

# All Lit Up

## INSTALLING OWL LIGHTING LED KITS

BY TRICIA SZULEWSKI



EVER NOTICE HOW MOST BIKES BECOME almost invisible at night when they're viewed from the side? Two or three side reflectors don't add much visibility, and they're often removed anyway for the sake of aesthetics. Well, there's one solution that a lot of Gold Wingers already know about that enhances a motorcycle's looks and offers greater safety at night. That's right — I'm talking about lighting up your bike with LEDs.

Owl Lighting offers a few different versions of LED kits. Most can be used on any kind of motorcycle and require a minimal draw from a standard 12-volt battery. My dad, Pete, volunteered his 1999 Honda Valkyrie so we could try out Owl's Windshield Light Kit and LED Cruiser Kit. Both include almost everything you need for installation — all that's missing are connectors and solder. However, the kits may not contain enough wire for every job, depending on where you install the lights, so check how much you'll need before you get started.



**It's a good idea to test each light unit before installation by touching the leads to the battery.**

All the LEDs came in tasteful chrome units. We got the best lighting effect by mounting the lights so that they faced some chrome on the bike. This means that most of the units were left in plain sight, but since they're housed in chrome, they tend to blend in with their surroundings. Also, we used bullet-style quick-connectors when we attached the lights to any part that gets removed occasionally, such as the windshield and side covers. Pete carefully soldered all the connections, using heat-shrink between and

over the wires, to act as waterproof insulation.

Installing both kits took about six hours. Most of the time was spent planning the wiring and being careful to do a good soldering job. (One bad solder can cost you hours of trying to diagnose a short in the entire system.) This is an excellent rainy day installation for even a novice wrench. So pull up a stool, get out your soldering gun, and light up your ride.



**The LED Cruiser Kit (top) and Windshield Light Kit come with almost everything needed for installation.**



**1** First, Pete added an extra chrome adhesive strip to the inside of the light bar to give it a tighter fit.



**2** With the windshield removed, he secured the light bar to the shield by tightening the three setscrews. He then reinstalled the windshield.



**3** Pete decided to solder quick-connectors between the push-button switch and the light bar, so that the windshield can be removed easily for cleaning.



**4** He ran the hot and ground wires from where he'd decided to mount the switch (the upper triple tree) down to the battery terminals, and spliced in the 3-amp fuse that would be placed under the seat.



**5** Using the activator and double-sided foam tape, Pete mounted the switch on the triple tree.



**6** Moving on to the cruiser light kit, he decided where each light unit would be located and soldered wires of the right length to each unit. He used the adhesion promoter and adhesion pads to stick all the lights in place, and then led all the wires down the frame, zip-tying them together under the seat.



**7** Pete gathered the hot (red) wires in one bundle and the ground (black) wires in another, near the area where the switch would go. He soldered one of the switch wires to the bundle of red wires and the other switch wire to the 3-amp fuse holder. The switch was then mounted near the fuel petcock valve.



**8** Finally, he soldered the four wire lugs to the ends of the hot and ground wires and attached them to the proper battery terminals. **RB**

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