

Five things to remember when driving a roundabout

- 1 Slow down when approaching a roundabout.
- 2 Pick a lane as you approach a roundabout. To turn right, be in the right lane. To turn left, be in the left lane. To go straight, use either lane unless otherwise indicated.
- 3 Yield to traffic in the roundabout. Vehicles in the roundabout have the right-of-way.
- 4 Stay a safe distance behind trucks because they will usually use both lanes. Driving side-by-side a truck in a roundabout can be risky!
- 5 Do not stop within the circular portion of the roundabout.

Washington Roundabouts

www.wsdot.wa.gov/safety/roundabouts

Video – driving a roundabout

www.youtube.com/wsdot

Signs near the roundabout show drivers how to navigate the intersection



The lane choice sign shows drivers which lanes are used for right turns, straight through travel, left turns and U-turns.



Drivers should note that trucks may take up both lanes in a roundabout.



Roundabouts are designed for speeds between 15 and 25 mph.



The yield sign tells drivers to yield to traffic already in the roundabout.



Drivers should look for pedestrians or bicyclists in marked crossings before entering or exiting a roundabout.



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RULES OF THE ROUNDABOUT

Spring 2015



Roundabouts

As traffic volumes increase on local roadways traditional intersections using stoplights can actually increase delays for drivers. Transportation departments around the nation are more frequently turning to roundabouts as an efficient, cost-effective way to improve safety and traffic flow.

Roundabouts substantially decrease severe injury and fatality collisions and allow drivers to get through intersections more quickly. Roundabouts also provide a safer way for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate traffic.

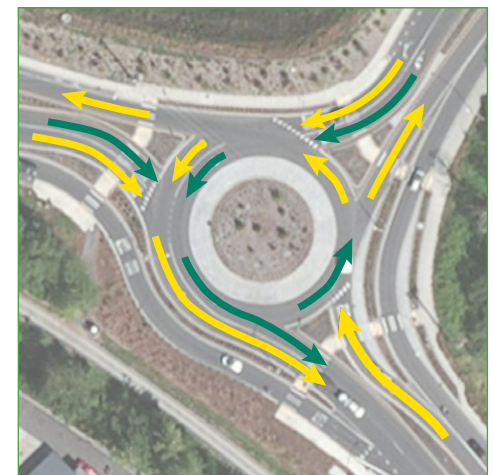
What is a roundabout?

Not all roundabouts are the same. A modern roundabout is a circular intersection where drivers travel counterclockwise around a center island. Drivers yield to traffic on their left as they approach the circle, then enter the roundabout and exit at their desired street. Drivers will never see traffic lights or stop signs in a modern roundabout, however, some feature pedestrian beacons that flash to warn drivers of pedestrians at some roundabouts.

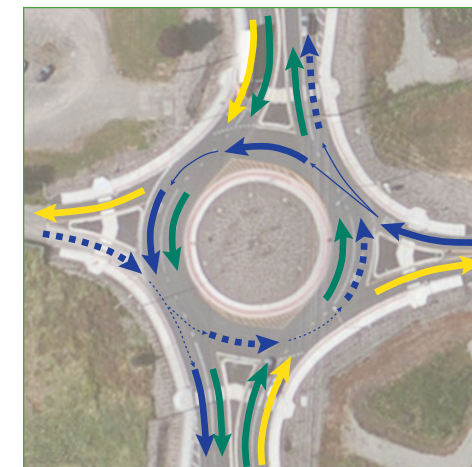
A traffic circle, common in Europe, is larger than a modern roundabout and often uses signals or stop signs.



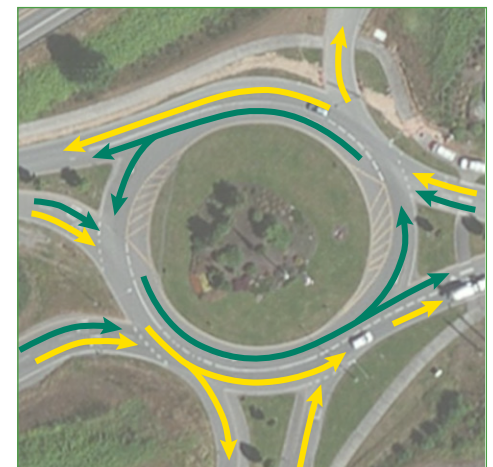
SR 202, Woodinville



East Lake Sammamish Pwky NE, Issaquah



SR 539, south of Lynden



W. Main Street, Monroe

Every roundabout is a little different. Follow the arrows to get to your destination.



Movements in a single-lane roundabout

Slowdown as you approach a single-lane roundabout. Upon entering, yield to vehicles in the circle and drive counterclockwise to your exit.

Movements in a double-lane roundabout

The following rules apply to double-lane roundabouts and some information will be helpful for single-lane roundabouts as well.

How do I go straight?

In most cases, use either the left or right lane to go straight in a two-lane roundabout. Yield to vehicles traveling in the circle coming from your left and drive counterclockwise while staying in your lane. Exit cautiously as cars may have tried to pass you on the right. Pay attention to pavement markings and signs as they will help guide you through the roundabout.

How do I make a right turn?

Make sure you are in the right lane as you approach the roundabout. Yield to traffic already in the circle. While driving counterclockwise, turn one-quarter of the way around the roundabout and exit.

How do I make a left turn?

Make sure you are in the left lane as you approach the roundabout. Yield to traffic already in the circle. Drive counterclockwise three-quarters of the way around the circle while staying in your lane. Exit cautiously as cars may be trying to pass you on the right.

How do I make a U turn?

Make sure you are in the left lane as you approach the roundabout. Yield to traffic already in the circle. Enter the circle, driving counterclockwise completely around the center of the roundabout. Exit cautiously as cars may have tried to pass you on the right.

Can I change lanes in a roundabout?

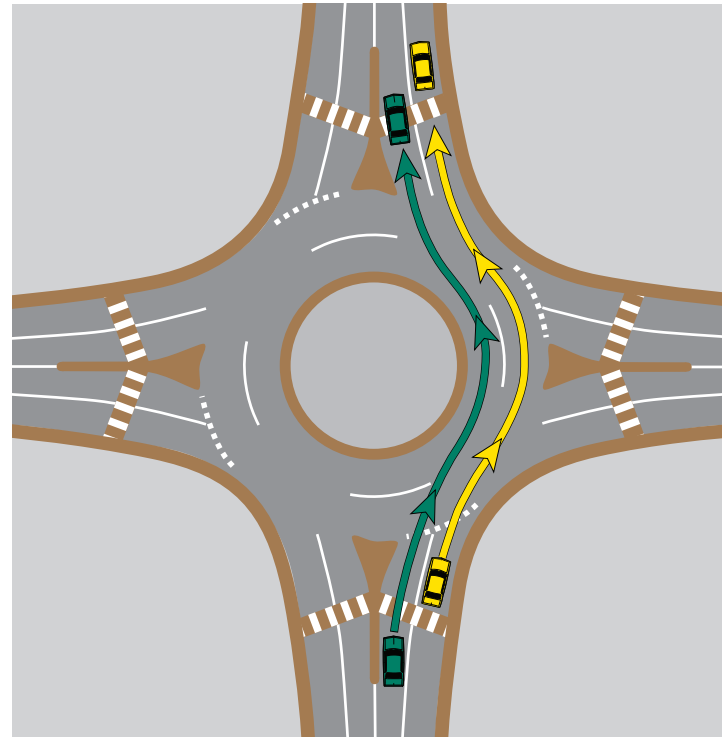
No. You must stay in your lane once you enter a roundabout. Make sure you choose the correct lane before you enter the roundabout and stay within your lane as you drive the roundabout. Some double lane roundabouts have spiral striping (a pattern of marking that will move you from the inside lane to the outside lane) to position you to exit the roundabout easier.

Do I have to yield to entering vehicles if I'm already in a roundabout?

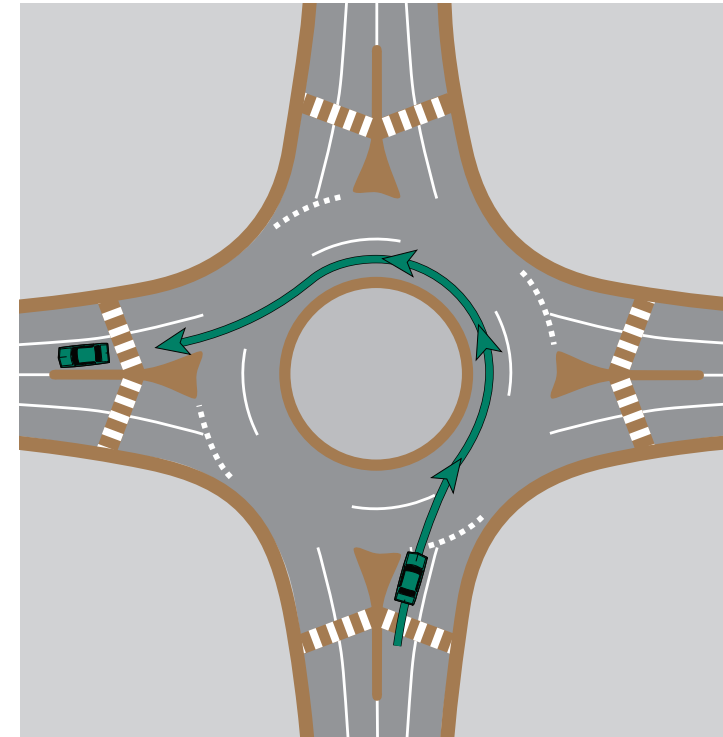
No. If you are in a roundabout, vehicles entering the roundabout must yield to you. However, you must yield to pedestrians or bicycles in crosswalks when entering or exiting the roundabout.

Studies by the FHWA and Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have shown that roundabouts typically achieve:

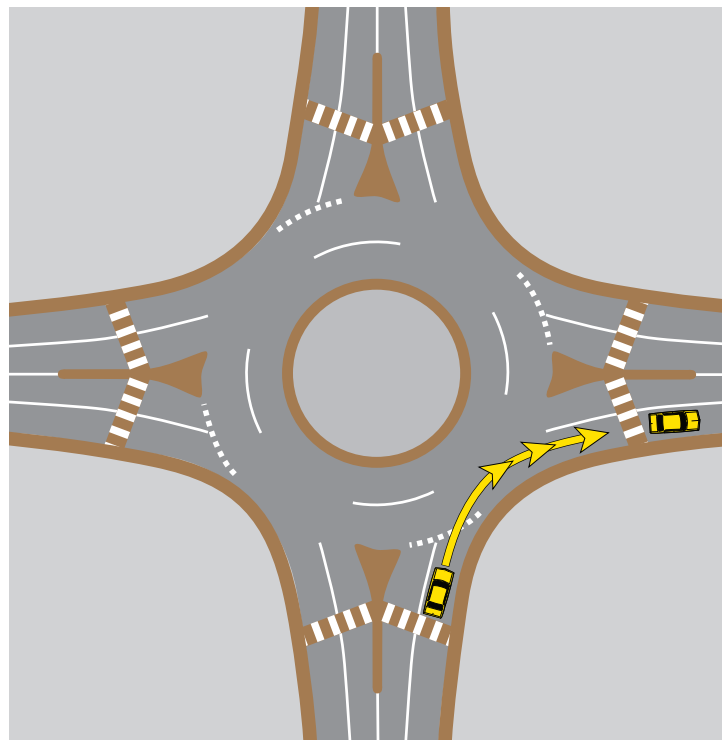
- A 37 percent reduction in overall collisions
- A 75 percent reduction in injury collisions
- A 90 percent reduction in fatality collisions
- A 40 percent reduction in pedestrian collisions
- 75 percent fewer conflict points than a traditional intersection



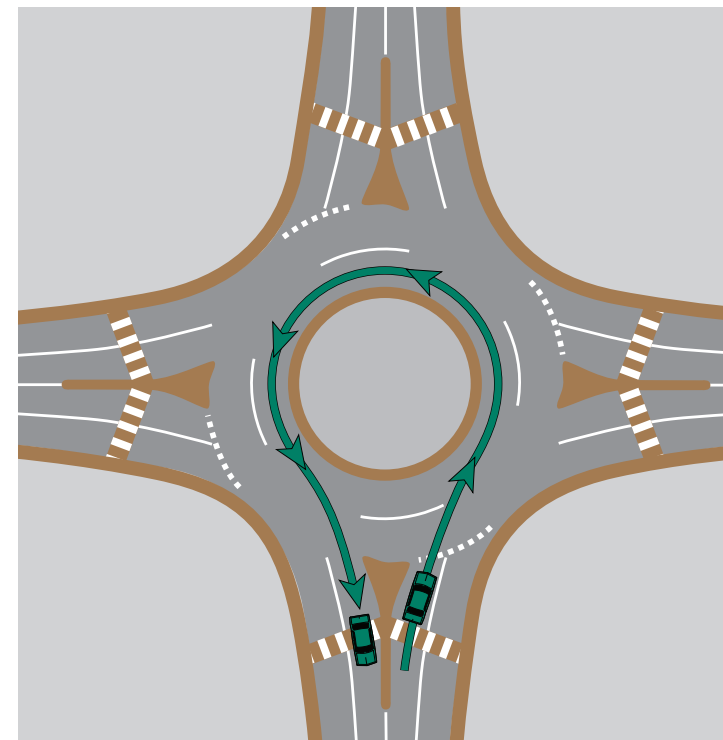
Use either lane to go straight.



Use the left lane to make a left turn.



Use the right lane to make a right turn.



Use the left lane to make a U-turn.

What if an emergency vehicle approaches?

In a roundabout, treat emergency vehicles the same way you would in a traditional intersection. Do not stop if you are in the roundabout. Continue to your exit. Once you exit the roundabout, pull to the right and allow the emergency vehicle to pass. If you see an emergency vehicle as you are approaching a roundabout, pull to the right to allow it to pass, then continue into the roundabout.

How fast should I go through a roundabout?

As you approach a roundabout, yellow signs with black lettering indicate the recommended speed which is usually 15 or 20 mph. The lower speed allows you to make the turns in the roundabout cleanly and staying within your lane. Regardless of the recommended speed, always yield to vehicles in the roundabout.

How do I use a roundabout if I'm on a bicycle?

If you feel comfortable doing so, you can ride through the roundabout with traffic. You must observe the same rules as vehicles. You may also walk your bicycle through the pedestrian crossings.

How do I use a roundabout if I'm on foot?

Crosswalks are located on each street near the entrance to the roundabout. Pedestrian islands are also located between lanes. This means that you can cross one direction of traffic and have a safe place to wait in the median before you cross another direction of traffic. Although pedestrians have the right-of-way, vehicles do not always stop, so be cautious and make eye contact with the vehicle driver if possible before crossing. This ensures vehicles are aware of your intention to cross!

What happens if there's a collision in the roundabout?

Treat it like you would a collision in a traditional intersection. If possible, drivers involved in the collision should drive out of the roundabout to the shoulder of the road. Drivers within the roundabout should, if possible, drive around the collision and exit. Consider an alternate route if a collision is completely blocking the roundabout.

How safe is a roundabout?

Studies have shown that roundabouts are safer than traditional signalized intersections, reducing the severity and frequency of collisions. Speeds are slower through a roundabout because vehicles enter the circular intersection which provides a speed reduction (as compared to a straight intersection) and all travel the same direction. The chance of T-bone and head-on collisions is virtually eliminated.