

Removal and Replacement of Golf MKIV Tail Lights

Originally written by walker-ranger for the [VWvortex community](#) and for anyone at [Fred's TDICLUB](#)

Purpose

This is to illustrate the removal and replacement of the Volkswagen Golf MKIV tail light assemblies. The parts listed below are for the replacement of stock tail light assemblies with GTI Tinted assemblies. Of course, the removal instructions apply to all MKIV golf cars regardless of what tail light assembly you are replacing.

Contents

- [Parts and tools necessary](#)
- [Passenger side assembly removal](#)
- [Driver side assembly removal](#)
- [Finished product](#)

Parts you need

1. 1J6 945 096 AC – North American Rear Tinted Tail Light (right side)
2. 1J6 945 095 AC - North American Rear Tinted Tail Light (left side)
3. 1J6 945 191 – Tail Light Gasket (will need 2 of these – they are the same for both sides).

Tools you need

1. 8mm socket and a ratchet with a 6" extension (a nut driver works too)
2. T-20 Torx driver

Passenger Side Assembly Removal

1. Remove cover for passenger side tail light assembly. This is the internal access cover that is normally used for replacing the bulbs.



2. Locate the 8mm nuts that we are going to remove. There are 3 on the passenger side. The first is visible right when you take the cover off. Remove it.



3. The second is below the first – about 8 inches down. Remove this one.



4. The third nut on the passenger side assembly is located just behind the carpeted trim. You have to look back towards the rear of the car to see this one. Remove it.



5. Gently press the assembly back towards the rear of the car from the inside. We only need about one inch of clearance. NOTE: You are NOT removing the assembly yet! There is still a pin in the way that we have to deal with (otherwise, you will crack your tail light assembly).



6. Now, we are going to pull the assembly out to the right of the vehicle. This is in a direction 90 degrees to the front of the vehicle. Move the back of the light out about one inch (as done previously). Now – grip the corner of the light as shown below. Pull 90 away from the vehicle – this is to the side. Pull straight – do NOT twist or pry the light. The pin at the corner of the light is pressed into a rubber grommet.



7. Now, rotate the light assembly downwards to gain access to the light assembly itself. The light assembly will snap off of the back of the plastic tail light assembly housing.



8. Assembly is the reverse of the above. I would recommend using a new gasket. They are available online or at your dealer (online gets them to you in about 3 days). The Part # for the gasket is 1J6 945 191. They are about \$6 each.

Driver Side Assembly Removal

1. This side is a bit tricky. First, open the access door for the CD player / Medical kit. Remove the medical kit strap and bracket. This will require a T-20 Torx driver (star shaped screwdriver).



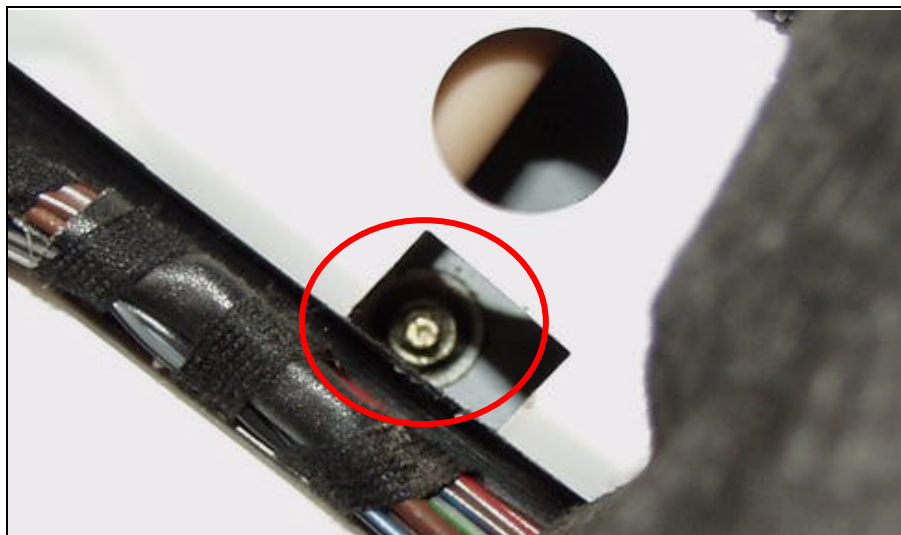
2. Now, we have to pull back the carpeting. To do this, we must pull back part of the plastic trim as shown below. Just put your fingers behind the trim and pull towards you. There are little white snaps that hold the trim in place – do not lose these.



3. Then, we remove the black retainers that hold the carpeting in place where you just pulled the trim back. I am pointing at it with a screwdriver for identification only, you must just pull it away from the metal with your fingers. They are just pressed in.



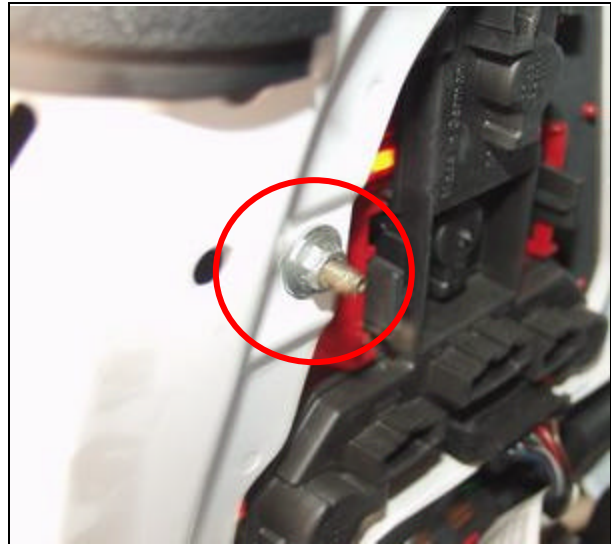
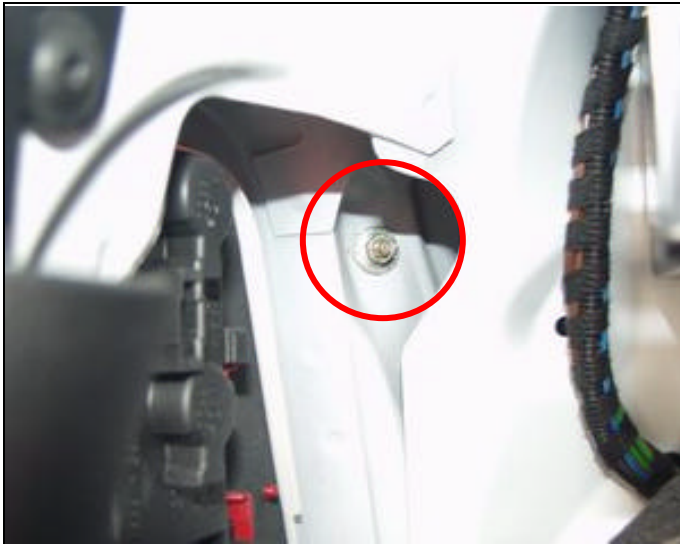
4. Now, pull the carpeting back to gain access to the lower nut on the tail light assembly.



5. Use a 8mm nut driver (or a ratchet with a long extension) to remove this nut. To keep the nut from falling down inside the body of the car, use your index finger as a guide for the retainer (this is what the other hole is there for).



6. Remove the top nut, and the one at the back by the trim (just like the other side). This one is easy because you have pulled back the trim to expose the location.



7. Now, we pull the light assembly down and away from the body of the car. There is no pin to worry about on this side, there are 3 bolts and no pin, versus 3 bolts and a pin on the passenger side.



8. Remove the lighting assembly from the housing. Replace the housing with the new housing. Again, I would recommend using a new gasket in the new assembly. This is also a good time to replace bulbs too!



9. Assembly is the reverse of the above steps. NOTE: when reseating the plastic trim, the seal for the rear hatch may get pinched underneath the plastic trim. Just replace it and take a look at the passenger side trim so that the rear hatch gasket is properly seated (this will be obvious when you do it.... Always pay attention to the little details).

Finished Product

Here are some before and after shots. Yes, I know the back is dirty, but I drive a diesel.... And we LIKE it dirty! I also have a trailer hitch. Makes hooking up the mountain bikes a snap!



Subtle difference. And, the GTI tail lights are US DOT approved.

