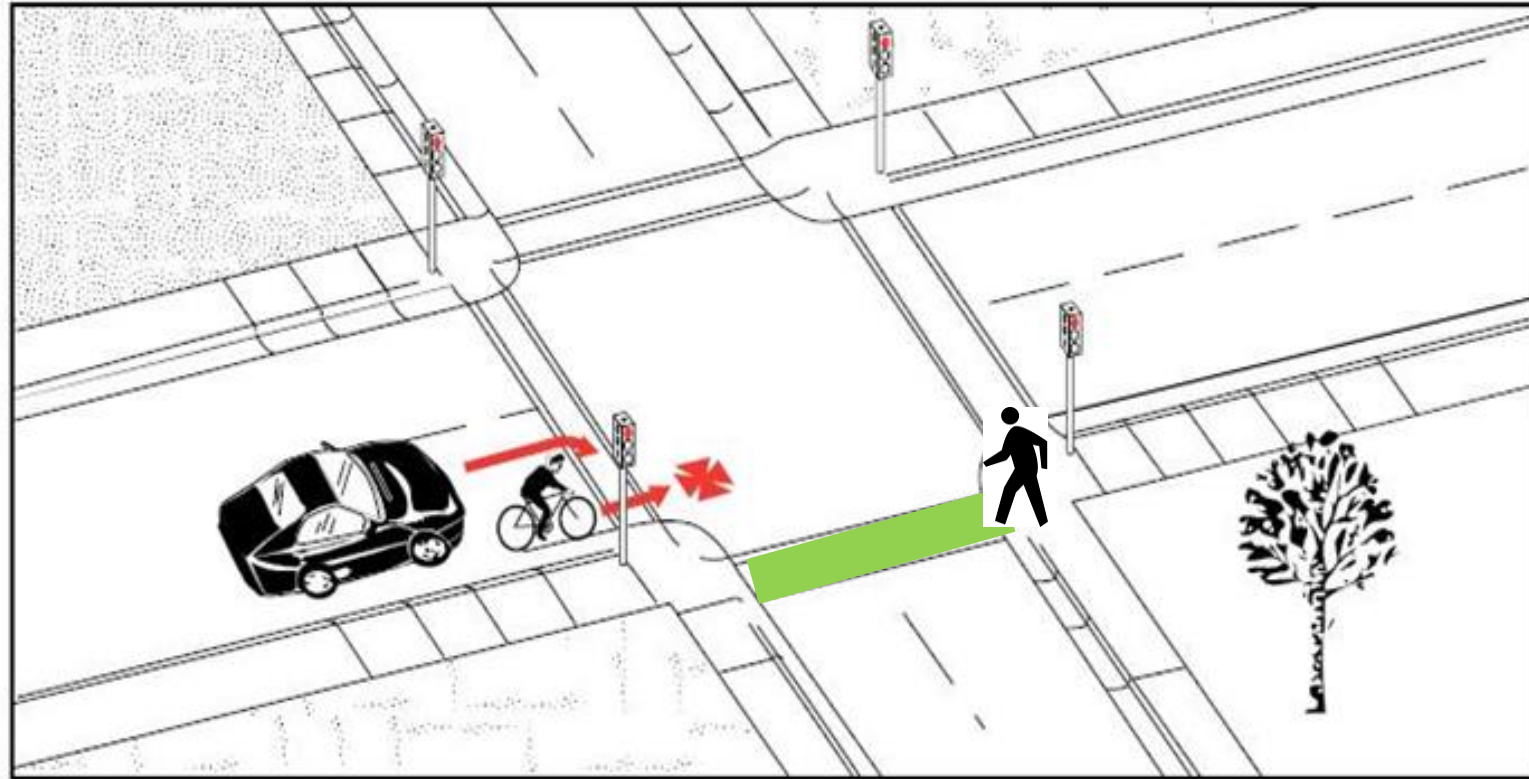


AVOID A LEFT CROSS

- If there is on-coming traffic, **slow down, stop and wait to turn** until traffic clears, including bicyclists
- Watch for on-coming bicyclists as it may be difficult to **judge their speed and distance**
- Watch for on-coming bicyclists **in the 'shadow' of a vehicle**
- **Look for pedestrians** who may be crossing. This is the most common situation for pedestrian-vehicle crashes. Remember to **"Look Before Left!"**



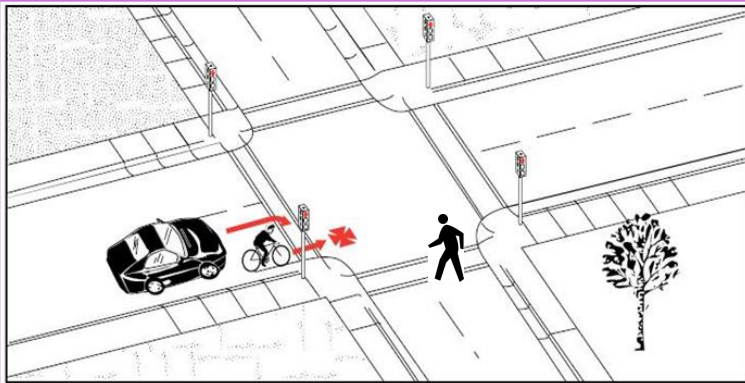
Common crashes: Right Hook



- ▶ 14% of crashes are “Right Hook” (also called Overtaking Turn)



AVOID RIGHT-HOOKING A BICYCLIST



- Check for **bicyclists approaching from behind**
- Avoid **overtaking** a bicyclist and **turning right**, unless it's safe to do so
- Check for bicyclists in your **blind spots**
- A bicyclist may take the lane to **avoid being right-hooked** by cars making right hand turns
- **Look for pedestrians** who may be crossing



Summing It All Up

Driving safely around pedestrians & bikes

- Drive alert, unimpaired, distraction-free
- Slow down, obey speed limits
- Watch for pedestrians & bikes, especially at intersections and driveways (look left and right)
- Stop for pedestrians in crosswalks even if unmarked
- Move over for stopped vehicles



Driving safely around pedestrians & bikes

- Treat bicyclists as drivers of vehicles
- Understand when and why cyclists take the lane
- Give 3 feet when passing; pass with care
- Look before turning and changing lanes
- Expect the unexpected



We all play a part in making our streets safer.

When we all drive safely, have patience, and are considerate of one another, it is easy to share the road.

Everyone's trying to get somewhere.
Let's all get home safe.



Questions?

www.WatchForMeCT.org

Thank you to Simsbury Bike.

Thank you to the Bicycle Friendly Driver Program, from which some content was borrowed:



City of Fort Collins FC Bikes
FC Bikes Bicycle Ambassador Program
Bike Fort Collins

