

Signs headlights need to be replaced



Automobiles require a little TLC to stay on the road and operate efficiently. When vehicle maintenance is ignored, vehicles operate less efficiently and, in many instances, less safely as well. Jerking and stalling is a telltale sign of engine trouble, but some vehicle problems are more subtle. One such problem is fading headlights. Fading headlights can pose a significant threat to drivers and their passengers as well as fellow motorists. According to the National Safety Council, drivers do only one-quarter of their driving at night. However, the NSC notes that 50 percent of traffic deaths occur at night. Such figures highlight the potential dangers of nighttime driving, which only becomes more dangerous if headlights are not operating at optimal capacity. Since drivers do most of their driving during the daytime, it's easy to overlook headlight performance. However, it's important that drivers learn to recognize the signs that headlights need to be replaced.

Dimming

Dimming headlights do not necessarily require replacement. In some instances dimming headlights are a byproduct of a dirty car. The

buildup of dirt and grime can reduce light output even when the headlights are otherwise fine. If your car is dirty, take it to the car wash and make sure the headlights are scrubbed clean of dirt and grime. Then drive at night to see if the light output of your headlights is still dim. If so, the headlight bulbs may need to be replaced.

Flickering

Flickering headlights can indicate anything from worn out headlight bulbs to a weak car battery to loose connections. Flickering is one of the more dangerous headlight issues, as it can lead to headlights suddenly going dark while drivers are on the road at night. If headlights are flickering, take the car to a mechanic as soon as possible to have the issue resolved.

One light out

When one headlight goes dark, chances are the other is not far behind. Automotive experts recommend replacing headlight bulbs in pairs, even if only one bulb has gone dark, because this ensures equal light output. Headlight maintenance tends to be overlooked. But recognizing the signs of fading headlights can help drivers avoid accidents and vastly improve the safety of nighttime driving.



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