

HEADLAMPS

Information

Headlamps are lamps used to illuminate the road ahead of the vehicle, but are not fog lamps.

This inspection applies to all obligatory headlamps fitted.

This inspection does not apply to: vehicles used only during the hours of daylight, which are not fitted with front or rear position lamps, etc.

Note:

Headlamps are not required on vehicles first used before 1 January 1931, but they may have one or more optional main or dipped beam headlamps.

- Where one is fitted it must dip
- Where two are fitted, either both must dip or one must dip and the other switches off.

Care must be taken to ensure that relatively large front lamps on old vehicles are headlamps and not merely position lamps.

‘Matched pair’

A ‘matched pair’ is a pair of lamps which:

- Both emit light of substantially the same
- Colour and intensity, and
- Are both the same size and shape, so that they are symmetrical to one another.

In a four-headlamp system the outer pair of headlamps need not emit the same colour lights as the inner pair.

Vehicles first used:

- Before 1 January 1972, or
- On or after 1 January 1972 with

- An unladen weight of 440 kg or less and
- An overall width of 1300 mm or less requires only one headlamp.

Three wheeled mopeds and light quadricycles

These only require one **Dipped Beam** head lamp but may be fitted with two.

If one is fitted it must be mounted centrally, or if adjacent to another lamp (e.g. main beam lamp) they must be mounted symmetrically about the centre.

If two are fitted, they must be symmetrically mounted.

Tricycles and quadricycles

These only require one **Main** and one **Dipped Beam** head lamp but may be fitted with two. However, If the maximum vehicle width exceeds 1300 mm, two main and two dipped headlamps are required (1700 mm for motorcycle derived tricycles)

If one is fitted it must be mounted centrally, or if adjacent to another lamp (e.g. main beam lamp) they must be mounted symmetrically about the centre.

If two are fitted, they must be symmetrically mounted.

Headlamp cleaning and levelling devices

Levelling devices

Vehicles with high intensity discharge (HID) or LED dipped beam headlamps may be fitted with a suspension or headlamp self-levelling system. If these systems have been fitted, they must work.

Some high-performance vehicles fitted with HID headlamps that have limited luggage space or stiff suspension do not require a self-levelling system. It is accepted that it may not be possible to readily determine the functioning of self-levelling systems. In such cases, the benefit of the doubt must be given.

You can identify HID headlamps from:

- 'DCR' mark on the headlamp lens or body
- an igniter module or inverter behind the headlamp
- taking a few seconds to reach full intensity
- a bluish tinge to the light

HID headlamps use high voltage and extra care should be taken when inspecting these items.

Headlamp cleaning devices

Vehicles with high intensity discharge (HID) or LED dipped beam headlamps may be fitted with headlamp washers.

You must inspect vehicles first used on or after 1 September 2009 equipped with headlamp washers.

You can identify HID headlamps from:

- 'DCR' mark on the headlamp lens or body
- an igniter module or inverter behind the headlamp
- taking a few seconds to reach full intensity
- a bluish tinge to the light

HID headlamps use high voltage. You should take care when inspecting these headlamps.

Headlamp aim

Headlamps must dip downwards and to the left (or extinguish as appropriate pre 1 January 1931)

Method of Inspection

1. Check that the vehicle is fitted with obligatory headlamps, as follows

- a. A matched pair of main beam headlamps, and
- b. Matched pair of dipped-beam headlamps

Note:

Main-beam and dipped-beam functions may be provided by a single pair of headlamps.

2. Check the presence, condition, security and operation of the switch.
3. Where HID dipped beam headlamps are fitted, switch on the headlamps and check where possible the operation of any headlamp self levelling devices.
4. Where HID dipped beam headlamps are fitted, switch on the headlamps and check where fitted the presence and operation of any headlamp cleaning devices.
5. Where LED dipped beam headlamps are fitted, switch on the headlamps and check where fitted the operation of any headlamp self levelling and cleaning devices.

6. With the headlamps on, switch between dipped and main beams checking that:
- each headlamp illuminates immediately it is switched to either dipped or main beam
 - either:
 - all main beams are switched off by one switch (dip switch) leaving a matched pair of dipped-beam headlamps switched on, or
 - the main beam headlamp reflectors are deflected by a driver's control, to make them dipped beams
 - on a vehicle first used on or after 24 January 1996, the 'tell-tale' illuminates when main beam is selected
7. Check that each obligatory headlamp:

- Is in good working order

Note:

Any adverse effects due to headlamp lens damage or deterioration can also be assessed on checking beam aim. A repaired lens must be assessed on its merits.

- Insecure
- Is not affected by the operation of any other lamp
- Does not flicker or extinguish when tapped lightly by hand
- If intended to be one of a matched pair it emits light of substantially the same colour as its counterpart (either white or yellow)
- Is the same size
- Is correctly positioned
- Is of the correct colour either white or yellow.

Reason for Rejection

	Deficiency Category
1. A missing or insecure obligatory headlamp.	MAJOR
2. Missing, faulty or insecure switch	MAJOR
3. A HID or LED headlamp self-levelling device inoperative.	MAJOR
4. A HID or LED headlamp cleaning device inoperative.	MAJOR

5.	A headlamp cleaning device inoperative when not required	MINOR
6.		
a.	Headlamp does not operate immediately when selected on dipped beam or on main beam.	MAJOR
b.	Operation of the dip switch does not	
	Extinguish all main beam headlamps, and leave on at least one pair of dipped-beam headlamps, or	MAJOR
	Deflect the main beams to make them dipped beams.	MAJOR
c.	The 'tell-tale' does not illuminate when main beam is selected	MINOR
7.	An obligatory main or dipped beam headlamp	
a.	Inoperative, not in good working order damaged or deteriorated or light source so that:-	
	The light output is slightly reduced, or	MINOR
	The light output is well below that required to illuminate the road ahead, or	MAJOR
	The beam image is adversely affected	MAJOR
b.	insecure	MAJOR
c.	an obligatory headlamp shows light that is not substantially white or yellow	MAJOR
d.	adversely affected by the operation of any other lamp.	MAJOR
e.	an LED headlamp	
	with up to ½ light sources not functioning.	MINOR
	With more than ½ light sources not functioning	MAJOR
f.	Flickers or extinguishes when tapped lightly by hand	MAJOR
g.	The headlamps provided to form a, matched pair.	

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| • Do not emit light of the same colour | MINOR |
| • Are not the same size | MAJOR |
| • Are obviously not correctly positioned. | MAJOR |