

HOW TO USE A ROUNDABOUT

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

What are the general principles behind using a roundabout?

Think of roundabouts as a series of “T” intersections, where entering vehicles yield to one-way traffic coming from the left. A driver approaching a roundabout must slow down or stop for vehicles stopped ahead, yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk, and yield to traffic already in the roundabout. Then it’s a simple matter of a right turn onto a one-way street. Once in the roundabout, the driver proceeds around the central island, then takes the necessary right hand exit.

What are the advantages of roundabouts?

A well-designed roundabout can improve safety, operations and aesthetics of an intersection:

- ◆ **Greater safety** is achieved primarily by slower speeds and elimination of left turns
- ◆ **Operation** is improved by smooth flowing traffic (with less stop and go than a signalized intersection)
- ◆ **Aesthetics** are enhanced by landscaping and less pavement

Are there any disadvantages? What about costs?

Drivers must pay attention; pedestrians don’t have a signal to help them cross and bicyclists must merge with motor vehicles to enter the roundabout.

Construction costs are generally comparable to a traffic signal. Additional landscaping requires a long-term maintenance

commitment, but normally costs less in the long run than signal maintenance.

General Information

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Step-by-Step Instruction

Bicyclists □ Drivers □ Pedestrians

Roundabouts are designed to accommodate fire trucks and large vehicles. Large trucks may have to drive on the concrete apron around the central island in order to get through the roundabout.

Step-By-Step Instructions For Drivers & Bicyclists

NOTE TO BICYCLISTS: If you're riding a bicycle, ride as if you were driving a car.

Roundabouts are designed so motorists will drive at about 15-25 MPH, close to your bicycling speed. Be assertive, so cars see you and respect your right to be on the road.

The first cue that you are approaching a roundabout is the following sign, telling you there is a roundabout ahead:

You should start slowing down. Next you will see a directional sign that shows where the exits are located on the roundabout:

Now the roundabout will be clearly visible. Slow down to 10-15 MPH as you approach. Stay in your lane, to the right of the splitter island.

Be sure to look for bicyclists merging into the travel lane, or pedestrians wanting to cross.

Be considerate, and let the bicyclists merge.

If you see a person in or about to enter the crosswalk, let them cross; **it's the LAW.**

NOTE TO BICYCLISTS: If you are riding on the shoulder or bike lane, merge into the travel lane before the shoulder ends. Prepare for this move early, look over your shoulder, and signal your intent to move into traffic. Don't be intimidated; assert your position upon entering the roundabout.

If you do not want to ride your bicycle in the roundabout, you may enter the sidewalk using the ramps, and proceed as a pedestrian. Refer to the step-by-step instructions for pedestrians for more details.

Then move slowly to the yield line, looking left. A YIELD sign will tell you to yield to traffic in the roundabout:

You may have to stop to yield to cars on your left. If the road is clear, simply enter the roundabout, turning right. You don't have to stop, just enter.

Proceed around the roundabout slowly. Don't pass bicyclists ahead of you within the roundabout, as your speeds should be nearly equal. Continue until you get to your exit. **Do not stop in the roundabout.**

NOTE TO BICYCLISTS: Once in the roundabout, don't hug the curb. Ride close to the middle of the lane to prevent cars from passing and cutting you off. Watch for cars waiting to enter the roundabout, as they may not see you.

Directional signs will tell you where to exit: Exit carefully, **using your right turn signal.** Watch for pedestrians in or approaching the crosswalk and stop for them.

That's it, you're done! Go on to your destination and enjoy the rest of your trip. If you have questions, contact the ODOT Preliminary Design Unit at (503) 986-3564.

Step-By-Step Instructions For Pedestrians

You can walk safely through a roundabout by following these simple steps:

- Proceed around the roundabout on the sidewalk and in the designated crosswalks. **Never walk in the roundabout or to the central island.**
- Cross one lane at a time to the splitter island; it's there to provide you a refuge between lanes.
- When crossing an entry lane, watch traffic coming at you down the entry lane. You have the right of way when you're in the crosswalk, but be careful - make sure that drivers can see you and stop for you.
- When crossing an exit lane, watch for cars leaving the roundabout. Some vehicles will use their right-turn signal, but some won't. You have the right of way, but proceed carefully.