

RWD LED Lights - Brighter Is Better

Installing RWD LED taillights and turn signals on a bagger

writer: Ernie Lopez

photographer: Ernie Lopez



Installing RWD Led Taillights Turn Signals On A Bagger

Safety is a big thing when you ride. Let's face it, we have all heard that same old excuse from some driver after an accident: "I just didn't see the bike." Well, we all know you're pretty much out there on your own when it comes to being seen and heard by those on four wheels. What do you do? Ride defensively and hope that others see you and that your pipes are loud enough to alert drivers that you're there. Another solution? The brighter your brake lights are, the better your chances are to be seen. On a stock Harley-Davidson, the brake light (one little 1157 bulb in the center of the fender) along with two turn signal lights on the light bar work well enough but could be brighter.

Russ Wernimont Designs has a solution. If you own a bagger, a set of cat-eye taillights comprised of a cluster of LEDs in a chrome bezel mounts to your bags and comes with hidden wires that run along the inside of the bags. The kit also comes with wires, load equalizers, gaskets and mounting hardware. RWD also has a license plate mounting bracket with a cat-eye taillight and brake light that make any bike stand out at a red light. The cool thing about this light is it can be wired as a single brake light or as a brake light and turn signal mounted in the same LED light cluster. Either way, the wires are designed to run along the inside of the bags-easy to get to and tucked away. Both products are available through the Drag Specialties catalog. We stopped by to have our pal Scruffy show us just how easy it is to install these lights on a Harley-Davidson Road King.



(1.)To get started, Scruffy rolled the bike onto the lift. As he tightened down the bike, he made sure it was straight and level. He then disconnected the battery and a few non-OEM wires that were installed to an old load equalizer for the brake light. The OEM taillight

wires were also disconnected from the harness.



(2.)Here is an overview of both the taillights and the center license plate light mount. The light kit comes with two chrome cat-eye turn signals with 3 feet of extension wires, rubber gaskets, six connector H-D wire interface assemblies along with all the mounting hardware and the license plate mount light.



(3.)To protect the bag from getting scratched, Scruffy covered it with masking tape where the gasket would be installed. Then he taped small wood wedges on the side of the bags to visually find the center and keep the light straight. Next, with a ruler he found the center of the bag and marked it so he would know exactly where to place the gasket.



(4.)Using the gasket material, Scruffy located and marked where to drill the three holes in the bag: two for mounting and one for the wires.



(5.) This is the best way to see how the lights will mount before drilling any holes into the bags.



(6.) After both sides were marked, Scruffy rechecked to see that the lights would be straight before drilling. He placed two straightedges along the center of the bags where the lights would be mounted.



(7.) On Scruffy's own bike, he showed us an alternate way the lights could be mounted, by placing them at a 45-degree slant.



(8.) Using a 1/4-inch drill bit, Scruffy drilled the two mounting holes first and then drilled a 3/8-inch hole for the wires to pass through.



(9.) A look at the back of the lights shows that they are well made with a sealed LED micro board to protect it from the elements.



(10.) Next, the wires were routed through the bag and along the floor of the bag. Scruffy recommended we use a small amount of silicone along the inside edge of the bezel to keep water out of the bag.



(11.) Scruffy then drilled a 3/8-inch hole in the side of the bag for the wires to exit and connect under the seat.



(12.) Moving on to the brake light, the stock H-D light bar and brake bracket were removed.



(13.)The fender already had four mounting holes, with two in the right spot for the new RWD bracket, so there only needed to be two additional holes marked and drilled for the top two mounting bolts. Next, Scruffy routed the wires under the fender and back to the seat and battery area.



(14.)After the holes were drilled, the license plate was installed in the bracket, and the two were then mounted to the fender. You will have to trim the license plate to fit inside the new mounting bracket.



(15.)When it comes to connecting the wires, there are various options, so we need to point out that every bike is different. The kit comes with six different harnesses to use, so it is important that you follow the installation sheet that comes with the taillight. On this bike, we had to remove the five-pin connectors for the turn signal and the eight-pin brake and running light connector. The kit comes with a precut six-pin H-D wire interface assembly along with a plug-in load equalizer and turn signal extension wires with the connectors ready to plug into the factory harness.



(16.)The bags were mounted back on the bike. Scruffy pushed on the brake to light up the bag and brake lights, and they were nice and bright.



(17.)Here is a look at the bag lights while using the blinker. You can see that the center light is as bright as the brake light and blinks brighter than the running light.

