

# CROSSING THE STREET

One FALSE MOVE might  
spell DISASTER



Québec 



[ The other day, I was in a hurry to get across the street to the convenience store. And, believe it or not, I was knocked down by a car. Seems the driver hadn't seen me.

Just about now you're probably saying that it was a young reckless driver who was going too fast. Well, you'd be wrong.

The fortyish motorist was travelling within the speed.

It embarrasses me to say this, but come to think of it, I'm the one who made a few mistakes. ]



### **Mistake no. 1**

*I stepped off the sidewalk to cross right in the middle of the street, not at an intersection.*

### **Mistake no. 2**

*I crossed between two parked cars. No wonder the driver couldn't see me.*

### **And mistake no. 3**

*I didn't even take the time to look left and right carefully to make sure there were no cars coming before crossing.*



*I came out of it with a broken arm and a few bruises to the head. But because I'm not twenty any more, it'll be several weeks before I've recovered.*

*As pedestrians, we are very vulnerable in accident situations because we're completely unprotected.*

*And at my age, I have to be doubly careful because my eyesight and hearing aren't as good. And my reflexes aren't as quick either.*

- The main causes of accidents involving pedestrians are **distraction and carelessness**.
- The majority of accident victims are either under 15 years of age or 55 and over. But seniors are the ones subject to the greatest number of fatal accidents.
- **The state of health** of senior citizens can change greatly, so an annual check-up by your doctor and eye specialist is recommended.
- Certain medications can affect your reactions. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the effects of your prescription or over-the-counter medication.





*[What I've learned from this terrible experience is that it's always better to **cross at intersections or at pedestrian crosswalks** And to never cross diagonally or between two parked cars.]*



Generally,  
**white lines**  
identify pedestrian  
crosswalks at intersections.

**Yellow pavement markings** identify pedestrian crosswalks between intersections.

If there is no intersection or pedestrian crosswalk,

be extra  
careful by checking  
left and right  
before crossing in a  
straight line.





*[Another thing I've learned from my near-disaster is that it's very important to **make sure that the driver has really seen you.**]*

Wear bright-coloured clothing at night or when it's dark.

Darkness is a pedestrian's enemy. When light decreases, the visual acuity of all road users is significantly reduced. In fact, the greatest number of accidents involving pedestrians occurs in Autumn.



## Don't take chances!

It can happen that a driver fails to see a pedestrian for the following reasons:

- Glare from the sun or from another vehicle's headlights
- A parked car
- Rain, snow or fog.



By the same token, pedestrians may also have trouble seeing the cars coming towards them due to obstacles obstructing the view (e.g. umbrellas).





*[ Since my accident, I'm more cautious in general on the road.*

- *For example, **I always use the sidewalk**, and when there's none, I walk along the edge of the road, facing traffic.*
- *At intersections, I rely most of all on pedestrian signals to know whether I can cross the road safely. Before crossing, I still take the precaution of looking right and left to make sure there is no traffic.*
- *When I don't feel very sure of myself, I ask for help or have someone take me across. ]*



## Pedestrian signals

- A **white silhouette** indicates that a pedestrian can cross the street safely.
- An **upheld hand** indicates that crossing is prohibited.



- A **flashing signal (hand or silhouette)** also indicates that crossing is prohibited.
- **When there are no pedestrian signals**, obey the traffic lights.
- **When there are no traffic lights or pedestrian signals**, check left and right several times before crossing in a straight line.



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