Model A Ford
Tech Tips

By Willie Priaulx September 2022

Turn Signal Flasher for LED Lights

The stock lights on a Model A Ford are fine for a show car. But if you intend to drive in modern traffic, stock lights are wholly inadequate, if not outright dangerous.

First, you need two brake lights, not one. And the stock 21 candle power brake light is just too dim. Crank it up! 32 CP bulbs and higher are now available from parts suppliers. Better yet, switch to LED tail lights. It's an investment well worth the money. A 3rd brake light in the rear window is also a nice safety feature.

Then, you need turn signals, front and rear. If you think today's teenaged drivers know the meaning of your arm flapping out the window, you're sadly mistaken. You shouldn't be surprised when they cheerfully wave back, while cutting you off at the turn.

Now, let those nice bright brake lights double for your rear turn signals. No one is looking for that wimpy little light stuck between the rear bumper bars.

Front turn signals, either in the bumper or in the cowl lights work well, provided they are bright enough to be seen. Kits are available for both of these front turn signal options from your favorite parts supplier.

Hopefully by now you are considering some, if not all, LED lighting on your Model A.

LED lights are super bright and draw much less power than standard incandescent lighting. Although LEDs certainly have their advantages, replacement of turn signal bulbs with LEDs can cause what is called hyperflashing, where the turn signals blink faster than your stock incandescent bulbs did. This happens because your new LED light draws such little power that the thermal flasher unit does not recognize the bulb.

There are two strategies to fix hyperflashing:

1. Install load resistor kits. These resistors are installed in parallel (spliced to positive and negative) for each LED bulb. With this added resistance the hyperflashing will be slowed down to a normal rate.

2. Replace the stock thermal flasher with an electronic flasher module specifically designed for LED bulbs. This is the easiest method for fixing hyperflashing. These units are little circular or square boxes with metal contact pins that in most cases plug into the same socket as the stock flasher unit.

Electronic flashers function with both LED and incandescent bulbs, so even if you have LED turn signals in the back and incandescent bulbs in the front, you can use an LED flasher module with no problems.

Sourcing the Electronic Flasher

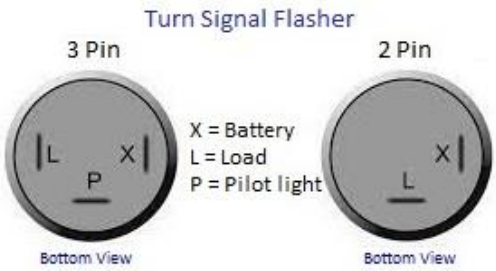
12-volt negative ground electronic flashers are easy to find since they are still in use on modern cars. Finding the correct flasher for your 6 volt Model A presents some challenges however.

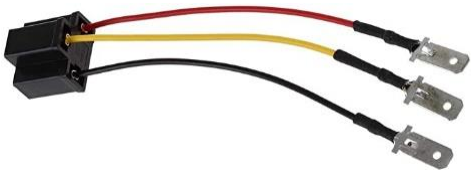
Ideally, we would like a flasher that works on both 6 volt or 12 volt systems in the correct pin configuration. A pilot feed for a dash light or a beeper to indicate when the lights are flashing is also a nice feature. Like a motorcycle, the Model A doesn't have an auto-off function when the turn is complete. We must remember to turn the signals off or they just keep blinking.

I found an electronic flasher designed for motorcycles that fits the bill. It's a 2-pin LED flasher that works with 6V or 12V, and has an internal beeper that's loud enough to be heard while driving a roadster. Made for the motorcycle market it is also waterproof and inexpensive.

Available at Amazon.com
6V 12V Motorcycle Flasher 2 Pin Relay with Beeper

Flashers come it several pin-out options. This new 2-pin unit has an internal beeper, so the pilot light feed is not used. If your turn signal unit currently has a 2-pin flasher the new LED flasher will plug directly into the unit. To replace a 3-pin flasher with the 2-pin version, follow the diagram on the right for the correct wiring.





A new relay socket with pigtails will make this wiring conversion a snap without the need to splice any wires.

HB2 Wiring Harness Socket also at Amazon.com

The dash light, if you have one, will not work with this 2-pin flasher as the internal beeper now replaces the pilot light pin. If you want both the light and the beeper to work, you could splice the pilot wire into the load wire (L) with an inline diode to block any back current from the pilot to the turn signals. If the beeper seems too loud, put a piece of tape over the speaker hole at the back of the flasher.

As always, enjoy the ride and keep the rubber side down – Willie