

# Walk NEBRASKA

## Stay Safe When Walking with Traffic

Although walking is an easy and relatively safe way to increase your physical activity, when you add motor vehicles to the scenario, you enter a different world.

The loss of 4,378 lives in pedestrian/motor vehicle crashes in 2008, almost twelve people every day of the year, is an awful toll. (NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts). The number of fatalities has decreased over the decade from 1998-2008, however, reported injuries in 2008 were nearly identical to those 1998 figures, at 69,000.

To protect yourself when walking, follow these tips for being a safe pedestrian:

- **See and be seen.** Make it easy for drivers to see you. Wear bright colors -- or reflective clothing at dusk or later. Carry a flashlight, especially after dusk. Make eye contact with drivers when crossing busy streets. Stay out of drivers' blind spots.
- **Be predictable.** Stay off highways, freeways and other restricted zones. Use sidewalks, or even better, walking paths where provided. Cross or enter streets at crosswalks..
- **Watch traffic.** When crossing a street or road, look left, right, then left again for on-coming traffic. Stop at the curb or road edge to signal drivers you intend to cross. Always obey signals and cross in marked crosswalks. Walk straight across the street, not diagonally.
- **Do a double take.** When crossing multiple-lane or higher speed streets, use extra caution. Look left, right, and left, then do it again – take a second look before crossing.
- **Face traffic.** If you walk where no designated walkways are provided, it is safer to walk facing road traffic.
- **Avoid alcohol and drugs.** Just as alcohol and drugs impair your ability to drive, they can impair your safety as a pedestrian.
- **Stay alert and aware.** Don't be distracted by cell phones, PDA's or headsets.

When mixing your walking and traffic, add an extra measure of safety and avoid becoming a pedestrian statistic.

Sources: Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center. Pedestrian Crash Facts. Retrieved 02/10/2010.  
<http://www.walkinginfo.org/facts/facts.cfm>

UNC Highway Safety Research Center. Pedestrian Safety Tips. Retrieved 02/10/2010.  
[http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/safety\\_info/pedestrian/safty\\_tips.cfm](http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/safety_info/pedestrian/safty_tips.cfm)

**Know how. Know now.**



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