



Information on Crosswalks



*Why are there not marked crosswalks at every intersection?
Will I get a ticket for jaywalking if I cross at an intersection without a crosswalk?
Isn't it safer to cross the street with a marked crosswalk than an unmarked crosswalk?
Doesn't traffic have to stop for me if I am at a crosswalk but have not started crossing?*

What is a Crosswalk?

Crosswalks are considered part of the roadway used to channel pedestrian traffic safely across the roadway. Crosswalks can be both marked and unmarked. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) defines a crosswalk to mean "1. That part of a highway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs or, in the absence of curbs, from the edges of the traveled portions of highways; or 2. Any portion of a highway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface." (The MUTCD defines any public road as a highway.) Accordingly, a legal crosswalk exists at all public street intersections whether marked or unmarked. However, the only way a crosswalk can exist at a mid-block location is if it is marked. Beaufort County uses the "ladder pattern" as shown above to mark crosswalks in accordance with the MUTCD, latest edition.

How are Crosswalks used?

At marked and unmarked crosswalks, motorists must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians that are in the crosswalk when the pedestrian is upon the same half of the roadway the motorist is on. Crosswalks are marked to define the location where pedestrians can legally cross and to delineate the pedestrian path crossing the road. Pedestrian crossing safety relies on the judgment exercised by pedestrians and drivers; therefore, educating pedestrians and drivers is essential in providing for a safe operation.

Collisions at marked Crosswalks.

Research indicates that on multi-lane streets with more than 12,000 vehicles per day, pedestrian collisions are higher at marked crosswalks versus unmarked crosswalks at uncontrolled locations especially on higher speed roadways. This appears to occur because pedestrians believe and expect a motorist to stop for a pedestrian in a crosswalk. However, drivers frequently fail to stop and a collision results. Another frequent factor in pedestrian crosswalk collisions is when the driver of a vehicle in the lane nearest to the curb stops for the pedestrian that is crossing in a crosswalk. This will sometime block the visibility of the pedestrian to another motorist in the lane next to the stopped vehicle and the motorist passes the stopped vehicle and hits the pedestrian. **Pedestrians should always be very cautious when walking in a crosswalk, especially when their visibility is limited by a vehicle already stopped at the crosswalk. At all crosswalks, both marked and unmarked, it is the pedestrian's responsibility to be cautious and alert before starting to cross the street.**

School Crosswalks.

Marked crosswalks for school aged pedestrians follow somewhat different criteria. Crosswalks are marked to provide a walking path and to concentrate the area where school aged pedestrians must cross at uncontrolled crossing locations. Crosswalks are not installed for school bus or public transit bus stop locations. The best safety measure is to educate children on how and where to safely cross the street.

Want More Information?

This flyer is for general purposes only. For more information, please contact the Beaufort County Traffic & Transportation Engineering Department at (843) 255-2940 or [click here](#)

NOTE: The **MUTCD** is used throughout the country as the standard by which traffic control decisions are made. The complete **MUTCD** can be found at: http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf_index.htm