

How use a flashlight for a bicycle headlight

by [tyler_durden](#) on July 24, 2008

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intro: How use a flashlight for a bicycle headlight

Need to ride at night once in a while? Don't want to spend big bucks for a bike specific headlight? This instructable is for you!



step 1: Here's what you need

A bike helmet. Riding without one is silly, riding in the dark without one doubly so! I like having a light on my helmet because it points where I am looking and can be pointed at drivers on cross streets at intersections. Get a helmet that fits you properly and make sure the straps are adjusted to keep it in place if you go down. A helmet that doesn't stay put when you crash is as bad a no helmet at all!

I like my Giro for the good buckle/strap system and the ventilation. You can get good helmets cheaply by buying last year's model closeouts at places like Nashbar, Pricepoint, etc.

Just about any helmet will work- almost all have plenty of vent holes- you'll see why that is important in a minute...

The other things you need are a flashlight- this thing is going to be on your head, so a small one is best. I used a "River Rock" flashlight that I bought at target for \$20. It uses two AA batteries, it's weather proof and VERY bright. A pair of alkaline batteries will give full output for 4-5 hours. Rechargeable NiMH will provide full output for 2-3 hours. That's plenty for most bike commutes in the dark.

Oh yeah, you'll need a couple rubber bands too. I used whatever I had around. Just make sure they'll fit...



Image Notes

1. Giro with the i and r removed for inspiration.
2. Red reflective tape in the back. You can't be too careful when riding at night!
3. White reflective tape.

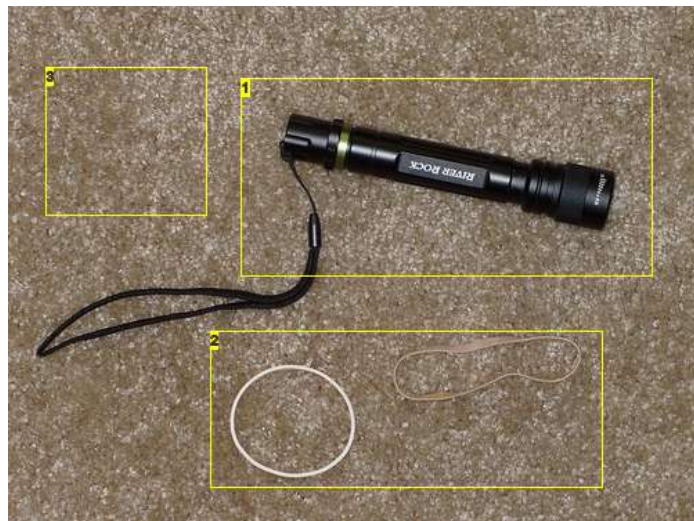


Image Notes

1. \$20 at Target. Similar lights are everywhere for about the same price, maybe lower.
2. Run of the mill rubber bands.
3. Standard apartment carpet.

step 2: Putting it all together.

Put one end of the first rubber band around the flashlight. Put the other end down through one of the vent holes in the helmet. Bring that end back up through another vent hole and loop it around the end of the flashlight.



Image Notes

- 2) Bring the loop back up through another vent hole in the helmet.
- 1) One end goes over the flashlight. Other end goes down into a vent hole in the helmet.



Image Notes

1. Both loops over the flashlight. You could stop here, but the flashlight won't be very stable.

step 3: Almost done!

Now do the same with the other rubber band at the other end of the flashlight. Make fine adjustments to the position of the flashlight by adjusting the rubber bands so that the light points forward and is approximately centered.

Done! That wasn't hard, was it?

No go out and ride, but watch out for cars!



Image Notes

1. Just like the first one- one end over the flashlight, the other down through a hole then back up through another hole, then over the end of the flashlight.



Image Notes

1. This is how it should look when you're done.

step 4: Improvements/Variations

Use velcro straps to hold the flashlight instead of rubber bands if you're going to be riding in the dark a lot. Velcro straps won't break after repeated exposure to your sweaty head.

Use sticky velcro tape and put one piece on the helmet and its mate on the flashlight. Then you can just stick it on and go.

Or you could just keep a few extra rubber bands around...

You can do the same thing to hold the light on the handlebar stem of your bike if you don't want it on your head. It is probably better for racing-type bikes because of the crappy position in which you have to hold your head to see where you are going.

I ride a recumbent so the top of the helmet is fine for me.



Image Notes

1. Can't seem to keep track of your rubber bands? Loop the flashlight's lanyard through them and they won't get lost unless you lose your flashlight.

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Comments

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admin says:

This is a great Instructable, but you need to add a main image of the final project to the intro step. Please do that and leave me a message when you have so that we can publish your work.

Thanks!

Jul 25, 2008. 11:08 AM [REPLY](#)



Pumpkin\$ says:

It's called Ducttape! XD

Aug 8, 2008. 7:53 PM [REPLY](#)



tstartrekdude says:

hey, is the a cree led flash light or an incandescent?

Jul 27, 2008. 2:05 PM [REPLY](#)



tyler_durden says:

I don't recall exactly what was on the package, but I think it is a Luxeon K2. It has a DC-DC converter to keep it at constant brightness as batteries discharge. It is plenty bright for riding home on streets in the dark but I wouldn't try barreling down singletrack with it in the dark.

Jul 27, 2008. 3:52 PM [REPLY](#)
