



A Drive Thru Roundabouts



The modern roundabout is a type of raised intersection with no traffic lights. It is designed to reduce crashes and improve traffic flow. By understanding what a modern roundabout is and how it works, motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians can travel through intersections easier and more safely.

How to Drive Around Modern Roundabouts

As you enter a roundabout, remember two key points:

1. **Never merge.** The right of way is observed at the yield sign. *Motorists already in the roundabout have the right of way.* You must slow down or stop to yield to traffic approaching from the left. Wait for a gap in traffic, and then carefully proceed into the roundabout.



2. Go **SLOW**:

- Slow down to 15-25 mph when entering.
- Let vehicles already circulating go ahead.
- Obey all one-way signs.
- Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists, emergency vehicles and large vehicles.

For multiple-lane usage, follow these guidelines depending on traffic patterns:

- For right-hand turns, travel in the right-hand lane and use your turn signal.
- For left-hand turns, travel in the left-hand lane and use your turn signal.
- For continuing forward, remain in the same lane you entered.
- For missed exits, circle around the roundabout again.

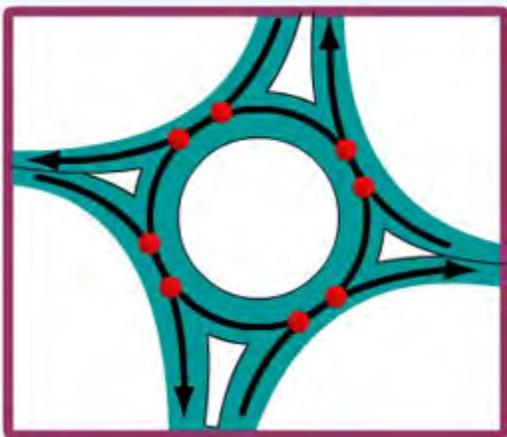
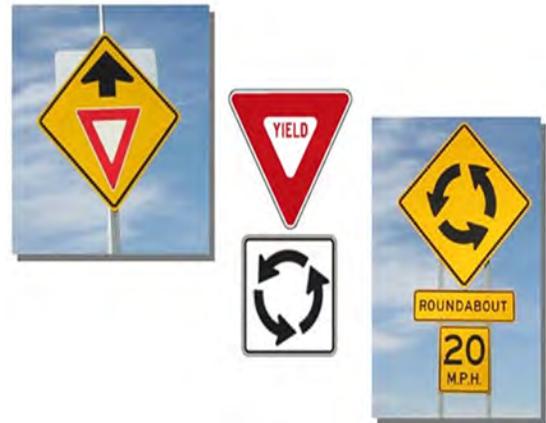
Benefits of Modern Roundabouts

According to the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety (IIHS), there are many safety benefits associated with the modern roundabout:

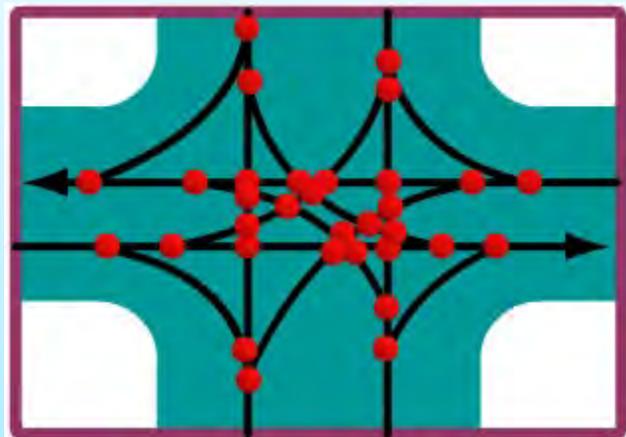
- 90 percent reduction in fatal crashes
- 75 percent reduction in injury crashes
- 30-40 percent reduction in pedestrian crashes
- 10 percent reduction in bicycle crashes
- 30-50 percent increase in traffic capacity

There other benefits to roundabouts, including:

- Reduction in fuel use and pollution.
- No signal equipment to install and repair.
- Quieter neighborhoods.



Red dots indicate eight vehicle-to-vehicle conflict points in a modern roundabout.



Red dots indicate 32 vehicle-to-vehicle conflict points in a standard four-way intersection.

What's the difference between a traffic circle and a modern roundabout?

Many traffic circles require circulating vehicles to grant the right of way to entering vehicles and can be very large or very small. They can operate at higher speeds and often require motorists to move from one lane to another.

Modern roundabouts include improvements such as yielding to as opposed to merging with circulating traffic, deflection at entry and low-speed entry by design.

Is a modern roundabout like a four-way stop?

No, a modern roundabout is not a four-way stop. Both intersections are what the engineering community calls a "method of moving traffic," but four-way stops require all traffic to stop prior to entering the intersection. Modern roundabouts require motorists to yield at entryways. All traffic entering a modern roundabout must follow the golden rule of the modern roundabout: Never merge.

Here are some other differences between roundabouts and four-way stops.

- Four-way stops yield to the right, while roundabouts yield to the left (similar to a right turn at a red light).
- Traffic in a modern roundabout circulates counterclockwise.
- Motorists coming from different directions take turns in a first-come-first-served order at a four-way stop. This is not the case with roundabouts, where each driver chooses a safe gap to enter.

How do I enter a modern roundabout when traffic is congested?

First, do not stop, yield. You should approach a modern roundabout at no more than 25 mph. Drivers entering the roundabout must yield to traffic already in the circle ... For multilane roundabouts, stay in the left lane to turn left and the right lane to turn right, and all lanes to go through, unless otherwise directed by signs or pavement markings.

Will modern roundabouts slow down traffic?

In most situations, a modern roundabout can handle higher traffic volumes with less delay than traffic signals because motorists do not stop for traffic lights. A two-lane roundabout will handle the same capacity as other major intersections in the Town, and a three-lane roundabout handles up to 6,000 vehicles per hour.

Are roundabouts safe for pedestrians and bicyclists?

While it depends on the number of pedestrians and vehicles, in many instances, a modern roundabout can be safer for pedestrians than a traffic signal. Pedestrian crossing is reduced to two simple crossings of one-way traffic that is proceeding at relatively slow speeds. Pedestrian safety is improved further by the pedestrian crosswalk sign placed right where a vehicle enters a modern roundabout. Even with this precaution, it is recommended that pedestrians always use caution and designated crosswalks.

Auto-pedestrian crash rates are usually lower at modern roundabouts than traffic signals. Also pedestrian injuries that do occur tend to be less serious because of the relatively low speeds demanded by modern roundabouts.

Properly designed modern roundabouts safely accommodate bicycles. Because vehicles are traveling at 15-25 mph, bicyclists can negotiate this traffic mode like a car.