

Making Traffic Lights Turn Green

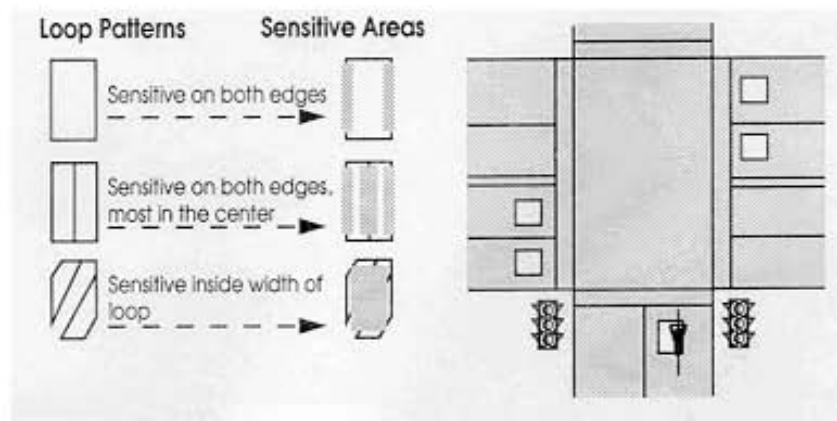
There are two types of traffic lights

Traffic-actuated lights are programmed to respond to changes in the flow of traffic. The length of the green light varies accordingly; heavier traffic movements receive proportionately longer green time. **Fixed-time** lights change from red to green at preset intervals. The majority of traffic lights in Palo Alto are traffic-actuated. Downtown traffic lights are fixed-time signals.

To recognize a traffic-actuated light

In most cases, **loops of wire** are buried in the traffic lanes before the intersection. The loops detect metal on the road above, and send a signal to a control box beside the street. Loops in Palo Alto are set to detect small amounts of metal in a bicycle.

There are several types of loops. Patterns used in Palo Alto are shown below. Some appear as white, painted squares or rectangles, others as thin black lines or cut marks in the pavement. Loops are **most sensitive to metal over the highlighted areas**.



To make a traffic light turn green

Stay on the sensitive area with the two wheels of your bike as shown until you get the green light. Don't leave the loop until you have a clear space in the intersection.

When riding with a group of cyclists, ride over the loop about a bicycle length apart to extend the green light. When metal is over the point of detection, the light will stay green up to a preset maximum length of time.



Pushing the pedestrian button does not make the light turn green faster.

If you can't find the loop or the light won't change

Call the City of Palo Alto Transportation Division at 329-2520 to report the location and problem.