



intersection safety

Almost 60 per cent of crashes happen at intersections.* Here are some ways you can drive smart when in or around intersections.

Tips for intersections

When you're approaching an intersection...

- You should always use caution. Don't make any sudden moves that might confuse another driver—or a cyclist or pedestrian.
- If you haven't just seen the traffic light up ahead turn green, be ready to stop in case it changes to yellow. Always check your mirrors and look around. Slow down well in advance.
- Only go through a yellow light if it's unsafe to stop.
- It's not safe to change lanes in an intersection. Make sure you're always in the correct lane before a turn.
- Always use your turn signals well before you make a move—it helps other drivers, cyclists and pedestrians know what you're doing.
- Watch for other, more vulnerable road users also approaching or entering the intersection, such as motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians.

When you're stopping at an intersection...

- If you're the first car to stop—make sure you're behind the line or crosswalk.
- Always leave space between you and the vehicle in front—a good rule is to leave enough space so you can see its wheels (about a car length).
- Keep your wheels straight when stopped.
- Make eye contact with pedestrians so they know you have seen them and it is safe for them to cross. Do the same for other drivers, motorcycle riders and cyclists.

When it's your turn to go...

- When the light turns green, check the intersection before you move forward—in case someone's running the red or jumping the green (counting to three works well).
- Don't enter the intersection if traffic is backed up. If you can't get through the intersection before the light changes, you'll be stuck in the middle.
- Accelerate moderately to fit in with traffic flow.
- Ignore aggressive drivers—don't worry if they're honking their horns behind you.
- Drivers should always be ready to yield the right-of-way to another vehicle, motorcyclist, pedestrian or cyclist. When turning left, don't let pedestrians be in your blind spot.

Tips for railway crossings

- Don't forget: trains always have the right-of-way.
- Slow down when you see the railway crossing ahead sign and be ready to stop.
- Check both directions before crossing.

Can I call or text when I'm stopped at a red light?

No. The law applies whenever you are in control of the vehicle—even when you're stopped at a light or in bumper-to-bumper traffic. Studies show that drivers who are talking on a cellphone lose about 50 per cent of what is going on around them, visually. When you're stopped at an intersection or slowed in traffic, you're still driving.

*ICBC reported five year average from 2012 to 2016.