

# HID Headlights from GoldWingHIDs.com

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In an article published in the January 2009 issue of *Wing World*, I explained the process used to make my own HID headlight system for the 1800 Gold Wing. Ever since installing them, I've wanted to convert my *high beams* to HID as well.

I never got around to doing so but, at Wing Ding last July, I met with some of the folks from GoldWingHIDs.com and decided to buy their system to give it a try.

## Why the Install?

Before starting the high beam install, I already knew how well HID lights work in the *low beam* position. Even on an interstate, at night, and from a quarter mile away, the light reflecting off the overhead signs will light up the dead bugs on the windshield of your bike. So why then, you might ask, would someone want to do the *high beams* as well? Well...have you ever heard of *too much* light?

## Preparing to Install

The most difficult part of this conversion was installing the bulbs. This had nothing to do with the HID bulbs. Rather, it was their location in the fairing that made for scraped hands because the high beams are even more difficult to reach than the low beams. (The manufacturer's recommendation for mounting the ballast assemblies differed from where I had put them in my original conversion. This was convenient, since they wouldn't then interfere with this conversion.)

The instruction manual that comes with the kit is very easy to read and understand. Unfortunately, however, it contains a number of errors. Also, I would like to see some better photographs, especially one showing a ballast assembly mounted inside the fairing.

In addition, I personally found that the self-tapping screws they supply to mount the ballasts with are too long. But other than those few minor gripes, I was initially impressed with the components in the kit and anticipated a smooth and successful install.

## The Installation Itself

Well...maybe not so smooth. The Honda shop manual tells you to remove the fairing pockets to access the high beam bulbs. The last time my hands were small enough to do this job was before my first birthday (and this was on the *right side*, which is easier to get to than the left side). Off came the seat, the top shelter, and the instrument cowl. (This is not necessary in order to do the low beams.)

But, with the first bulb installed, I was disappointed to find the adapters on the HID bulbs were not deep enough for the rubber boot to seal around. (Honda put them there for a reason and, if this install were on the low beams—where water can more easily get to the bulbs—I would have stopped right there.) Lastly, Step #14 of the instruction manual tells you to put shrink tubing onto the factory power connector.

Step #15 tells you to connect wires to the connector you just put shrink tubing on. Seems to me these two steps are reversed. Step #15 also tells you to connect two wires from the HID bulb, which is wrong. The two wires you need to connect are actually part of a pair of "pig tails" supplied with the kit but not listed in the parts list.

On the plus side, if there are deer where you live or ride, these lights will show their eyes off the sides of the road at a greater distance. In the daytime, they may prevent someone approaching from the opposite direction from making a left turn, because it will be less likely they will "not see you". Maybe they are not as effective as a headlight modulator, but they are much more visible than stock lights.

## A Note About "Color Temperature"

HID bulbs are rated in "Degrees Kelvin". My low beams are 6000K. The bulbs normally shipped with the kit are 4300K.

Although GoldWingHIDs.com provided me with a set of 6000K bulbs to match my low beams, I installed the 4300K bulbs instead in order to show what they look like. After all, more light is *not* always better. Go above 6000K, and they get bluer; go higher, and they turn purple!

As you may be able to see in the photo below, the high beams are actually whiter than the low beams. (The low beams also have a cap built into the housing, thereby blocking a direct view of the bulb. This does not exist in the high beam portion of the housing, thus it allows more usable light out.)

## Conclusion

Bottom line? The factory bulbs use 55 watts each. HID bulbs use around 35 watts to "ignite", then the current draw drops even lower. With four bulbs converted, the load on my alternator has been significantly reduced, and I have triple the usable light.

I like my HID lights, and this kit seems to be of good quality. But I would really like to see the issue of the "boot" resolved.



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