



Trailers come in all shapes and sizes, each with a different purpose. One thing they all have in common: the lights don't work. (Photo by Mark Rackay)


Zen and the art of trailer maintenance? Not quite

Through my own personal calculations, I think that over the course of the average outdoor person's life, he or she will own around a dozen trailers. These will include boat trailers, motorcycle or snowmobile trailers, cargo, RV and camping trailers, utility trailers and possibly more.

I have owned at least that many trailers, and still have a few now. I am getting back into boating so there will be a boat trailer in my future once again. One thing is constant among all trailers: the lights don't work.

A caveman by the name of Grog long ago invented the wheel and shortly thereafter, he added the axle. Basically, these are the two major parts of a trailer. Ever since Grog assembled two wheels to an axle, and added a carry box on top, he has been trying to make the lights work.

The wiring kit comes with a plug that has four wires coming out of it. These wires lead to the



Tips
from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

rectangular lights on the back of the trailer. Each light has several functions; brake lights, turn signal and lights for night operation.

One would logically think that there is a set number of possible combinations that four wires from a plug can hook to two lights. I am not very good at math, but I think the number of possible wiring combinations number in the thousands. I have yet to stumble on the correct combination but someday hope to hit upon the number and will report back to you here.

The constant for hooking up trailer lights is for the operator to take

many breaks so that he can defoliate he shrubbery with colorful expressions. Anytime I go near the trailer, my wife covers the grandkids ears with her hands and heads into the house.

The thing that attaches the trailer to your tow vehicle is called the trailer ball. The ball is what the tongue, or front end of the trailers attaches to. These evil creations are simple enough, as they come in two sizes: too big and too small.

If you use the too big trailer ball, you spend your time jumping up and down on the trailer tongue, trying to get it to fit on the trailer ball. If you use the too small trailer ball, you have to use a piece of rope to tie down the trailer tongue or else it will bounce off while you drive down the road.

Since the trailer is such an evil contraption, it will choose a mountain pass with lots of curves, for it disconnect from the car routine. This results in you no longer being

the driver of the car/trailer rig, as the trailer is now passing you on the highway.

You a passenger with no input as to where the trailer will end up, but you are assured of a full view of the proceedings.

Since there are lots of curves, you will probably have no problem catching up with the trailer, eventually. Trailers are the kind of thing that make my insurance agent give me obscene gestures whenever he sees me drive past.

It is good practice to test out all the lights on your trailer every time you use it. The preferred method is to hook everything up and have your wife stand behind the trailer as you try the brakes and turn signals.

I recently hooked up our ATV trailer and had my wife of many years help me check the lights.

The conversation went something like this:

Me: Ok, I have the right turn signal on, is it blinking?

Wife: No

• Me: &%%\$ Ok, how about the left one now?

Wife: No, but the right one is on all the time now.

Me: @#\$\$ Arrrrrrgh ok, are they both on now? Steady now?

Wife: No, but they both blinked for a second then went out. Look, why don't you get someone else to help you with this because I have other things to do today? Besides, I am sick of your bad language.

• Me: %%\$% %#\$& %5E%#

But she can no longer hear me. She has retreated to the sanctity of the house. In fact, she is probably on the phone with an attorney. Trailers are known to be a major cause of divorces.

Trailers are a necessary evil for outdoor people. We need them to haul all the toys and equipment to the mountains necessary for us to properly recreate. People with campers and RVs are hauling around their temporary home. Unfortunately, we will continue to

need the trailer because all this junk won't fit in a station wagon, especially if you add a boat.

And speaking of boats, it seems I will be spending some time in South Florida fishing in the upcoming years, so a flats boat is in my future. If you are driving down the road and see a guy jumping up and down on the tongue of a trailer and defoliating shrubbery with his colorful comments, and the trailer lights are blinking, give a sympathetic wave. It is just yours truly with his new boat and trailer.

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