



# REGISTERS

## V8

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### LEDs for an RV8

With modern cars and today's driving conditions, a useful upgrade can be the fitting of LED lamps, where the law permits this. LEDs provide a brighter light and can be seen more easily by other road users. RV8 member Paul Keeler considered this to be a worthwhile upgrade on his smart, low-mileage Nightfire Red RV8, which is a Japanese import car. Paul researched the subject thoroughly and obtained the correct flasher unit, which is a simple plug in item that requires removal and replacement from the under dash - but do ensure you obtain the correct item. On the fitting of all LEDs Paul discovered they all worked, except for the front indicators and the rear fog lights. The bulbs were checked for the correct size (BA15S), -ve earth, 12 volt and 21 watts – all was fine, so further investigation was needed. The mystery deepened when the LEDs were checked elsewhere on the car and all

worked perfectly well – but the lamp sockets worked with the original filament bulbs.

At this stage Paul reached out on the V8BB for assistance. Bob Owen responded, focussing on the polarity of the bulbs. The original filament lamps work regardless of polarity, whereas LEDs are 'uni-polar', meaning that the current only flows in a single direction. Bob suggested the use of a digital multimeter on the bulb holders on the car to establish the polarity, so Paul tested the holders. Low and behold, the holders turned out to be +ve earth and hence the LEDs worked in the holders when the wiring connections were reversed. To avoid changing the wiring, Paul has now ordered and fitted +ve earth LEDs to these four lights. With the problem now solved, the question remains if Paul's car is unique or if other owners have found similar problems when attempting to fit LEDs. Bob Owen questioned whether Paul's car had suffered accident damage early in its life, with subsequent incorrect wiring, although this seems highly unlikely. There is no such evidence, front and/or back and the wiring to each light originates from the front and rear wiring harness, which is original equipment.

Fellow RV8 owner, Ian Hanstead responded that he had replaced the same lights (excluding the indicators) without any issues. Ralph Hardwick added a warning that in some cases LED bulbs are not 'plug and play'. Ralf has had issues fitting amber indicator bulbs. The LED profile is not exactly the same, resulting in the shoulder fouling the socket sides, preventing the bulb being rotated to fit into the bayonet. The shoulder needs to be filed down such that it can be inserted far enough to rotate and engage the bayonet. So, the question remains; have other RV8 owners found similar problems when replacing standard filament bulbs with LEDs? Bi-polarity LEDs are available, so this would avoid any issues if the wiring polarity is unknown. If you have experienced similar issues, please get in touch or respond to Paul Keeler's thread on the V8BB.



Paul Keeler's RV8 and B Roadster