

## Green doesn't always mean Go: Brits confusion over crossings causes more accidents

- Admiral investigates rise in pedestrian accidents on UK roads -

- A third of pedestrians have had a near miss with a vehicle at a pedestrian crossing
- Pedestrians are the most vulnerable group using our roads, with 15 serious injuries or fatalities every day
- A Pelican crossing is the most dangerous place to cross – and 4 in 5 drivers and pedestrians don't know what they are
- Over 1 in 4 people can't identify a zebra crossing in the UK
- More than half of pedestrians don't know what a flashing green light means

According to new research from car insurance expert, [Admiral](#), drivers and pedestrians in the UK are clueless when it comes to identifying the difference between pedestrian crossings and the rules around them and are putting themselves in potential danger as a result.

According to the Department for Transport, pedestrians are one of the most vulnerable groups using UK roads, with 1 fatality and 15 serious injuries involving pedestrians recorded every single day – that's **more than 5,500 pedestrians a year killed** (equivalent to 25% of all road deaths as a result of road accidents).<sup>1</sup>

Over the last five years alone, **Admiral has dealt with almost 6,000 claims from pedestrians** who have been hit by an Admiral insured driver.

Despite being designed to give pedestrians a safe place to cross the road, **pelican crossings accounted for over a third of all casualties at crossings in 2017.**<sup>2</sup>

And shockingly, the Admiral research shows that **79% of Brits can't identify a pelican crossing.**

### Pedestrian casualties at road crossings

Rank	Location	% of pedestrian casualties on or within 50 metres of crossing
1	Pelican Crossing	38%
2	Light Controlled	31%
3	Zebra Crossing	25%
4	Crossing with Human Control	7%

And it's not just pelican crossings that road users aren't sure of. Admiral research also revealed that **over 1 in 4 people can't identify a zebra crossing**, the location for 25% of pedestrian crossing casualties.

Meanwhile **92% of people can't identify a toucan crossing**, and **85% of Brits are unable to tell the difference** between a puffin and a toucan crossing.

<sup>1</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/648081/rrcgb2016-01.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/648081/rrcgb2016-01.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras30-reported-casualties-in-road-accidents> see table 30027

### Should I stay or should I go?

According to the Highway Code, when the green figure begins flashing at a pelican crossing pedestrian should not start to cross the road, yet more than **2 in 5 people think it just means you don't have much time to cross**, and **1 in 5 think it means you still have plenty of time** to cross.

Both drivers and pedestrians admit to ignoring the lights at designated crossings. Nearly 60% of pedestrians admit to ignoring the light instructions and crossing anyway, and when it comes to those behind the wheel, over half of drivers admit to being amber gamblers and drive through amber lights at pedestrian crossings.

Showing that wisdom doesn't necessarily come with age, pedestrians aged between 55 – 64 are the most likely age group to ignore light signals for pedestrians, while drivers aged 45-54 are more likely to dash through an amber light than any other demographic.

### Man vs Car

**A third of pedestrians have had a near miss when using a pedestrian crossing with 19% of those admitting they didn't look properly** before stepping onto the crossing, and **1 in 10 people** admitting it was because they were on the phone.

And while 10% of pedestrians who narrowly escaped an accident with a car admit they ignored the light signals altogether, 4 in 10 laid the blame firmly at the driver's feet saying the car simply didn't stop. .

Meanwhile, a **quarter of drivers admit to having a close shave with a pedestrian at a designated pedestrian crossing**, with **50% of those blaming the pedestrian** for not looking before they crossed. A third of these drivers said they didn't see the pedestrian, and 13% if them admitted to being distracted by their phone.

Overall, a third of drivers admit their mobile phone is the biggest distraction they face when behind the wheel.

### Top 3 reasons given for the near miss by road user

	Driver	Pedestrian
1	The pedestrian didn't look before crossing	The driver was going too fast
2	The pedestrian ignored the crossing lights	The driver didn't see them
3	The pedestrian just didn't see the pedestrian	The driver didn't stop

**Half of people between the ages of 25 – 34 have had a near accident at a crossing as a pedestrian**, and they are also the age group **where the fewest people knew what a flashing green figure represents on a pelican crossing**.

When asked, **44% of people in the same age category were** unable to identify a zebra crossing and **less than 1 in 5 could identify a toucan crossing** .



A 2016 study into serious traffic injuries in the EU found that pedestrians 'failing to look properly' was the most common cause of severe pedestrian crashes (accounting for 48-58% of accidents).<sup>3</sup>

### How does the UK compare?

Across the EU, **NINE** countries have seen an increase in the number of pedestrian casualties as a percentage of all road fatalities in the five years to 2015, including the United Kingdom which saw a 2% rise.

The UK also has the sixth highest number of pedestrian deaths behind Poland, Romania, Italy, Germany and France, while Luxembourg had the fewest with just 7 pedestrian deaths.<sup>4</sup>

**Sabine Williams, head of motor at Admiral says:** "Having any sort of accident can be a frightening experience, but where a pedestrian is involved the implications can be devastating.

"What's worrying about these findings is how little both drivers and pedestrians understand about the designated crossings and what the rules are for safely using them. More needs to be done to make sure all road users know what their responsibilities are when it comes to crossing so we can see a reduction in the number of accidents taking place."

"In a media led society we're also urging pedestrians as well as drivers to stay vigilant in and around the road and avoid life altering distractions. No text message or tweet is more important than remembering the green cross code."

**ENDS**

### Notes to editors

- 1) [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/648081/rrcgb2016-01.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/648081/rrcgb2016-01.pdf)
- 2) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras30-reported-casualties-in-road-accidents-see-table-30027>
- 3) [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/injuries\\_study\\_2016.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/injuries_study_2016.pdf)
- 4) EU data sourced from: (2015 most recent EU comparison available)  
[https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/pdf/statistics/dacota/bfs2017\\_pedestrians.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/pdf/statistics/dacota/bfs2017_pedestrians.pdf)

**HIGHWAY CODE GUIDELINES:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/rules-for-pedestrians-1-to-35>

**Zebra crossings.** Give traffic plenty of time to see you and to stop before you start to cross. Vehicles will need more time when the road is slippery. Wait until traffic has stopped from both directions or the road is clear before crossing. Remember that traffic does not have to stop until someone has moved onto the crossing. Keep looking both ways, and listening, in case a driver or rider has not seen you and attempts to overtake a vehicle that has stopped.

**Pelican crossings** These are signal-controlled crossings operated by pedestrians. Push the control button to activate the traffic signals. When the red figure shows, do not cross. When a steady green figure shows, check the traffic has stopped then cross with care. **When the green figure begins to flash you should not start to cross.**

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<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/injuries\\_study\\_2016.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/injuries_study_2016.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> EU data sourced from: (2015 most recent EU comparison available)  
[https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/pdf/statistics/dacota/bfs2017\\_pedestrians.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/pdf/statistics/dacota/bfs2017_pedestrians.pdf)



**Puffin crossings** differ from pelican crossings as the red and green figures are above the control box on your side of the road and there is no flashing green figure phase. Press the button and wait for the green figure to show.

**Toucan crossings** are light-controlled crossings which allow cyclists and pedestrians to share crossing space and cross at the same time. They are push-button operated. Pedestrians and cyclists will see the green signal together. Cyclists are permitted to ride across.

**Crossings controlled by an authorised person.** Do not cross the road unless you are signalled to do so by a police officer, traffic warden or school crossing patrol. Always cross in front of them.

**Media contact:**

Laura Jones - 02920 56 6220 [laura.jones@brandcontent.co.uk](mailto:laura.jones@brandcontent.co.uk)

Zoe Paines – 07812 050395 [zoe.paines@brandcontent.co.uk](mailto:zoe.paines@brandcontent.co.uk)



**About Admiral:**

Admiral (a trading name of EUI Ltd and part of Admiral Group plc) is a UK based insurance company, founded in 1993 to specialise in car insurance. In 2005, it launched MultiCar, a product designed to help people with two or more cars get a better deal and in 2013, it launched its telematics product LittleBox which helps safe drivers receive discounts based on their driving style. Admiral also offers other insurance products including home insurance, travel insurance, pet insurance, van insurance, learner driver insurance and recently MultiCover, enabling customers to insure their cars and home on one policy. Admiral was also voted the UK's Best Car Insurance Provider at the 2017/18 Personal Finance Awards and the Admiral Group employs over 6,200 people in the UK and has over 4 million UK customers.