

# How to Stay Safe While Walking

Walking is a healthy activity, but you should know the rules of pedestrian safety first. This is especially true if you are walking in an area where there aren't sidewalks or paths separate from the road. To stay safe while walking, follow these rules of the road:



## Walk Facing Traffic

Walk on sidewalks whenever they are available. If there is no sidewalk and you must walk on the side of the road, choose the side where you are facing oncoming traffic.

## Cross Safely

Look both ways before crossing any street. At controlled intersections, it is wise to cross only when you have the pedestrian crossing light. But even then, drivers and bikers may have a green light to turn and won't be expecting you to be in the crosswalk. Make eye contact with any drivers who may be turning. Give them a wave. Make sure they see you.

## Walk Single File When Not Separated from the Road

Unless you are on a sidewalk separated from the road or in a wide bike/pedestrian lane, you should walk in single file. This is especially important on a road with lots of curves and where traffic has only a split second chance of seeing you.

## Be Aware of Bikers and Runners

Share the road and path with bikers and runners. Bike riders should alert you when approaching from behind with a bike bell or a "passing on the left/right." Listen for them, and move to walk single file, allowing them to pass safely. Runners should also call out for passing. Bike-walker collisions can result in broken bones or head injury for either — and you aren't wearing a helmet.

## Be Visible

Wear brightly colored clothing when walking in the daytime. When walking at night, wear light-colored or reflective clothing to be visible. Drivers are often not expecting walkers to be out after dark, and you need to give them every chance to see you, even at street crossings that have crossing signals. Be just as cautious at dawn or twilight, as drivers still have limited visibility or may even have the setting or rising sun directly in their eyes.

## Keep the Volume Down

Don't drown out your environment when listening to your earbuds or headphones. Keep the volume at a level where you can still hear bike bells and warnings from other walkers and runners coming up behind you.

## Hang Up and Eyes Up

Chatting, texting, or playing games on a mobile device while you walk is as dangerous as doing those things while driving. You are distracted and not as aware of your environment. You are less likely to recognize traffic danger, passing joggers and bikers or tripping hazards. Potential criminals see you as a distracted easy target. Adopt habits that can keep your phone in your pocket, or at least stop in a safe place to complete your phone tasks before moving on.