

Somewhere along the timeline, manufacturers started installing automatic headlights. The idea was a good one.

The DRLs would operate in the daylight and when it got dark a sensor would turn the full headlight system on.

The plan was that the automatic headlight system would look after drivers who were too lazy to notice that the sun had gone down. What could be wrong with that?

Two things:

The first is simply a matter of engineering. The sensor triggers the headlights to go on at a much lower light level than the eye registers as appropriate.

The second is the driver's role in managing safety systems, the driver has to actually turn the switch to the "automatic" setting.

Electronic LED-lit dashboards are always illuminated, reducing drivers' sensitivity to the need for external lighting changes.

DRLs themselves are bright enough that drivers in well-lit urban areas probably don't notice the need to turn the headlights on and have no idea that their taillights are not on.

Intelligent, competent people admit in front of their peers in a classroom that they have driven for months without ever touching the light switch because they believed the lights were controlled automatically.

More and more vehicles are being driven in the dark and in low light conditions with only the forward DRLs and no taillights because of the mistaken belief in automatic headlights.

Automatic headlights are a solution to a problem that nobody had.

The only solution to remedy the problems created by automatic headlights is to build cars with no headlight switch at all.

When the car starts, the full lighting system comes on.

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