Pedestrians

Michigan Lefts increase pedestrian safety. Divided roadways are safer for pedestrians in general, since pedestrians can cross one direction of the roadway at a time and wait at the median to safely finish crossing. Where direct left turns are prohibited, the traffic signal can remain green for pedestrian crossings longer.

Bicyclists

Bicyclists are able to use a Michigan Left as either a pedestrian or in the same manner as a vehicle. If traveling through the Michigan Left as a pedestrian, dismount your bike and cross the road using the same guidelines as a pedestrian. If riding your bicycle through the Michigan Left, do so in the same manner as a motor vehicle, refraining from turning left at the intersection, and using the designated median crossover to navigate a U-turn.

Emergency Vehicles

As with any intersection, do not enter a Michigan Left if you see or hear an emergency vehicle approaching.

Trucks

Michigan Lefts are built to accommodate larger vehicles, with some designed with additional paved aprons, or “truck loons.”

Winter Weather

Winter weather conditions do not generally affect crashes at an intersection with a Michigan Left. However, motorists are advised to continue exercising caution in snowy and icy conditions.

Why a Michigan Left?

1. Research shows they reduce congestion and severity of crashes (often reduced by 30-60 percent).
2. They provide 20-50 percent greater capacity compared to conventional intersections (less time spent waiting at a signal for traffic to turn).
3. Engineers evaluate crash data and intersection logistics to determine if a Michigan Left will be an effective tool to reduce congestion and improve safety.
4. There are no traffic volume requirements for installing a Michigan Left. However, they have been used on state roads with daily vehicle counts of 10,000 - 100,000.

Toward Zero Deaths™
National Strategy on Highway Safety

MDOT
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Providing the highest quality integrated transportation servicesfor economic benefit and improved quality of life.

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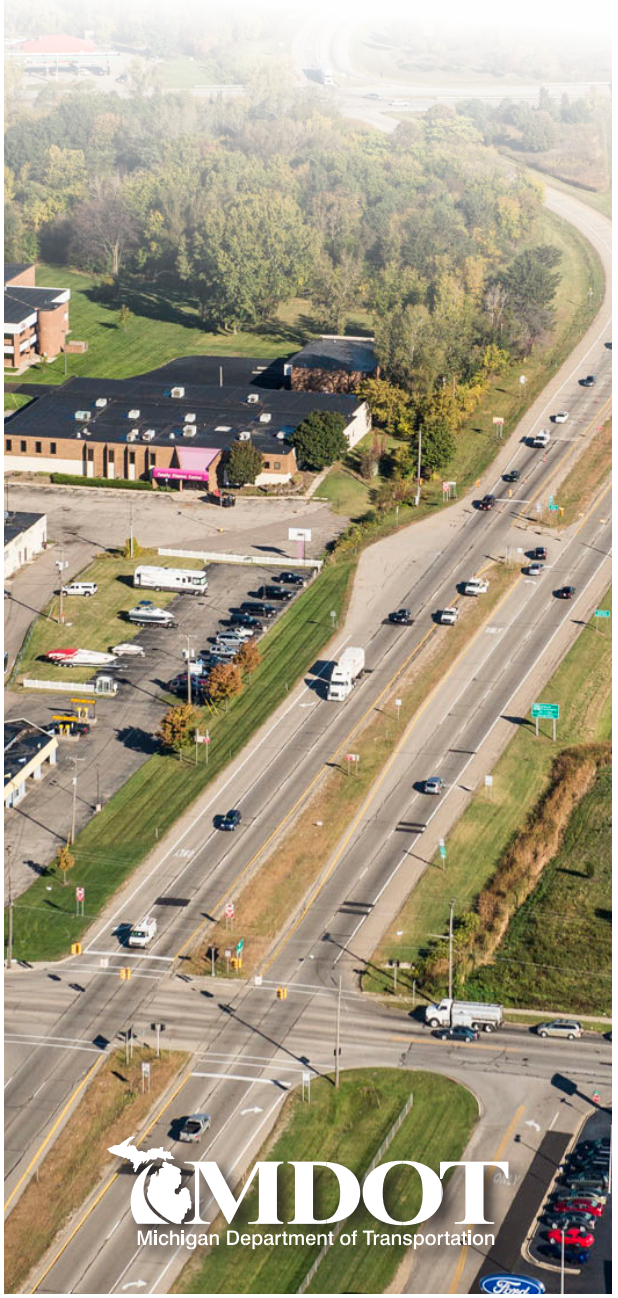
Using a Michigan Left

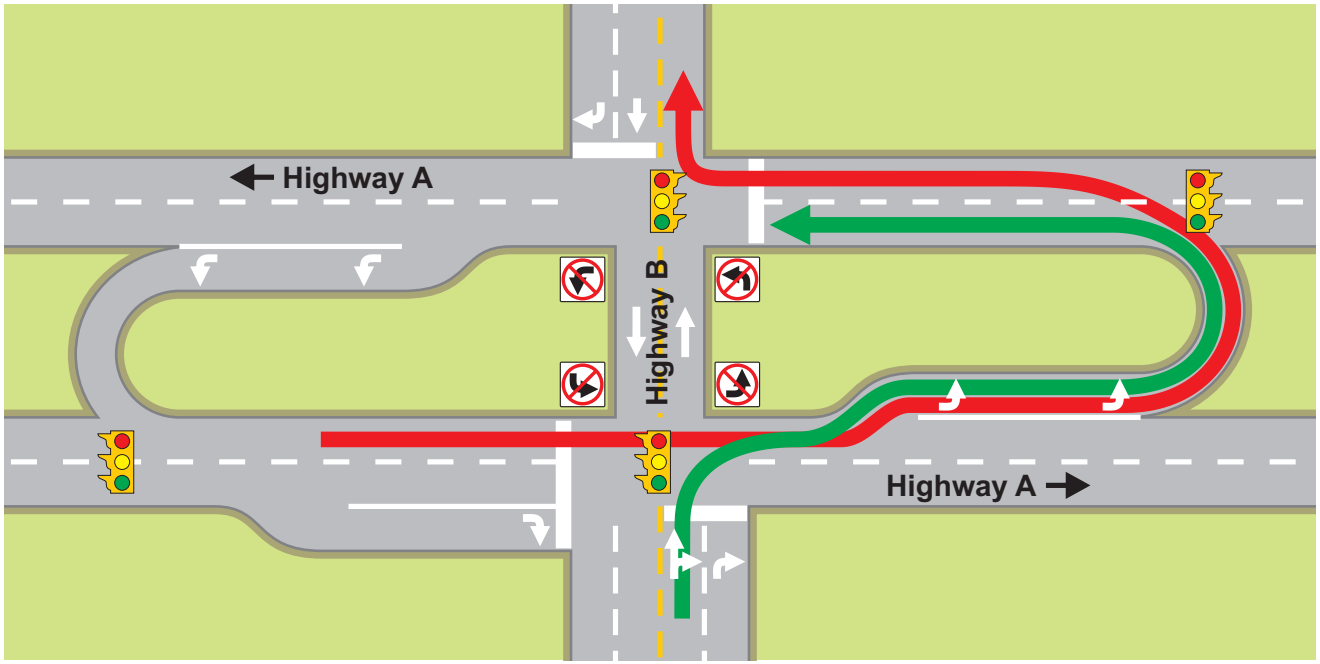


What is a Michigan Left?

Michigan Lefts are a common type of turn that have been part of Michigan roadways since the late 1960s. Where a Michigan Left is in place, left turns at the intersection are not allowed. Instead, to turn left, you must drive straight or turn right, then make a U-turn at a median crossover.

How to make a Michigan Left:

- Never attempt to make a left turn at the intersection.
- Proceed through the light and use the designated median crossover to navigate a U-turn (see red line in diagram below).
- Visit http://1.usa.gov/1UCZ278 to view a demonstration video.



Turning from Highway A to Highway B

Highway A traffic cannot turn left directly onto Highway B at the intersection. Instead, traffic must continue past the intersection and turn left into the median crossover, usually about 660 feet beyond the intersection. When traffic clears sufficiently, turn left onto the opposite direction of Highway A, then move to the far right lane and turn right onto Highway B, completing the traffic movement.

Turning from Highway B to Highway A

Highway B traffic looking to turn left onto Highway A must first turn right onto Highway A, move to the far left lane and turn left into the median crossover (also about 660 feet from the intersection). When traffic clears sufficiently, turn left onto the opposite direction of Highway A, completing the traffic movement.

Why bring a Michigan Left to a location?

Safety

Due to the number and severity of crashes at a location, the area may be able to qualify for a safety grant. By installing Michigan Lefts, left-turn and angle-type crashes (the most severe types of crashes) should be reduced.

Reduce Congestion and Improve Access Management

MDOT is sensitive to the potential impact on businesses and homes along state roadways. Highways with a Michigan Left are shown to reduce congestion and vehicle crashes. By improving traffic flow, which includes fewer crashes, residents and other customers will have easier access to businesses.

Traffic flow is further improved with fewer crashes.

Improve Roadway Operations

With fewer crashes and less congestion, the location and corridor featuring Michigan Lefts will function better for all drivers.