

BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN AND DRIVER SAFETY LESSON PLAN – HIGH SCHOOL



SUBJECT

Pedestrian, bicycle and driver safety for teens.



CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY

AGE LEVEL

This lesson plan is recommended for 9th-12th grades (ages 14-18).

BACKGROUND

Pedestrians and cyclists are among the most vulnerable roadway users. They are more likely to be seriously injured or even killed in car crashes due to the lack of added protection from an enclosed car and safety equipment such as seatbelts and airbags. As children get older and into their teenage years, they are more likely to be walking, cycling and even driving independently. It's important to remind these young adults that walking, cycling and driving all require critical thinking skills to keep them safe at all times.

GOAL

The purpose of this brief lesson plan is to provide educators with an opportunity for discussion with young adults about the importance of pedestrian, bicycle and new driver safety when near or around pedestrians and cyclists. This content reintroduces skills they learned as children, as well as new safety information for those that are just becoming, or have recently become new drivers.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

> Start by having students watch this video

> ["Walk Safely"](#)

> Discussion

1. What can someone do to stay safe while walking?

Answers may include:

- > Look out for cars at all times
- > Follow the rules of the road
- > Stay on the sidewalk
- > Say no to distractions (i.e. phones, ear buds, etc.)
- > Wear reflective gear at night

Tip: Be seen — wear clothes or reflective materials to make you more visible to others.

2. What are some ways to be predictable to drivers?

Answers may include:

- > Obey all signs and signals
- > Make eye contact with drivers

Tip: Anticipate what other road users might do—turns, pulling out of a parking space or driveway, backing up. The sooner you notice a potential conflict, the quicker you can act to avoid it.

3. Where should you walk if there is no sidewalk?

Answer: Walk facing traffic as far off of the road as possible.

Tip: Plan your safest route. Safer routes have less traffic, slower speeds, lighting, sidewalks, and may separate you from traffic (i.e., sidewalks, paths, a barrier).

4. What are some types of distractions?

Answers may include:

- > Texting
- > Listening to music
- > Talking to friends

Tip: Walk defensively. Walk focused and alert. No texting, scrolling through your phone, listening to music or anything that takes your eyes, ears, or your mind, off the road and traffic.

5. You should always cross at a crosswalk, but what should you do if there is no sidewalk?

Answer: Find a well-lit area where you have a good view of traffic. Cross only when there is enough space from traffic and watch out for cars.

Tip: You can also cross at corners, or at intersections. Look left-right-left and behind for traffic before crossing a driveway or road.



Pedestrian Safety Guide

- 1 Follow the rules of the road, and obey signs and signals.
- 2 Walk on sidewalks, whenever they are available.
- 3 If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far to the left as possible.
- 4 Keep alert at all times; don't be distracted by electronic devices that take your eyes (and ears) off the road.
- 5 Always cross the street at a crosswalk or intersection with a stop sign or signal to ensure drivers can see you.
- 6 Don't dart or walk between parked cars.
- 7 Look for cars in all directions, including those going straight, or turning.
- 8 If a crosswalk or intersection is not available, locate a well-lit area where you have the best view of traffic. Wait for a gap in traffic that allows enough time to cross safely; continue watching for traffic as you cross.
- 9 Never assume a driver sees you. Make eye contact with drivers as they approach to make sure you are seen.
- 10 Be visible at all times. Wear bright clothing during the day, and wear reflective materials or use a flashlight when it's dark.
- 11 Watch for cars entering or exiting driveways, or backing up in parking lots.

Driver/Pedestrian Safety

> Start by having students watch this video

- > ["Pedestrian Safer Journey"](#) (Credit: Federal Highway Administration):

> Discussion

1. What could Connor (driver) have done to prevent the crash?

Answers may include:

- > Ignore the text
- > Put his phone on silent before getting in the car

Tip: Other types of dangerous distractions include changing the radio station, talking on the phone, talking with passengers, and eating.

2. What might Anthony (pedestrian) have done differently that might have avoided the crash?

Answers could include actions such as:

- > Wear bright or reflective clothing
- > Stop and look for cars before crossing the street

Tip: Always make eye contact with pedestrians and acknowledge them with a quick nod or wave to confirm they see you.

3. What are some things that could have created a safer walking environment for Anthony (pedestrian)?

Answers may include:

- > Sidewalks
- > Lighting that made it easier to see and be seen
- > Crosswalks

Tip: Take a little extra time slowing down and stopping, especially in poor weather (ice, snow, rain), and during low visibility (dusk, dawn, fog, or night).

4. **True or False:** Pedestrians can only cross at crosswalks.

Answer: False

- > Pedestrians are allowed to cross at any intersection or crosswalk, even those without a stop sign or signal.

Tip: Yield to pedestrians until they have safely crossed the street.

5. **True or False:** You should never pass a car that's stopped at a crosswalk.

Answer: True

Tip: Slow and prepare to stop when motorist in the next lane has stopped; the motorist may be stopped to allow a pedestrian to cross.

Driver and Pedestrian Safety Guide

- 1 Look out for pedestrians everywhere, at all times. Safety is a shared responsibility.
- 2 Use extra caution when driving in hard-to-see conditions, such as nighttime or during bad weather.
- 3 Understand the rights of pedestrians. Pedestrians are allowed to cross at any intersection or crosswalk, even those without a stop sign or signal.
- 4 Slow down and be prepared to stop when turning or otherwise entering a crosswalk.
- 5 Stop behind crosswalks and yield to pedestrians. This includes waiting until the pedestrian has safely crossed the street and the "Walk" signal has expired.
- 6 Never pass cars stopped at a crosswalk. There may be people crossing that you are not able to see.
- 7 Never drive under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- 8 Always follow the speed limit, but especially when there are people on the street.
- 9 Follow slower speed limits in school zones and in neighborhoods where children are, or may be present.
- 10 Be extra cautious when backing up from driveways or parking spaces—pedestrians can move into your path.
- 11 Before turning, look for other cars, pedestrians and bicyclists and yield to them.
- 12 When turning right on red, come to a complete stop and scan for all traffic, including pedestrians and bicyclists. Proceed only when clear.

Driver/Pedestrian Safety

> **Start by having students watch this video**

> [Bicycle Safety Video](#)

> **Discussion**

1. Why is it important for bicyclists to go in the same direction as traffic when riding on the road?

Answers may include:

- > Bicycles are considered vehicles. When riding on the road, bicyclists must follow the same rules of the road that drivers do.
- > It helps make you predictable. Drivers are not expecting bicyclists to ride facing traffic.

Tip: Use hand signals when turning and use extra care at intersections.

2. Dark or dusk times of the day are particularly risky for bicycling. Why is that?

Answers may include:

- > It may be more difficult for drivers to see bicyclists, especially if they aren't wearing reflective gear.
- > Drivers may not be expecting to encounter bicyclists during these times of day.

Tip: Remain alert, keep your head up and look around; watch for hazards.

3. How can bicyclists and drivers make it safer to ride in low light conditions?

Answers may include:

- > Bicyclists should use reflectors
- > Bicyclists should wear reflective gear
- > Drivers should watch for bicyclists and give them space when passing

Tip: Always wear a properly-fitted helmet. It should be nice and snug. If it tilts back on your head or goes into your eyes, it is too loose.

4. What is the ABC check?

Answer:

A. Air. Check to make sure there's enough air and the tires are not flat or worn down.

B. Brakes. Spin the wheel. There should not be anything rubbing against it. The brake pads should also not rub on the tire or spokes. Check hand brakes and foot pedal brakes to make sure they work.

C. Chains. It should feel smooth and be slippery when you touch it.

Tip: Check your bike before every trip for optimal safety.

5. Are helmets required in California?

Answer: Yes, everyone under the age of 18 is required to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.

Tip: Before entering traffic, stop and look left, right, left again and over your shoulder.

Bicycle Safety Guide

- 1** Wear a properly fitted helmet. It should be nice and snug. If it tilts back on your head or goes into your eyes, it is too loose.
- 2** Make sure you are comfortable. Check that the seat and handlebars are where they need to be.
- 3** Do the “ABC”
 - A. AIR.** Check to make sure there’s enough air and the tires are not flat or worn down.
 - B. BRAKES.** Spin the wheel. There should not be anything rubbing against it. The brake pads should also not rub on the tire or spokes. Check hand brakes and foot pedal brakes to make sure they work.
 - C. CHAINS.** It should feel smooth and be slippery when you touch it.
- 4** Ride in the same direction as traffic as far on the right-hand side as possible.
- 5** When riding when it’s dark, wear bright colors and use a light.
- 6** Use bike reflectors. Reflectors on your clothes or bike will help drivers see you more easily.
- 7** Obey street signs, signals, and road markings.
- 8** Don’t text, listen to music, use your phone or do anything that distracts you.
- 9** Keep your eyes on the road at all times.
- 10** Use hand signals.

Fun Activity

[Pedestrian Safety Word Search](#)

Additional Guides

[Best Practices for Safe Crossing](#)
[Walking in Bad Weather](#)
[Pedestrian Safety Infographic Card](#)
[Pedestrian Safety Poster](#)
[Pedestrian Safety Tip Card](#)
[Distracted Driving Statistics](#)
[Distracted Driving Tip Card](#)

Additional Resources

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