

DIY: Replacing headlight bulbs for the VW Passat (for model year 2001.5 – 2003, except HID)

By Rich P

Page 1 of 15



Driver side. The bulb size for both low and high beams is H7 at 55W.

These were done on a 2001.5 Volkswagen Passat 1.8T. It may also apply to other model years and trims.

WARNING: Avoid touching the glass of the halogen bulb with bare hands. Use alcohol to clean off any contaminants.

Disclaimer: I assume no responsibility whatsoever for damages that an end user may inflict upon their vehicles or themselves using information contained herein. Proceed with caution and care when performing modifications to your vehicle. Be advised that making modifications to your vehicle may void your manufacturer's warranty.

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Page 2 of 15



For easy access to the headlight's bulbs, the cover shown above needs to be pulled out. As a reference, the arrows show what holds each other together. This will be helpful when placing this cover back.

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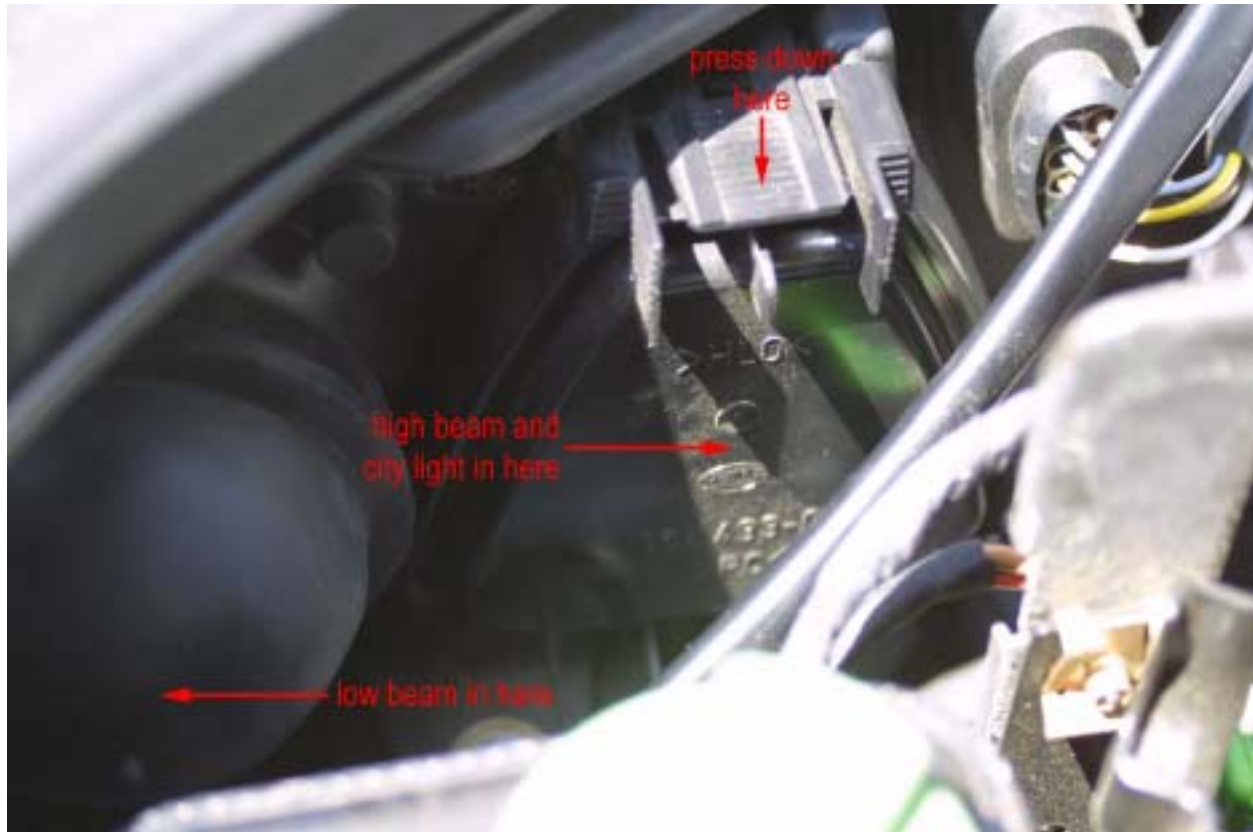
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Page 3 of 15



The rubber weather seal for the low beam bulb can be easily pulled out. For the high beam, press down on the area shown by the arrow.

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Page 4 of 15



Turn the bulb assembly counter-clockwise to release from headlight housing.

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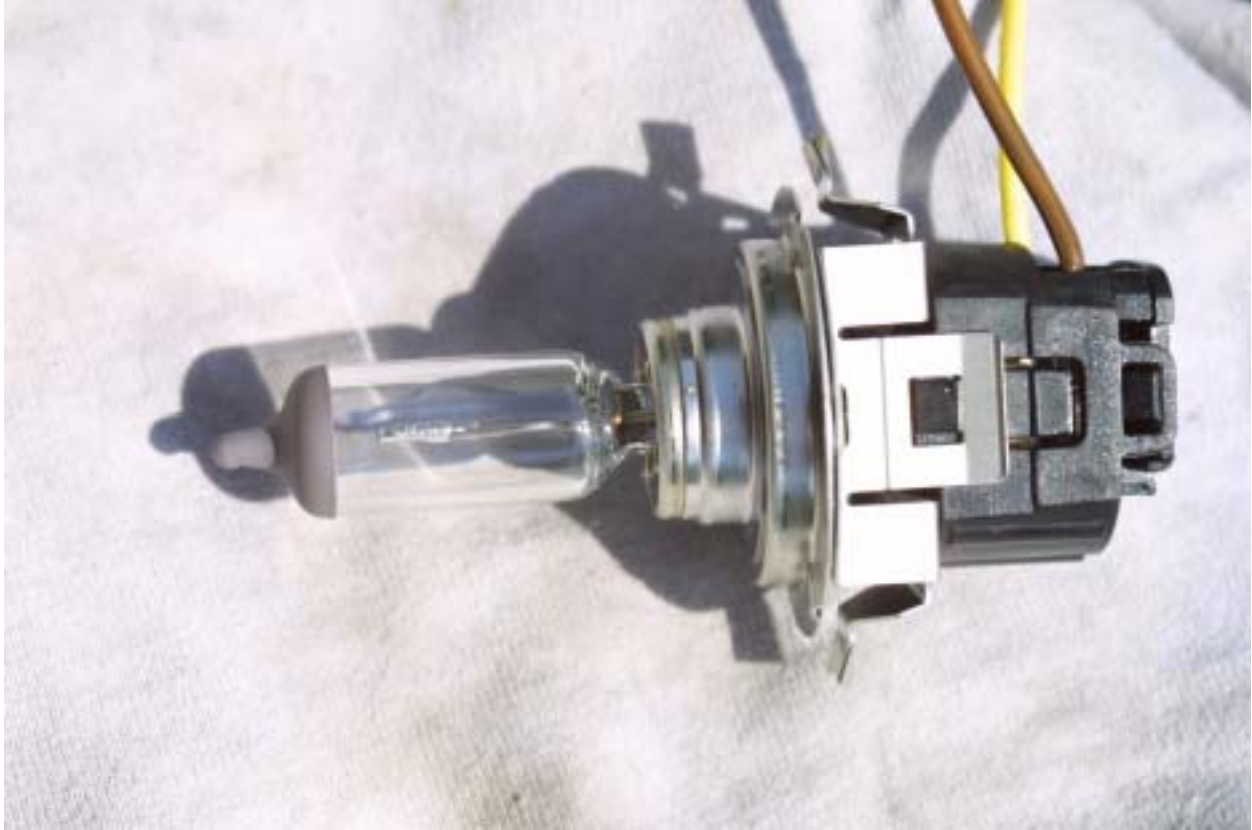
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Page 5 of 15



The low beam bulb assembly (the high beam assembly is almost similar). Pull the bulb out of the socket and replace with new bulb. Return bulb assembly to headlight housing.

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Page 6 of 15



The weather seal for the high beam bulb taken out. The high beam bulb and city light or parking light is inside and not easily visible. To see inside use a small mirror or something similar, such as...

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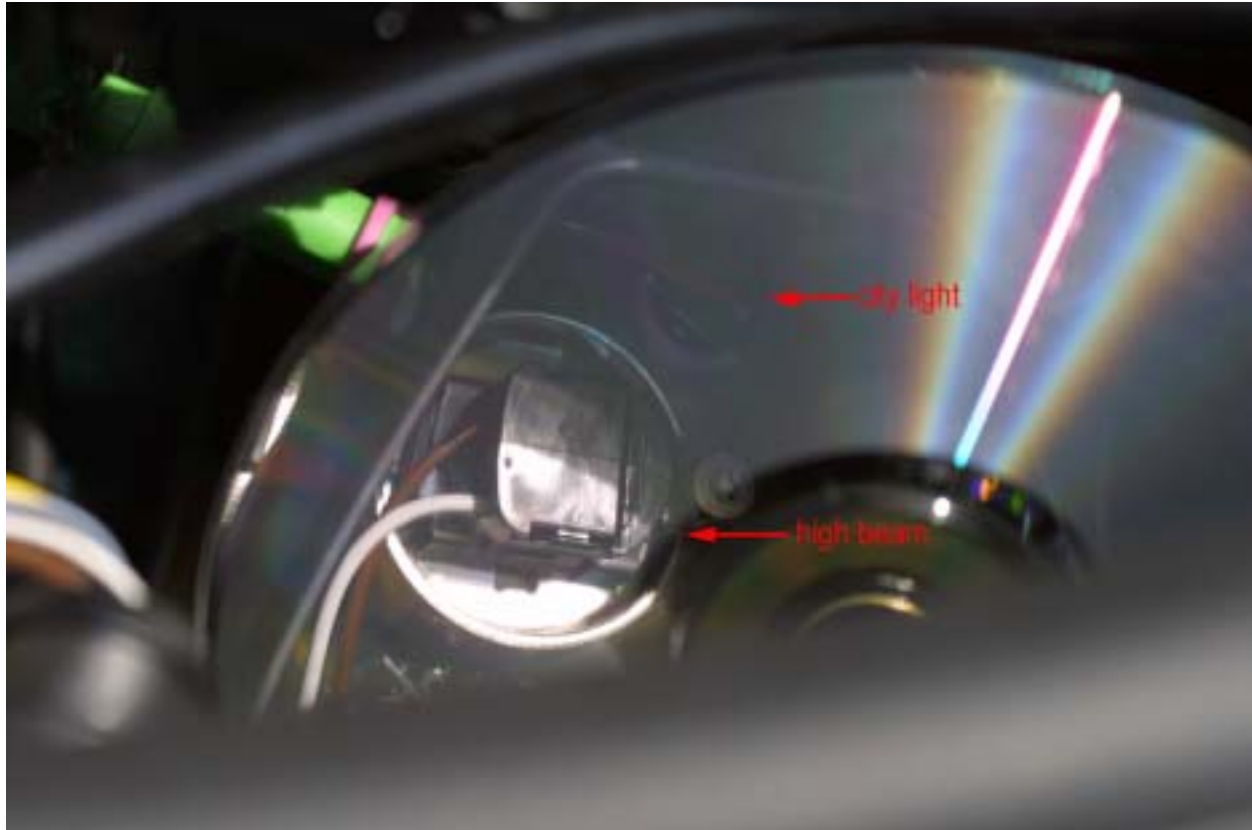
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Page 7 of 15



...an unused CD. I finally found good use for those AOL CDs. The high beam bulb assembly and how to take it out and replace it are similar to those of the low beam bulb.

Proceed to the passenger side.

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Page 8 of 15



Passenger side.

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Page 9 of 15



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Page 10 of 15



Pull out this end of the air intake duct first.

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Page 11 of 15



Pull the other end of the duct toward the direction shown by the arrow.

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Page 12 of 15



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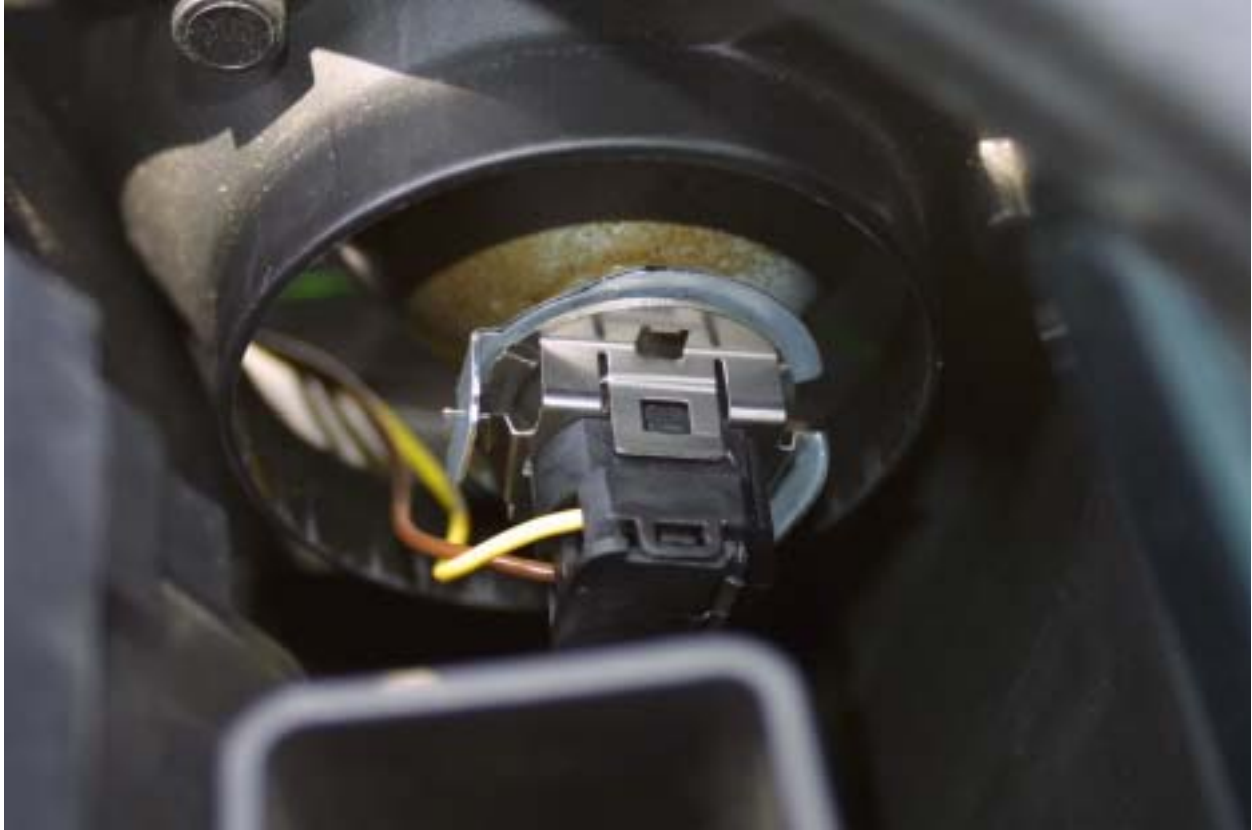
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Page 13 of 15



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By Rich P

Page 14 of 15



The weather seal for the high beam bulb taken out. Just as for the driver side, for the passenger side the high beam bulb and city light or parking light is inside and not easily visible.

Now continue replacing all bulbs and test before returning everything in place.

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Page 15 of 15



TIP: The space to work with on the passenger side is tighter than that of the driver side. You may find it more difficult to reach inside and/or get a good grip to turn the bulb assembly. I went to the Home Depot and found a 4" Vise Grip, but the opening does not seem to be too wide for the wiring connector. I found they used to have a 5" Vise Grip. That would probably do but they didn't have one in stock. Don't think about the 6". It's too long. So I found these. Unfortunately, they weren't sold individually as I needed only one. But they work. I was able to use it to get a grip on the bulb assembly and release it from the headlight housing.

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