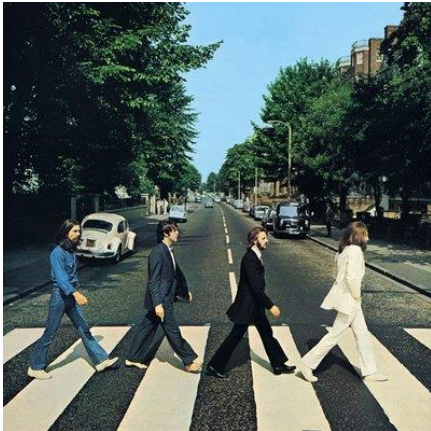




## CROSSWALK LAWS IN CONNECTICUT AND NEARBY STATES

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[Abbey Road](#) by badgreeb PHOTOS (CC BY-SA 2.0)

### ISSUE

What is Connecticut's law on yielding to a pedestrian in a crosswalk? Which nearby states require drivers to yield to a pedestrian who is standing on the curb by a crosswalk, rather than in the crosswalk itself?

### SUMMARY

Between 1994 and 2007 Connecticut required drivers to grant the right-of-way to a pedestrian who was either in the crosswalk or had stepped to a curb adjacent to one. In 2007 the legislature amended the law to require drivers to grant the right of way only when a pedestrian stepped off the curb or into the crosswalk.

We reviewed the laws of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Of these six states, only Maine requires a driver to yield or grant the right-of-way to a pedestrian who has not yet stepped into the roadway. Maine requires drivers to yield or grant the right-of-way to a pedestrian who shows "visible intent" to enter a marked crosswalk as well as those already in the crosswalk.

### UNIFORM VEHICLE CODE

State traffic laws, including those governing crosswalks, are generally adapted from the Uniform Vehicle Code (UVC), published as a national standard by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances. The crosswalk laws in New York and the New England states are based on [UVC § 11-502](#), which states, in part:



When traffic control signals are not in place or not in operation, the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right of way, slowing down or stopping if need be to yield to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling, or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger.

## **CONNECTICUT LAW**

Connecticut's crosswalk law has been changed several times. Starting in 1978, Connecticut law required drivers to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, provided the pedestrian was in the half of the road in which the vehicle was driving or crossing to it from the opposite side. The pedestrian also had to be approaching so quickly, or be so close to the portion of the roadway on which the vehicle was traveling, that he or she "was in reasonable danger of being struck" (PA 78-309).

In 1994, the legislature enacted [PA 94-189](#), which required drivers to grant the right-of-way (1) not only to pedestrians in a crosswalk but also to pedestrians who had stepped to the curb at the entrance to a crosswalk and (2) regardless of whether the pedestrian was in danger of being hit.

In 2007, the legislature again changed the law, requiring that drivers grant the right-of-way when a pedestrian has stepped "off the curb or into the crosswalk" ([PA 07-167](#), codified as [CGS § 14-300\(c\)](#)).

## **OTHER STATES' CROSSWALK LAWS**

### ***Maine***

Besides requiring drivers to yield to a pedestrian within the crosswalk, Maine also requires vehicles to yield to a pedestrian "who has shown visible intent to enter the marked crosswalk" ([Maine Rev. Stat. 29-A, § 2056](#)). Maine law specifies that the crosswalk be marked, and unlike the UVC, does not specify which half of the roadway the pedestrian must be on.

### ***Other Nearby States***

Language identical or nearly so to that of the UVC serves as the crosswalk laws of New Hampshire ([N. H. Rev. Stat. § 265:35](#)) and Rhode Island ([R.I. General Laws § 31-18-3](#)). Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont crosswalk laws differ slightly.

Massachusetts specifies that the crosswalk be marked according to state highway department standards, and requires a driver to yield to a pedestrian crossing from the road's opposite side when the pedestrian is within 10 feet of the half of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling ([M.G. L. A. 89, § 11](#)).

New York and Vermont laws require drivers to yield to pedestrians regardless of which half of the roadway the pedestrian is on ([NY Vehicle and Traffic Law, § 1151](#) and [23 V.S.A. § 1051](#), respectively).

The National Conference on State Legislatures has information on the crosswalk laws of all 50 states at: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/transportation/pedestrian-crossing-50-state-summary.aspx>

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