

Guide to Back Up Lights -1965 to 1970

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Back up lights, at one time, were not standard equipment on vehicles sold before the mid 1960's. Before then they simply were not offered, or required, equipment. One of the first years where Ford even started offering back up lights was in their 1957 model year. It wasn't until the 1960's when Federal Safety Regulations pushed new standards that back up lights became mandatory equipment. Part of that regulation reads that the back up light(s) must be white, the vehicle have at least one light, and only be activated when the car is put in reverse.

When the Ford Mustang was released in April 1964 back up lamps were not available as a factory option. It was not until August 1964 that the back up lamps could be ordered as an option. Therefore the early Mustangs and the 1965 model year Mustangs did not have this option standard. Ford sold a back up lamp kit during that time if owners wanted to retrofit their Mustangs. Reverse lights finally became standard equipment for the 1966 model year. From that point until the end of 1970 model year Mustangs, Shelby's, and Cougars had separate reverse lights mounted on the rear valance. It was not until the 1971 model year that the reverse lights were finally integrated into the entire tail light assembly.

The separate valance mounted reverse lights were unique to the Mustangs for almost 50 years, and were not ever brought back until 2015 when the new model Mustangs again mounted the reverse lights separately. This guide here will show the differences and details and how to identify the early back up lamps.

Model Year	Right Hand	Left Hand
1965-1966	C5ZZ-15511-A	C5ZZ-15512-A
1967 –1968 till April 8 1968	C7ZZ-15511-A	C7ZZ-15512-A
1968 from April 8 1968	C7ZZ-15511-B	C7ZZ-15512-B
1969	C9ZZ-15500-A	C9ZZ-15500-B
1969	C9ZZ-15500-C	C9ZZ-15500-D
1969-1970 after April 7 1969	C9ZZ-15500-E	C9ZZ-15500-F

1965



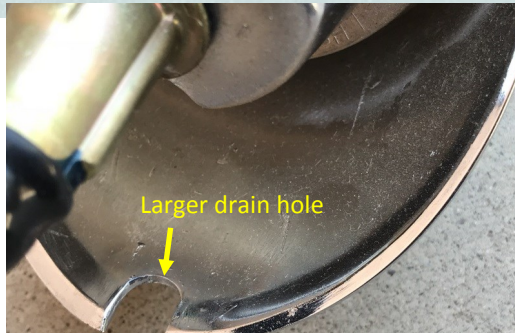
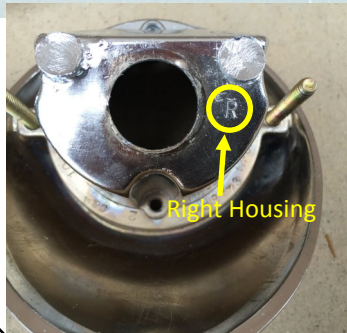
For owners that wanted to add reverse lights on their 1964 1/2 and 1965 Mustangs Ford sold a *Back Up Lamp Kit* under the service part number of C5ZZ-15499-A. This kit included everything from the template to cut the rear valance, to all the wiring, the reverse lamp assemblies, gaskets, screws, lenses etc. Then in 1966 this became standard equipment.

1966



The right hand assemblies are marked in the cast housing C4ZB-15515-B and the left hand assemblies are marked C4ZB-15A509-B. The wire harness is ink stamped with C4ZB-15536-A and FoMoCo and is two wires molded together with a spade and bullet end connector with the light bulb socket finished in a zinc dichromate. Note the smaller drain hole on the bottom of the housing as compared to the 1967 to 1970 versions.

1967—1968



The 1967 model year brought a new version of the back up lamps that replaces the C4 assemblies that were used the previous year. Except for one small change these lights shown here on this page are used for both the 1967 and the 1968 model year. And as with the previous year there is a distinct left and right assembly. The right hand assembly is marked with a C7ZB-15515-A and the left hand assembly is marked with a C7ZB-15A509-A. In addition to the engineering numbers cast in the housings there was a distinct "L" and "R" added to the back face for easier identification on the left and right side of the housings. The wiring harness that is part of the assembly is marked with a C7ZB-15536-A and has two wires molded together that lead to a plug connector. The bulb socket is finished in a zinc dichromate.

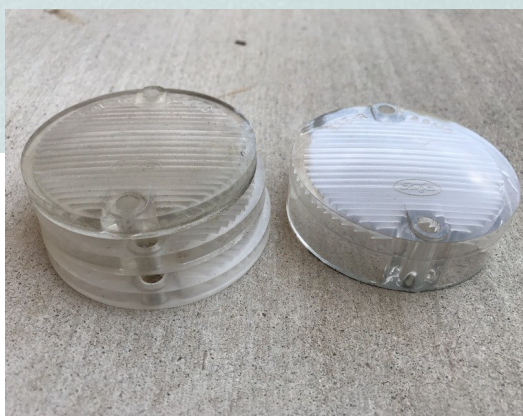
The Master Parts Catalog shows that the light assemblies changed after April 1968 (see page 1), but this change is only related to the light bulb socket that was specified by Ford. So although the part numbers changed, the visual differences between a -A and a -B version are not noticeable unless it was to be taken apart and compared.

1969—1970



The 1969 and the 1970 model year Ford used exactly the same housing as the 1967/1968 versions, as they are still marked with C7ZB engineering numbers. There was really only two major changes. First was the wiring harness assembly which now has a red connector on the end and the wires are covered in a black polyvinyl chloride insulator and marked with a C9ZZ-15536-B. The second change is in the design of the reverse lamp lenses which are now marked with a SAE-R 69MG.

The most unusual running change during the 1969 model year was in the reverse lamp lens and how they were installed. As with previous years a single thin lens was used with the housing. It seems that there was possibly an issue with moisture and debris getting caught in the housing so Ford started stacking the lens and used two lenses on top of each other to create a thicker surface. This then eventually changed to three stacked lenses until beginning of April 1969. At that point Ford finally made a single thick lens that was then used till the end of production 1970. Pictures here give a quick visual comparison of what that looked like. There would have been a gasket between each lens when stacked.



Left: Shows the single stacked lenses as compared to the thick lens that was used from April 69.

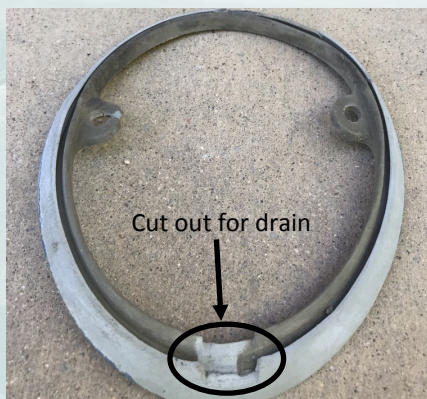
Right: Stacked lenses as they look when removed from a survivor 69 Mustang.



Back Up Lamp Gaskets



1965—1966 The first versions of the back up lamp gaskets were used for the 1965-1966 lights. These were originally black in color and were actually separate left and right side gaskets. Left side was marked as a C4ZB-15544-A and the right side was marked as a C4ZB-15533-A with a cut out for the drain hole.



1967—1970 The second version of back up lamp gaskets were used on all 1967 to 1970 model year Mustangs. Note the correct grey color as assembly line originals had since there is some Ford service replacements that were done in black. The gaskets are now the same for the left and right side and marked with a C7ZB-15533-A, also with a cut out for the drain.

Lenses



Three different lenses were used from 1965 to 1970. The first lens was used until the end of model year 1968 and is marked with SAE R 64 CR. The second and third lenses are marked the same with SAE R 69 MG with the only difference being the thickness of the lens as described on the previous page.

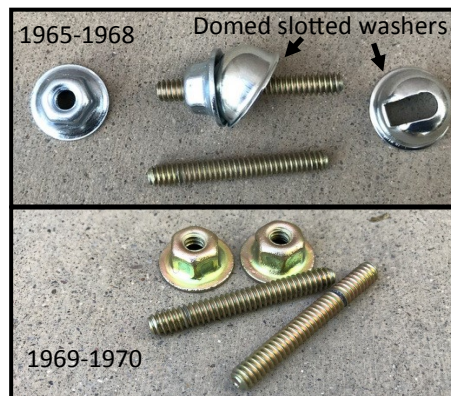
Miscellaneous Items



The same back up lens gasket was used all years between the lens (or lenses) and the body of the housing. Shown here these are a grey material C5ZZ-15510-A.



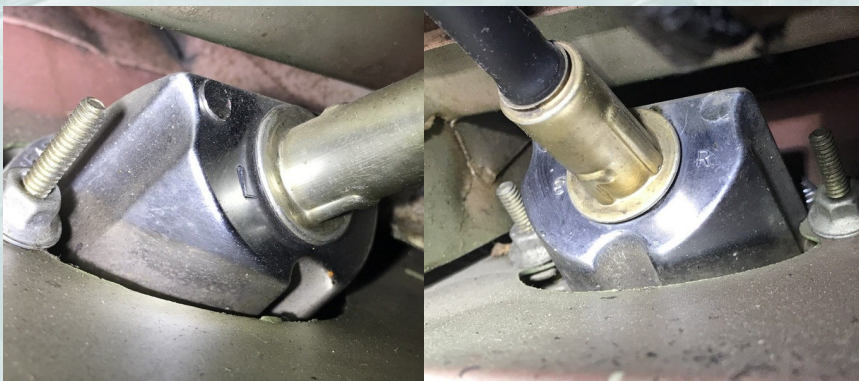
The original mounting hardware shown here that was used for the 1965 and 1966 installations. Besides the mounting nuts, there is a round washer used as well.



1965 to 1968 applications normally use the domed slotted washer, and 1969 to 1970 does not, even though this washer is still shown in the assembly manual. Unrestored cars (69-70) never seem to have these washers installed.



Bulbs that were used were a clear single filament bulb that was the 1142 type bulb. Original bulbs may have date codes.



Installation of left and right side of the reverse lights on an unrestored low mileage 1968 Mustang. Shown here is what is typical for the hardware and note the distinct L and R for the right and left side assemblies that can be seen once the lights are installed.



A super rare find, Ford actually serviced just the entire wire harness and socket assembly. Shown here the C9 versions with the red plugs.



Special thanks to Jim Woods for photos and Bob Furby for his contributions in the research here, and to all the Mustang community out there sharing this type of information with others.

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