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Pages (5): **[1]** 2 3 4 5 »

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Author

Thread

Fowway (Moderator)
One Track Mind

"How to" remove your headlamps.



Head Light Removal

The definitive guide now with pictures!

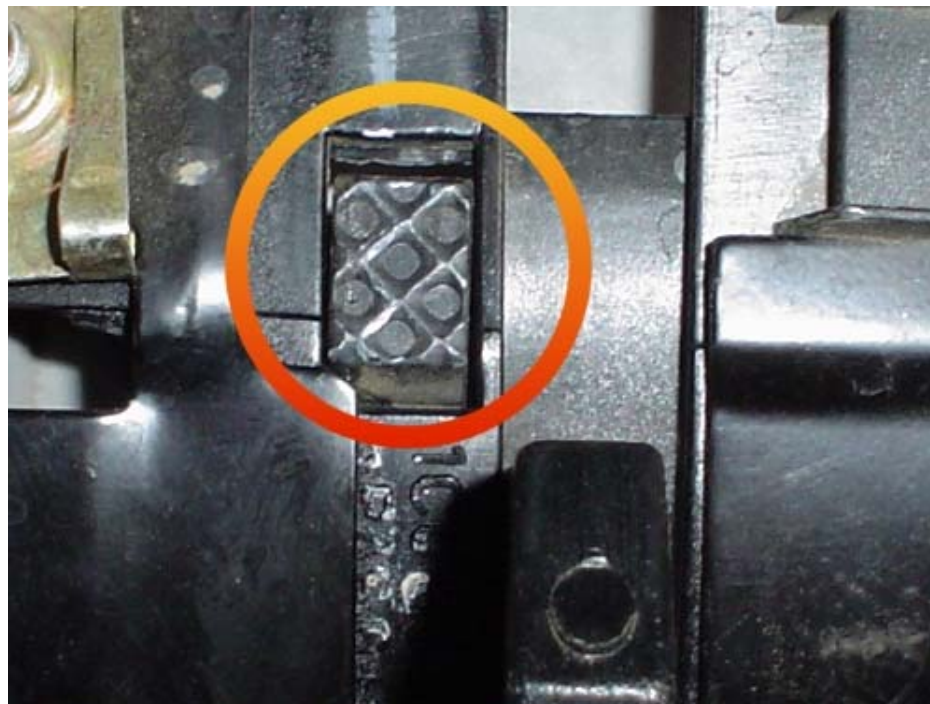
Why pictures? Well because we now know that some copies of the Handbook (the venerable **Beetle Bible**) do not cover the removal of the headlamp, suggesting you go to a VW agent to get the job done!

NB.org Member Sponsor

Posts: 11915
Registered: Jun 2002
Location: OTHC,
Cleveland OH
New Beetle: Yellow 2000
1.8T Yellow 1970 Bug

So If you do have a copy, it doesn't matter if it's not in English as the piccies are the same you can use them if you like. (or can't get your PC near your NB!)

With the bonnet open and book **3.2** Tips & maintenance ready, page 56 Piccie BNB-064K





You push in the chequered button **1** (a biro or screwdriver is ideal) then whilst pushed in slide the lever **2** fully up. This will release the headlight.
(Some early models had a spring clip on the lever, which also needed to be released, later ones seem to be sealed with a blob of what looks like white paint)

Now if all goes well (very unlikely) the headlamp will move forward. If not make sure the lever is fully up and push the headlamp from behind. It will most probably be very very stiff and need a lot of effort.



It would appear the headlamps get stuck in the (non-lubricated) runners and the rubber seal sticks to the bodywork. So a liberal use of magic spray (GT85, WD40 etc.) may help.....

When eventually released, push the lamp out far enough to remove the wire block connector. You have to pull the lug on the connector and the connector at the same time to release them. The headlamp is then free.

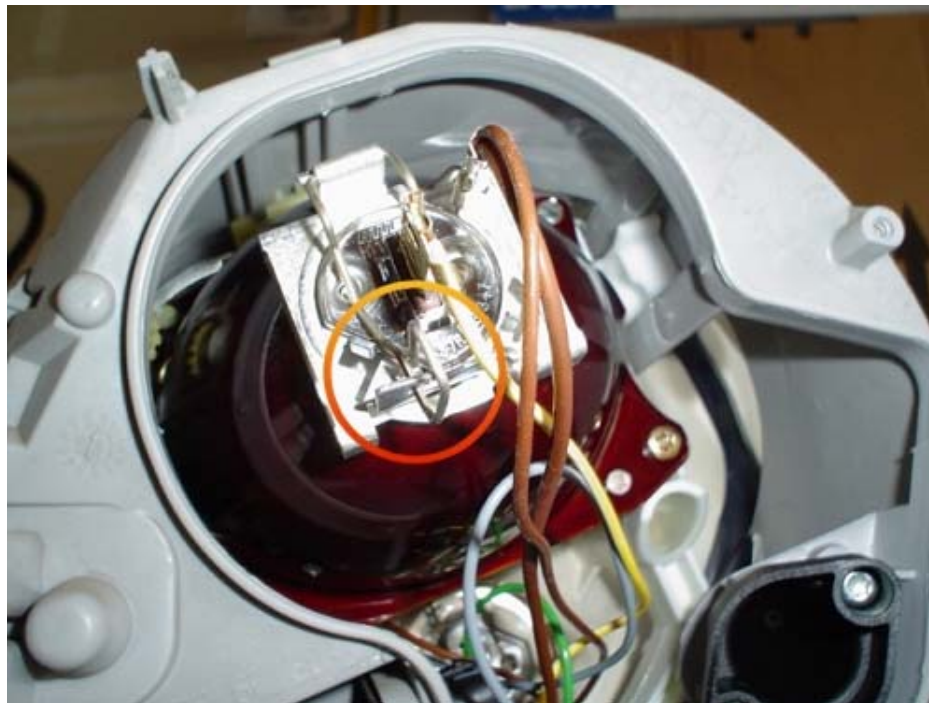
The battery side headlamp gives you very little room to push from behind, some sort of lever may be required. (Either plastic or wood is best, something from the kitchen?)



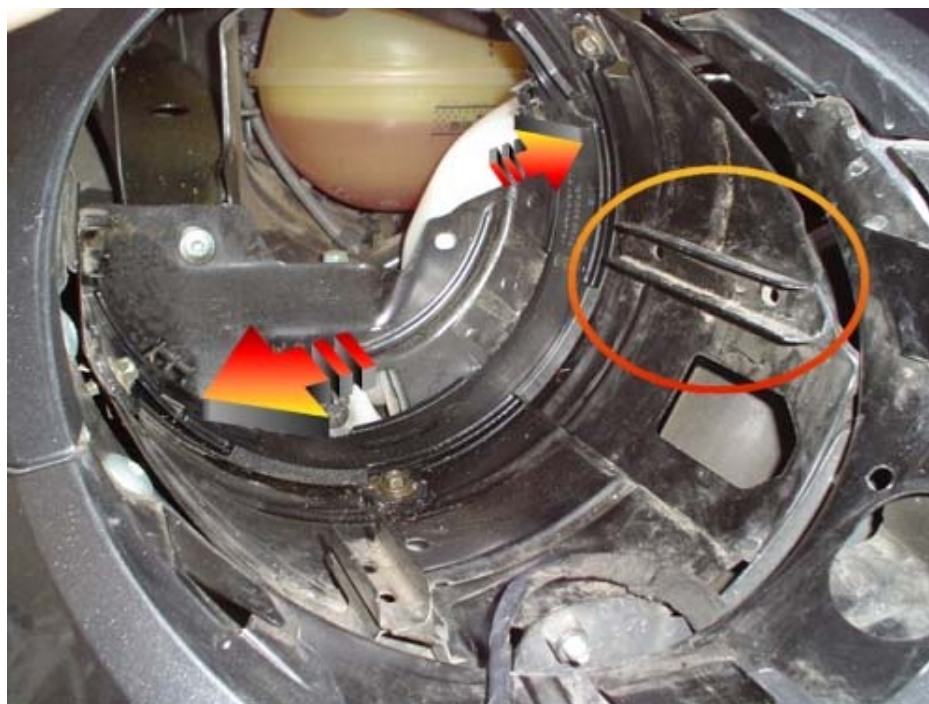
Carry it to somewhere safe, (the dining table 🍷) and remove the rear plastic cover, you do not have to remove the screw, you can use your Biro/ Screwdriver to push the lug clear of the screw to release the cover..... then there you are, free to remove the lamps after removing the push on connectors and spring clips.



It is also at this point that you can 'reverse dip' the headlights for foreign travel, you just need to use your Biro/screwdriver to flip the metal lever inside!



Now the important part... when you replace the headlamps be sure to clean all the grit out that collect there, then lubricate the runners and rubber seals with silicone grease. Also, make sure you get the lugs located in the runners properly.



A tube of silicone grease should be approx. £3.00 from a car spares shop. It has many uses, such as keeping any rubber components soft and sticky, so worth getting. VW recommend using it on the door, boot & bonnet seals for this reason. Normal greases will destroy rubber components.

Edit by Fowvay... powdered graphite does not attract dirt and will work better. You can find this in any hardware stores. It is designed for lock tumblers.

Once done once and lubricated, they are much easier to remove, it should then take less than ten minutes to remove.

Special thanks to Sixspeed for shooting, photoshopping and hosting the pics.

Tom aka Fowway

See my 13.98@104mph New Beetle -> Pomelo | Fowway

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Last edited by Fowway on 05-17-2005 at 10:33 PM

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08-23-2003 02:15 PM

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toad

Beetle Bum



hey fowway, love ya guides, it's awesome how you help us less mechanically inclined nb owners.

well anyhow, what is that black box inside the headlight in the 3rd picture? and also, in that last picture, the plug seems to have alot more wires coming out if it than usual, is this some new option, or something custom?

NB.org Member Sponsor

Posts: 587

Registered: Jun 2003

Location: OTHC New Bedford MA

New Beetle: '99 Rot Uni GLS "Chester"

Teter-tottering between brilliance and insanity.

[Foamy the squirrel](#) | [Homestar Runner](#) | [Videopimp](#) | [Pictures of Chester](#) | [People with Awesome NB experinces need to Speak up!](#)

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12-03-2003 01:05 AM

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Kitty

Vaarooooommbah V5 Power



Posts: 94

Registered: Sep 2001

Location: Essex/Herts Border UK

New Beetle: "Beetle Too" 03 V5 2.3 Ltr Raven Bl

Well Toad, I think the black box in the piccie is the drive mechanism for the electric headlight adjustment controlled by the small wheel on the dash.

Fowway is right about using a non sticky lubricant and I have updated the above post earlier in the year to reflect this as a lot of grit does get in there, it is best to lubricate the slider mechanism used to remove the headlights too, the one operated by leaver No 2 in the first piccie with a dry slide as well.

Changed to read: -

"Now the important part... when you replace the headlamps be sure to clean all the grit out that collect there, then lubricate the runners and the sliders themselves with a 'Dry Slide' lubricant so that the grit will not stick to it and the rubber seals with silicone grease. Also, make sure you get the lugs located in the runners properly.

Halfords (A major UK car spares store chain) own branded 'Rubber & Nylon lubricant' (in a yellow tin) seems to work well on the lubrication front and does not leave a sticky residue.

It can also be used instead of the silicone grease on the rubber seals too.

It is designed for sticky electric windows etc. and works on those extremely well too! "

Steve (not Kitty who doesn't do much Tech 😊)

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12-03-2003 01:47 AM

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OneBadBug

Lil'enginethatcould-TDI

**NB.org Member Sponsor****Posts:** 579**Registered:** Mar 2003**Location:** OH USA

What the heck does "'reverse dip' the headlights for foreign travel" mean?

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."
- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

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OneBadBug is offline.

12-03-2003 07:22 PM

**Dorado**

Senior Member

**NB.org Member Sponsor****Posts:** 1402**Registered:** Sep 2001**Location:** Pittsburgh PA**New Beetle:** 2k2 White TDI 5sp

quote:
Originally posted by OneBadBug
What the heck does "'reverse dip' the headlights for foreign travel" mean?

I think by his mention of the "Eurotunnel" that he's talking about going from England to France or viceversa, in which case the headlights (I guess) need to be "reversed dipped" in order to ride on the opposite side of the road. 😊

Thanks for the How To!!! 🙌👍

Soybean juice in the fuel tank!

What is Biodiesel? www.biodieselnow.com, www.biodiesel.org,
www.worldenergy.net, www.soygold.com/biodiesel.htm, www.soypower.net,
www.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/afd.../biodiesel.html

Where can I get some? <http://forums.biodieselnow.com/>

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Dorado is offline.

12-03-2003 11:04 PM

**hyakugojuuichi**

orca luvr

**Posts:** 889**Registered:** Aug 2003**Location:** Conway AR

U.S.A

New Beetle: 2001 yellow New Beetle.

Great instructions Fowvay! 🙌👍 I love it when there are pictures too. I had no trouble getting the headlights out but getting them back in was a different story. I tried pushing them in for two hours and they would not budge. I even made sure everything was lined up right and I even greased everything. I finally gave up and took the car to O'Reilly's.

They got the headlight back in after one try. 🤔 They didn't know why I couldn't get it back in and I still am unsure of what I did wrong. I'm just relieved that my headlights are in. 😊

Please **vote** to get Lolita the killer whale out of the worst orca tank in the US and back to her native waters in the Pacific Northwest. See pictures of **Lolita**

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hyakugojuuichi is offline.

12-04-2003 08:24 PM



sukhoidave
4 Point Roll



NB.org Member Sponsor

Posts: 955
Registered: Oct 2003
Location: Ravenna OH
USA
New Beetle: 2000 Black
GIX 1.8T 5-speed

I did it

Woohoooo!

Had a bulb burn out sometime yesterday and stopped on my way home tonight and bought the bulb and graphite dry lube. The job took me about an hour - taking my time and being careful and cleaning everything up good. I ended up not using the graphite lube cause I felt like I got everything cleaned and smoothed up good. That and it was dang cold out there tonight. I ran into one problem putting them back in. Thought I had 'em in far enough for the channels to grab and I pushed the lever back down. Made a nice satisfying click but did not pull the lights back in all the way (uh-oh) then was stuck pretty good. Thought I was screwed but I wiggled and jiggled and wriggled and out it came. (sheew)

Tried again and this time it slid right back in all the way up against the housing (yahoooo) so I could just slliiiide the lever down and be finished. Oh yeah at the very beginning when I used my screwdriver to push on the little crosshatched piece it broke off, of course it was frozen plastic, not much bending gonna happen! I just used a little piece of wood as a plug to fit the hole so the lever can't incidentally move up and release the headlight. (I cant imagine it happening!) I think Ill replace those plasic ring thingie parts if I ever have to do this again and it's warm outside. (1/06/04)

I like working on this car. Especially when it's so easy to learn how to do the stuff by checking the org. Thanks Fowway and all. Love the 8x10 color glossies with the circles and arrows....

Edit--> I did the drivers side on March 21, 2004. Much quicker this time. Still a few problems, several attempts required to get em back in straight. I didn't bother to remove and clean the rails out this time, maybe I'll regret that later but it was almost as cold today as it was back in January. Do they ever burn out in the summer?

Nowhere near fast enough

Check out my car!

See Sukhoidave
Arbeit Macht Nichts

Last edited by sukhoidave on 03-21-2004 at 08:11 PM

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sukhoidave is offline.

01-06-2004 06:17 PM



ginko
New Member



Posts: 2
Registered: Jan 2004
Location:

ARRGGHHH, why won't it come out!

Thanks for the info and the great pictures, I understand the theroy behind it now but for some reason I can only move the black leaver within about 2-3cm from the top of the slot, it wont go any further!

I pushed so hard I could hear the plastic about to give but it never got near the top like you state to do in the diagram.

I tried pulling on the headlight after moving the leaver as far as I could but still no joy!

Sucha acheap part I hate to think I have to pay someone to put it in!

Could I be missing something simple? It is a 2001 1.8t model no lock clip just the leaver and the small hashed button are visible....

Thanks, sorry I am the most pathetic mechanic ever! 😞

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ginko is offline.

01-13-2004 10:21 PM



ginko
New Member



wel it finally came out

After two people, one on the lever and one tugging on the headlighth it came loose!

What a silly design? some much dirt and grim was stuck in the track of the lever. The light will come out without the lever being 100% up.

Thanks for h epictures and words guys, guess I need to eat my ready break! weak boy I

Posts: 2
Registered: Jan 2004
Location:

am

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ginko is offline.
 01-16-2004 12:55 AM

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Bugged in CA
 New Member



Thanks, again to all of you for your help in replacing my headlight bulb. I thought, because of this help, a couple additional observations.

-- For headlight removal it helps to have a friend, in my case, my wife, once the inside lever is as far as you can get it in the "up" position, tug forward on the top and bottom of the front of the headlight assembly: while tugging the other person is pushing the lever up from inside. Please be careful, though, because this is very effective and, when my headlight popped, loose my wife almost shot clear across the garage in reverse: early divorce could be a result?

-- I tried for about fifteen minutes to reinstall the right side headlight unsuccessfully and decided to recoup over a glass of cabernet. With a fresh approach they installed the first time on the right and the left sides. the trick, IMHO, is to start the assembly in the longest ramp on one side first and then, once started, align the other side rail in the remaining short ramp, push, and everything will go together easily. The bottom ramp/rail will take care of itself. Voila!!

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Bugged in CA is offline.
 02-08-2004 08:31 PM

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mgwerks
 New Beetle Rat Fink



Here's a suggestion, too.

Get those light assemblies out one more time, and clean all the dirt/grime off of the entire outside of the housing, including the tracks. Then get a sponge, and soap and water, and clean out the inside of the openings in the car, and wash all soap away when done. You can even remove some screws and take out the sliding adjusters, too, and clean them and under them in the sme manner.

NB.org Member Sponsor

Posts: 1415
Registered: Jan 2004
Location: Town of Bandera, Republic of Texas
New Beetle: 99 NB TDI - Black

Now that everything is apart and clean and DRY, get some powdered graphite at the hardare store (or locksmith), and lubricate everything WELL with that as you put it back together. DO NOT use silicone, oil, WD-40 or anything else like that, because it all attracts dirt/grime, as the graphite will not.

This way, if you ever need to replace a bulb by yourself or away from home, it takes little effort, anyone can do it by themselves, and no one gets divorced over it!

Mark

Mark

Oso's Photo Thread

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mgwerks is offline.
 02-09-2004 07:52 AM

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Basher
 Swedish Chef

If you experience problems while putting the assemblies back in (like me) try this:

Pull the lever or the upper right side (on picture 1 in this thread) towards you. The plastic will flex slightly and the "ring" with the lever becomes just a little bit bigger -just enough to allow the assembly to slide in far enough to pull down the lever.

NB.org Member Sponsor

Posts: 110
Registered: Jan 2004
Location: Sweden
New Beetle: Techno Blue
 2.0

I struggled for half an hour before I found this trick. After that the other light took 30 seconds...

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Basher is offline.

02-10-2004 12:01 PM

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ReeseB
 Bailey



Awesome!!!



Great post Fowway!!! Your instructions are even better than the ones in the VW repair manual. I was ready to chuck it all and pay the stealership \$42 to replace the bulb and then I remembered that there are a lot of intelligent and well-informed members and moderators on newbeetle.org Forums.

Posts: 43
Registered: May 2003
Location: Ft. Lauderdale
 FL USA
New Beetle: Batik Blue
 2001 2.0L 5-Speed

Not only did your intructions make the whole process a snap, you saved me over 40 bucks!!!

Thanks

I tried to contain myself, but I escaped!

Last edited by ReeseB on 02-23-2004 at 03:36 PM

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ReeseB is offline.

02-23-2004 03:30 PM

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garvi
 Emma Blue's mom



Just had a headlamp go out on Weds. I knew I could find the info needed here on the org. Thanks once again to everyone for sharing their knowledge!

We did manage to break the crosshatch piece (#1) in the first picture. Does anyone know if this is a vital piece to keeping everything locked into position and if so what can be done once it's broken off?

Posts: 62
Registered: Feb 2004
Location: Oshkosh WI
New Beetle: 2001 2.0
 GLS Emma Blue (Batik Blue)

We got the assembly out and the bulb replaced in a fairly short period of time (relative to having a clue what we were doing....) Getting it back into the car itself took much longer than all else combined. We could get it to within 1/2 - 1 " in place but wasn't sure if we should be hearing (or feeling) a click to insure it was where it needed to be. Finally with one pushing the headlamp and one pushing the lever down - it seemed to go into place. And seems secure. But that whole crosshatch piece missing has me concerned that the assembly may not be secured as well as it should be.

Any reassurance or answers would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks again!!

"When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on." - FDR

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garvi is offline.

03-26-2004 07:26 AM

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