

I Can See Clearly Now

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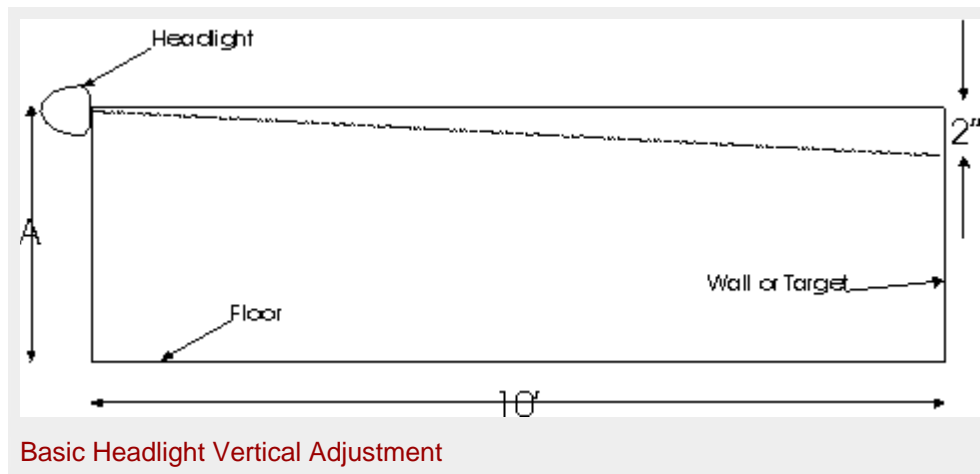
You've been out enjoying that ride all day. You've seen beautiful vistas, felt the wind, leaned into the curves and now you're headed home in the dusk. Before long, you realize the dusk is fading and darkness is descending. Suddenly you realize that you can no longer see where you're going, your headlight just isn't cutting through the night. This might be the first time you've been caught out in the dark, and if you're like me, just a little bit of panic sets in until you flip on the highbeam and can see a little better.

It's quite likely that you are the victim of a poorly aimed headlight. So, before you add those passing lamps, or get a higher wattage bulb, or do any of those other things that may strain your wallet and your charging system, try following these simple directions for aiming your headlight.

Most people are in the dark as to how to aim their headlights because the procedure is not shown in either the owner's manual or the service manual for any of the Yamaha Stars. The owner's manual does identify the correct screws to turn for either vertical or horizontal alignment. Make sure to check the screw location for your bike before you start. In addition, you will need a measuring tape, a marking implement or tape (I like electrical tape) and a helper.

Refer to the diagram below as you proceed.

The first step is to determine dimension A, the distance from the floor to the center of the headlight. Road Stars, for example are nominally 36". To check this dimension for your bike, sit on the seat with the bike level (off the sidestand) and have your helper measure the distance from the floor to the center of the headlight. That measurement is dimension A shown on the right hand side of the diagram.



Now, subtract 2" (inches) from dimension A and put a marker or piece of tape on the wall or target surface parallel to the floor. Measure 10' (feet) from your target surface, and put another marker on the floor.

Position the bike so that the headlight is over the marker on the floor and pointed at the target on the wall. With the rider seated on the bike and the bike level (off the kickstand), turn on the HIGHBEAM. Have your helper adjust the vertical aiming screw until the "hot spot" of the headlight is centered on the wall target. Draping a light-weight white cloth over the headlight helps to better define the "hot spot."

This procedure gives a good nominal vertical adjustment. You can fine tune it from there based on your personal preference for night riding.

If this doesn't solve your night light problems, it