

Study finds that drivers of flashycars are less likely to yield for pedestrians

February 27 2020



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Flashing crosswalk lights are no match for flashy cars, according to a new UNLV study which found that drivers of expensive cars are least likely to stop for crossing pedestrians.

Drivers on a whole aren't all that great at stopping for pedestrians waiting at crosswalks: Of 461 cars that researchers examined, only 28 percent yielded. But the cost of the car was a significant predictor of driver yielding, with the odds that they'll stop decreasing by 3 percent per \$1,000 increase in the car's value. Researchers estimated the cost of each car using pricing categories from Kelley Blue Book.

"It says that pedestrians are facing some challenges when it comes to safety, and it's really concerning," said lead author and UNLV public health professor Courtney Coughenour.

"Drivers need to be made aware that they legally have to yield. It's hard to say whether they're not yielding because they don't know the laws or because they don't want to yield," Coughenour said. "Further study is needed to examine that. Until then, the bigger thing is [driver education](#)."

The study, which analyzed video data from an [earlier UNLV study](#), also found that motorists overall yielded less frequently for men and people of color waiting at mid-block crosswalks than for women and whites. It is also consistent with findings from similar studies on the topics of driver yielding behaviors associated with [social class](#), race, and gender.

The research team said their findings are important to [public health](#), given that pedestrian injury and survivability are low even when struck at low speeds. According to the [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#), the average risk of severe injury for a pedestrian struck by a vehicle reaches 10 percent at an impact speed of 16 mph, 25 percent at 23 mph, 50 percent at 31 mph, 75 percent at 39 mph, and 90 percent at 46 mph.

More information: Courtney Coughenour et al, Estimated car cost as a predictor of driver yielding behaviors for pedestrians, *Journal of Transport & Health* (2020). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jth.2020.100831](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100831)

Provided by University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Citation: Study finds that drivers of flashycars are less likely to yield for pedestrians (2020, February 27) retrieved 20 September 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-02-drivers-flashycars-yield-pedestrians.html>

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