The average pedestrian can walk about a quarter of a mile in 5 minutes.

As many as 16.1 billion of the miles that Americans walk in a year actually replace automobile travel.

Walk Alert: National Pedestrian Safety Program Guide

In 1990 an estimated 4.5 million people commuted to work by walking (4 percent of all workers).

National Walking and Bicycling Study

why walk?

According to the 1990 National Personal Transportation Survey, 27 percent of all travel trips are less than one mile in length and another 13 percent are within two miles (feasible walking distance).

In Washington State, 55 percent of air pollution is caused by motor vehicles. Walking can replace short trips made by car, which are proportionately more polluting than longer drives.

Walking is one of the best things you can do for your health. Only one in 10 adults in the US exercises three times a week for more than 20 minutes at 60 percent of their overall heart-lung capacity. Increasing the percentage of the population that walks on a regular basis would likely improve overall public health by reducing the occurrence of a variety of ailments.

It is generally accepted that streets with significant pedestrian activity are less hospitable to criminal behavior than are streets that have few people walking.

Excerpts from Getting People Walking: Municipal Strategies to Increase Pedestrian Travel
As a pedestrian, you have the right to…

Cross at the intersection of any two streets, (unless there are signs prohibiting crossing) or any other marked crossing. Vehicles are legally required to yield to you, but always be cautious. At signals, obey the law (see Pedestrian Signal section below).

Cross mid-block, except between two signalized intersections; however, in these locations, you must yield to vehicles.

Report places that are unsafe or uncomfortable for walking. Contact City of Bellingham Bicycle and Pedestrian Hazard Report.

Access information about your local transportation system and participate in decision-making processes.

Be accepted as a valid user of the transportation system. Alert, responsible pedestrians should feel safe.

Using pedestrian signals

If the signal shows a steady “walk” or symbol of a person walking, it is okay to cross, but watch for turning cars.

If the signal shows a flashing “Don’t Walk” or a flashing hand, don’t start crossing. If you are already crossing the street, go ahead and finish crossing.

If the signal shows a steady “Don’t Walk” or a steady hand, don’t start crossing.

As a motorist, you have the responsibility to…

Stop for pedestrians in all crosswalks. There are crosswalks at every street intersection – whether they are marked on the pavement or not.

 Remain stopped for all pedestrians in crosswalks until they are more than one lane away from your half of the roadway. On one-way streets remain stopped until there are no pedestrians in the roadway.

Look for pedestrians before making a left turn, especially when crossing multiple lanes. Focus on on-coming vehicle traffic and pedestrians who will cross your intended path.

Use caution when passing another vehicle that is stopped at an intersection. They may be stopped for a pedestrian you cannot see.

Look for pedestrians when turning right at a red light. They may be crossing with the walk signal.

Yield to pedestrians on the sidewalk when crossing, entering or leaving a street. Be sure to look at both sides of the sidewalk that crosses your path.

Important phone numbers

City of Bellingham
Sidewalk repairs/Obstructions…676-6850
Planning…………………………676-6982
ADA Coord./Public Works…676-6961
Police Department/Traffic……676-6677
Neighborhood Patrol Sgts……..676-6968
Neighborhood Block Watch……676-6924

Public Transit (WTA)
Route Information………………676-7435
TTY…………………………676-6844

Alert, responsible pedestrians should feel safe.