

GENERAL FACTS AND TIPS FOR PEDESTRIANS WITH DISABILITIES



WE ALL FOLLOW THE SAME RULES

Mobility aid users, including those who use scooters and wheelchairs, have to follow the same rules as all pedestrians. They are expected to cross at crosswalks and follow all the same traffic laws as everyone else, including yielding to vehicles when there is no crosswalk available. In spite of that, those who use mobility aids are at a greater risk. Wheelchair users are 33% more likely to be killed in a road accident than the general public.

GENERAL TIPS

- Know where there are curb ramps or driveways you can use for safe crossings.
- Take extra care when leaving the curb to cross the road.
- Always be prepared to stop for other pedestrians, especially if your wheelchair or scooter is motorized.
- Watch for vehicles entering and leaving driveways.
- If you are forced to use roads, travel on quieter streets, keep to the side, and face oncoming traffic whenever possible.
- Avoid highways, roundabouts, major roads, and heavy vehicles, if possible.
- Attach a safety flag to your chair high enough above your head that it is visible to others.
- If you can, attach rear view mirrors to your chair.
- To maximize safety use a route that will allow you to use the sidewalk the whole way.
- Scouting a new route ahead of time can help you get where you are going safely!

BE SEEN

- Don't take for granted that drivers can see you. They may not if they are driving into the sun, are distracted, it's nighttime, raining, or if you are in dark colors.
- If you must travel at night, use reflectors, lights, and bright colors to aid visibility.
- Consider wearing a bright reflective vest (like road workers) especially in the dark or in an area where fast traffic might not expect pedestrians.

USE CAUTION (EVEN WITH THE RIGHT OF WAY)

- Despite having the right of way, you should always be cautious. Don't assume a vehicle will stop for you even if you have the right of way.
- Don't guess or assume what a driver will do.
- Never insist on taking the right of way.
- Yield whenever needed to be safe.
- Make eye contact with drivers at intersections if possible.

GENERAL FACTS AND TIPS FOR PEDESTRIANS WITH DISABILITIES



THE PROCESS FOR CROSSING

1. Analyze the situation: determine the length of the crosswalk, width of street, and traffic control patterns.
2. Determine how/when to cross.
3. Determine the risk of crossing: What could possibly go wrong? How can the risk be reduced? How likely is that risk to happen after it is reduced?
4. Reduce risks as much as possible. That might mean changing or revising your crossing strategy.
5. Decide if risks are acceptable: After determining risk and then reducing it as much as possible, decide if the risk is acceptable. Each person's acceptance of risk is individual and may be different than yours.
6. Consider alternatives if the risk is not acceptable.

CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

- Get help to cross or avoid crossing.
- At streets where there is no traffic signal or stop sign, find a place to cross where you can see/hear traffic better or you are more visible.
- Cross at a place with better traffic control.
- Cross only after getting drivers to yield.
- Be prepared to return to the curb.



REDUCING THE RISK

When you cannot see/hear with enough warning to know for certain it is clear to cross (that is you hope no one is coming and if they do, you are relying on cars to stop):

- Be sure there is a good line of sight between you and drivers.
- Be as visible as possible: wear bright or reflective clothing and make canes or dog harnesses visible.
- Cross at times when there is less traffic, if possible.
- Work with traffic authorities to make sure all crosswalks are well marked and well lit. Also working with local jurisdictions can help ensure pedestrian and white cane laws are publicized and enforced.
- Make the public aware that people cross there regularly.