



Information on Pedestrian Signals



*Who times the length the WALK and the flashing HAND symbols are on?
What do the symbols mean? Why do some have numbers that count down?
Why is the WALK symbol not on long enough to cross the street completely?*

What do the symbols mean and how are the pedestrian signals timed?

Beaufort County is required to use the **Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)** to time all pedestrian signals.

Pedestrian signals have 3 modes: WALK, flashing DON'T WALK and steady DON'T WALK.



Under WALK, you will see a walking person or the word "WALK" in white. Step off the curb, stay in the crosswalk and head directly across the street. Make sure to watch for vehicles that may be turning into and across the crosswalk. Although you have the right-of-way, an inattentive motorist yield as the law requires. The WALK symbol is only on long enough to get a person started across the street and is not intended to be on for a pedestrian to completely cross the street.



While you are in the crosswalk, the pedestrian signal may change to flashing DON'T WALK (or a flashing hand) in orange. **You will always have enough time to finish crossing.** If you have not started crossing, wait until the next WALK signal because you will not have enough time to safely cross the road. The amount of time for the flashing DON'T WALK uses a normal walking speed of 4 feet per second to cross the intersection as required by the **MUTCD**.

If the pedestrian signal shows a steady DON'T WALK (or hand), it may not be safe to be in the crosswalk or crossing the road.

Why do some pedestrian signals have numbers that count down?



The newer pedestrian signals have a countdown feature to indicate the seconds remaining to safely be in the crosswalks. The countdown starts at the end of the WALK signal and continues counting down through the flashing DON'T WALK signal.

It says WALK, so why are there still vehicles turning into the crosswalk?

Our goal is not only to provide you with a safe crossing, but also to minimize the time you have to wait to cross. To do this, we give the vehicles on the parallel street a green light when the WALK signal is on. Some of these vehicles may turn left or right into the crosswalk.

Why should I wait for a WALK signal?

It is not safe to start crossing until the WALK signal is showing. Even if there is a break in traffic, it is dangerous and illegal to try to cross against the signal. A driver might not be able to stop in time, especially in bad conditions. Please wait a few extra seconds for the WALK signal. It could save your life!

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