

CYCLOPEDIA

Questions answered, subjects explained – Cyclopedia is your bimonthly cycling reference guide

Right: Joolize Dymond



Legal

Q & A

Pedestrians crossing

Q On a recent club ride, the rider in front of me was confronted by a man standing in the road shouting: “Don’t you wait for pedestrians to cross?” The rider hadn’t a clue what the man was talking about until I explained the new Highway Code Rule 74 to him about stopping to allow pedestrians to cross at junctions.

Should large groups of cyclists now shout “pedestrian!” and hit the brakes if they spot someone at a junction who looks like they might want to cross the road? If so, surely that could cause a sudden chain reaction in the group and result in an accident?

Mike Lloyd

A While everyone owes a duty of care to their fellows, everyone also has a duty to look after themselves and not to place themselves in harm’s way (Law Reform Contributory Negligence Act 1945). So pedestrians need to apply a bit of thought to their actions. Rule 7D of the Highway Code, for pedestrians wanting to cross the road, states: “If traffic is coming, let it pass.”

There are several other references to your example found in the Highway Code:

- **Rule H2 (for drivers, motorcyclists, horse-drawn vehicles, horse riders and cyclists):** “At a junction, you should give way to pedestrians

Your Experts



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crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning”.

- **Rule 8 (for pedestrians at a junction):** “When you are crossing or waiting to cross the road, other traffic should give way. Look out for traffic turning into the road especially from behind you and cross at a place where others can see you. If you have started crossing and traffic wants to turn into the road, you have priority, and they should give way to you.”
- **Rule 170:** “Give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. If they have started to cross, they have priority, so give way”.

If the pedestrian is in the course of crossing, then it would be contrary to Rule 170 to simply carry on regardless. But this is a dynamic situation in which a crosser already embarked is likely to clear the junction in a matter of seconds.

It’s worth noting that the Highway Code is a guide. Legal requirements, its introduction tells us, “are identified by the use of the words ‘MUST/MUST NOT’”. The remaining contents of the Highway Code can nevertheless be used in civil court proceedings. As the judiciary is so fond of telling us, every case is different. So there’s discretion to be exercised in the circumstances you outline.

Paul Darlington

Technical

Cassette tech

Q I’d like to set up my road bike for use on gravel, including having some easier gears. I’ve currently got a compact chainset and an 11-34 cassette. Does a rear derailer exist that would allow me to put a 40-tooth (or bigger) cassette on there?

Jd843, on the Cycling UK forum

A The simple answer is ‘yes’ – and plenty of them. I’m running a Shimano Deore Shadow rear mech with an 11-42 cassette, and there are numerous mechs out there capable of handling the 50-plus sprockets found on today’s gravel transmissions. My Deore derailer