



Crossing Guard Reference



MASSACHUSETTS
Safe Routes to School

[MASS.GOV/SAFE-ROUTES-TO-SCHOOL](https://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school)

massDOT

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Introduction

Adult school crossing guards play several important roles in the community:

- They help children safely cross the street;
- They remind drivers of the presence of pedestrians;
- They are “eyes on the street;”
- They set an example of safe behavior for children; and,
- They help children develop the lifelong skills necessary to cross the street safely at all times.



This reference guide provides a brief overview of crossing guard roles and responsibilities. This guide serves as a reminder of:

- Basic Crossing Procedures
- Observing and Reporting Unsafe Conditions
- Expectations of Personal Conduct
- Emergency Procedures
- Required Equipment
- Where to Find Additional Information on Safe Crossing Practices





Basic Crossing Procedures

The crossing guard's role is to create an adequate gap in traffic for children to cross the street safely. By law, crossing guards are NOT allowed to direct traffic.

In Massachusetts, drivers must yield at a crosswalk if a pedestrian is walking in that half of the road, or is within 10 feet of crossing that half of the road. Crossing guards reinforce this law to assist children crossing the street.

The following steps (illustrated on the next pages) should be used to assist children crossing the street:

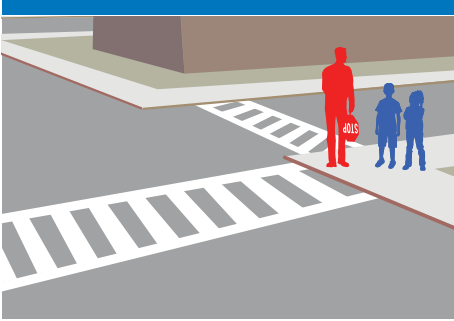
1. Assemble children at the curb.
2. Wait for an adequate gap in traffic.
3. Enter the crosswalk.
4. Stop traffic.
5. Take position.
6. Verbally initiate crossing.
7. Maintain position.
8. Return to curb.

Procedures for Streets with Four or More Lanes

For crossings with four or more lanes, experts recommend using two adult guards working in unison. One guard stops a lane of traffic while the other guard stops traffic in the opposite lane. In order to coordinate signaling, the guard on the side of the street from which children are approaching initiates the crossing, with the second guard taking his/her cues from the first guard.

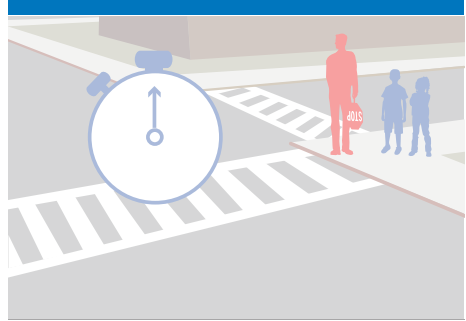
Basic Crossing Steps

1. Assemble children at the curb.



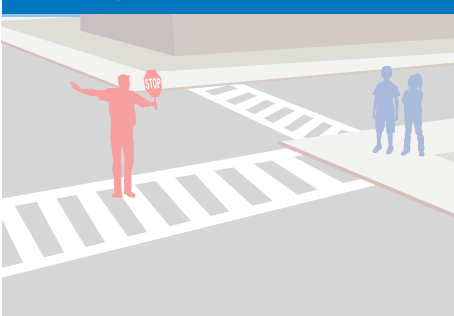
Tell children to wait three feet back from the curb.

2. Wait for an adequate gap.



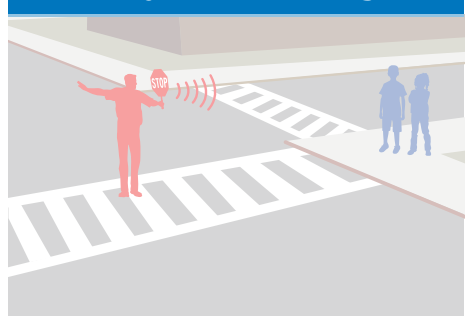
Wait for an adequate gap in traffic or, if applicable, for the WALK sign to appear on a pedestrian signal.

5. Take position.



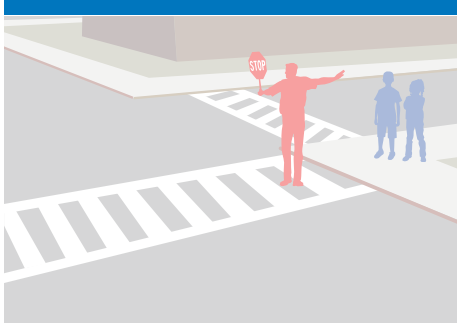
Take position at the center of the crosswalk, holding your STOP paddle high in the air. Face oncoming traffic and scan the roadway.

6. Verbally initiate crossing.



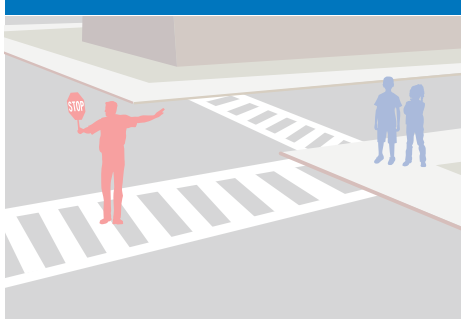
Once you are sure all traffic has stopped, verbally instruct children to enter the crosswalk. Do not signal to children with your hands, as this may confuse drivers who might think the hand motions are directed at them.

3. Enter the crosswalk.



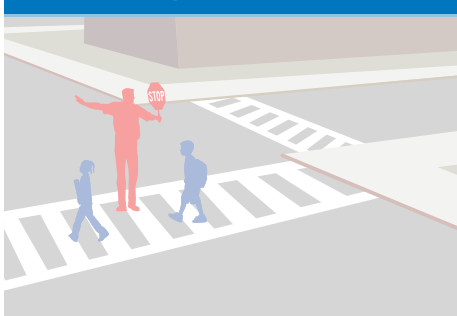
While scanning the roadway, enter the crosswalk, holding your STOP paddle high in the air.

4. Stop traffic.



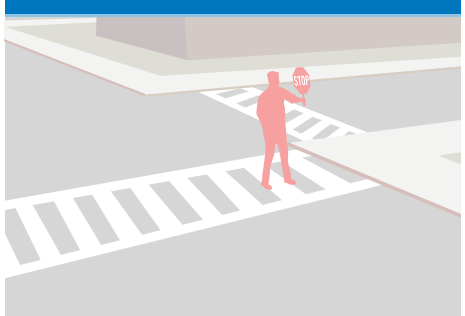
Making eye contact with drivers and using your free hand, signal traffic to stop.

7. Maintain position.



Maintain your position, holding your STOP paddle high and scanning for traffic as the children cross the street.

8. Return to curb.



Once all children have crossed, return to your original position. Keep your STOP paddle raised the entire time you are in the street.

Observing and Reporting Unsafe Conditions

Besides assisting with street crossings, crossing guards serve as “eyes” on the street, watching for unsafe conditions or behaviors. Report any of the following to your supervisor:

- Unsafe driver behaviors;
- Unsafe pedestrian behaviors;
- Unlawful parking;
- Construction interfering with safe crossing;
- Unsafe street conditions;
- Damaged signs;
- Poor visibility;
- Suspicious activity; and
- Improper use or lack of safety belt or bicycle helmet.

Expectations of Personal Conduct

- Arrive on time to your designated post.
- Do not use an umbrella or carry anything that prevents you from using your hands.
- Remain standing at your post.
- Be firm, courteous, and pleasant.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke on duty.
- Exhibit behavior that projects a positive image of your agency.



Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency:

- Remain at the post with the children. Assemble children in a group and stop crossing them until the situation is under control.
- If possible, call 911. If not, ask others to call 911.
- If a victim can walk, he or she should move out of the road. Otherwise, a victim should not be moved except by qualified emergency medical personnel.
- Always notify your supervisor as soon as possible of any emergency.

Caring for an Injured Person

- Do not attempt to help if you are injured.
- If a qualified person is at the scene, stay out of the way.
- Do not move a severely injured person unless there is a greater danger.
- Keep the injured person warm and still.
- Stop bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- Watch for changes in breathing and alertness. If the person shows no sign of circulation – conduct CPR if you are trained. Ask your supervisor about CPR training or contact your local Red Cross to learn about classes.



Required Equipment

Your supervisor will supply you with the required equipment listed below. Crossing guards are required by federal law to use both the vest and the STOP paddle. You may choose to use optional equipment to increase visibility.

Required:

- ANSI II Retroreflective vest
- ANSI II Retroreflective STOP paddle

Optional:

- Reflective gloves
- Reflective hat
- Whistle



Where to Find Additional Information

1. **Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Website**
<https://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school>
2. **Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development**
<https://www.mass.gov/workplace-safety-and-health-program-wshp>
3. **U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (Chapter 7D: Crossing Supervision)**
<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/part7.pdf>

Supervisor / School Contact Information: