

Pedestrian scramble

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Diagonal crossing in Cologne, Germany

Hachikō Square in Shibuya, Tokyo, one of the most famous pedestrian scrambles.

King George Street and Jaffa Road pedestrian scramble in Jerusalem, Israel (2007).

Pedestrian scramble at New York City's Union Square.

A pedestrian scramble, also known as a diagonal crossing (US), exclusive pedestrian phase, and (rarely) Barnes Dance, is a pedestrian crossing system that stops all traffic and allows pedestrians to cross an intersection in every direction at the same time. It was first used[citation needed] in Kansas City and Vancouver, Canada in the late 1940s, and has since then been adopted in many other cities and countries. It was most recently adopted in Toronto in 2008, and is under development in London's busy Oxford Circus.

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[edit] Naming

The name Barnes Dance comes from Henry Barnes; though he was not the inventor of the pedestrian scramble, he was the first to use the system on a large scale. In his autobiography, *The Man With the Red and Green Eyes*, he writes that the phrase was first coined by a City Hall reporter, John Buchanan.

In Hartford, Connecticut every crossing outside of the city centre requires all traffic to stop. Many crossings in the city centre do the same, such as the city's busiest intersection at Main and Gold Streets.[citation needed]

In Japan, where over 300 such intersections exist, it is known as a scramble crossing (スクランブル交差点, sukuranburu-kōsaten?).

In Toronto, Canada, the intersection of Yonge Street and Dundas Street, adjacent to Yonge-Dundas Square, is a scramble intersection. More intersections in Toronto are expected to follow this method of pedestrian crossing.

Typical signage for a pedestrian scramble in the United States.

[edit] Pros and cons

The pedestrian scramble has both negative and positive aspects. It requires that non-pedestrian traffic in all directions be stopped, creating lost time for motorists and reducing an intersection's vehicular capacity, although it may be mitigated by time gained removing pedestrian directional signals (e.g. east-west and north-south). It is also often difficult to ensure that an intersection is free of pedestrians at the end of the scramble time. For these reasons, some traffic engineering textbooks discourage the pedestrian scramble except in low-volume rural and suburban intersections where there may be a safety benefit.[1]

However, intersections with high volumes of turning traffic as well as high pedestrian volumes can greatly benefit from a pedestrian scramble. Lost capacity can be offset against what would have been lost because of cross-turning vehicles blocking the intersection while waiting for pedestrians.

[edit] See also

* Traffic light

[edit] References

1. ^ Roess, Prassas, & McShane, Traffic Engineering, 3rd Edition (2004), ISBN 0-13-142471-8

[edit] External links

- * The Barnes Dance (U.S. Federal Highway Administration)
- * Historical commentary and photo of Barnes Dance used in Fort Wayne, Indiana at Christmas in the 1950s and 1960's. (Fort Wayne Observed)
- * National Post article on Toronto's first pedestrian scramble
- * Time-lapse video of scramble intersection at Yonge and Dundas, Toronto
- * Pedestrian scramble comes
- * Oxford Circus to be re-designed