

RULES OF THE ROUNDABOUT

Spring 2017



Roundabouts

Transportation departments around the country are more frequently turning to roundabouts as an efficient, cost-effective way to improve safety and traffic flow.

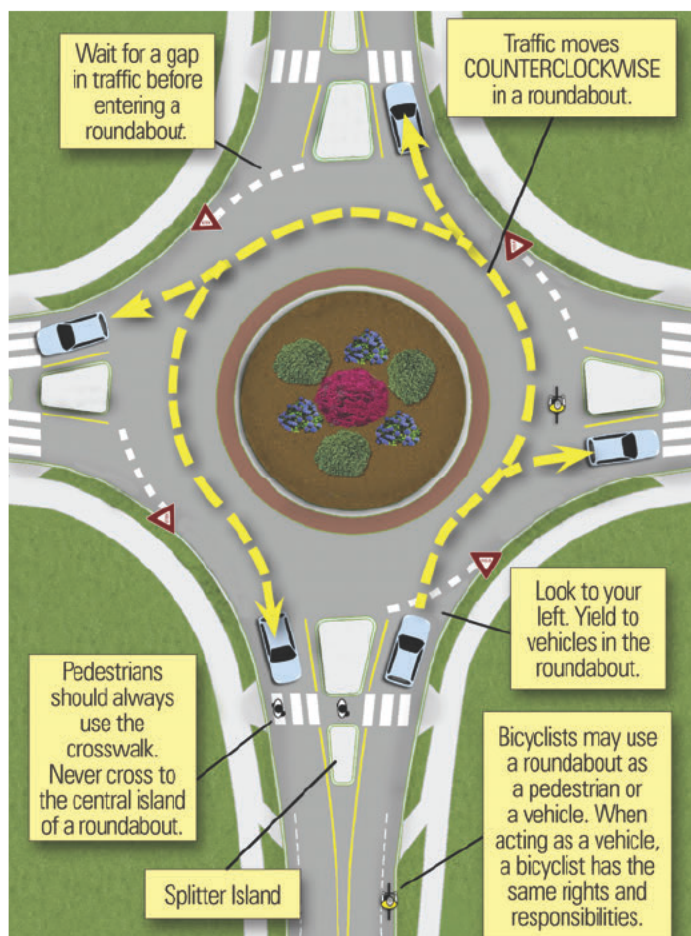
Roundabouts substantially decrease severe injury and fatality collisions and allow drivers to get through intersections more quickly. Roundabouts also provide a safer way for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate traffic.

What is a roundabout?

A modern roundabout is a type of intersection that has safety, operational and aesthetic benefits for many different road users.

Roundabouts are characterized by:

- A fairly large central island.
- A circular roadway on which all vehicles travel counterclockwise.
- Drivers entering the roundabout yield to traffic already in the circular roadway.
- Design elements that cause drivers to use the roundabout at slow speeds, including splitter islands at all approaches.



Follow the arrows to navigate your way through the new roundabout. Credit: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Studies by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program have shown that roundabouts typically achieve:

- A 35 percent reduction in overall collisions
- Over a 90 percent reduction in fatality collisions
- A 40 percent reduction in pedestrian collisions
- A 78 percent reduction in injury collisions
- 75 percent fewer conflict points than a traditional intersection

Frequently Asked Questions

How safe is a roundabout?

Studies have shown that roundabouts are safer than traditional signalized intersections, reducing the severity and frequency of collisions. Speeds are slower through a roundabout because vehicles enter the circular intersection which provides a speed reduction (as compared to a straight intersection) and all travel the same direction. The chance of T-bone and head-on collisions is virtually eliminated.

How fast should I go through a roundabout?

As you approach a roundabout, yellow signs with black lettering indicate the recommended speed which is usually 15 or 20 mph. The lower speed allows you to make the turns in the roundabout cleanly and staying within your lane. Regardless of the recommended speed, always yield to vehicles in the roundabout.

How do I use a roundabout if I'm on foot?

Crosswalks are located on each street near the entrance to the roundabout. Pedestrian islands are also located between lanes. This means that you can cross one direction of traffic and have a safe place to wait in the median before you cross another direction of traffic. Although pedestrians have the right-of-way, vehicles do not always stop, so be cautious and make eye contact with the vehicle driver if possible before crossing. This ensures vehicles are aware of your intention to cross!

Five Things to Remember When Driving a Roundabout

- 1 Slow down when approaching a roundabout.
- 2 Circulate counter-clockwise around the circle.
- 3 Yield to traffic in the roundabout. Vehicles and pedestrians in the roundabout have the right-of-way.
- 4 Signal your turning intentions within the roundabout.
- 5 Do not stop within the circular portion of the roundabout.

Video - Roundabouts: Improving Intersection Safety

www.youtube.com/OregonDOT

How do I use a roundabout if I'm on a bicycle?

If you feel comfortable doing so, you can ride through the roundabout with traffic. You must observe the same rules as vehicles. You may also walk your bicycle or ride at a walking speed through the pedestrian crossings.

What if an emergency vehicle approaches?

In a roundabout, treat emergency vehicles the same way you would in a traditional intersection. Do not stop if you are in the roundabout. Continue to your exit. Once you exit the roundabout, pull to the right and allow the emergency vehicle to pass. If you see an emergency vehicle as you are approaching a roundabout, pull to the right to allow it to pass, then continue into the roundabout.

What happens if there's a collision in the roundabout?

Treat it like you would a collision in a traditional intersection. If possible, drivers involved in the collision should drive out of the roundabout to the shoulder of the road. Drivers within the roundabout should, if possible, drive around the collision and exit. Consider an alternate route if a collision is completely blocking the roundabout.

Signs You Might See



The yield sign tells drivers to yield to traffic and pedestrians already in the roundabout.



Drivers should keep right of the center median when entering a roundabout.



Roundabouts are designed for speeds between 15 to 25 mph.



Drivers should look for pedestrians in marked crossings before entering or exiting a roundabout.