

Wheels: *I have received several letters and e-mails from readers about a previous column about the location of the gas fill door and bluish headlights.*

Alyssa and several others said the icon (pictograph) that is on the dash shows where the location is by looking at where the nozzle on the figure is pointing. Tom T. and others wrote that they felt that the bright blue lights were a safety issue to others as they said that these bright lights are blinding to on-coming drivers.

Halderman: Thanks to everyone who wrote. Regarding the gas icon on the dash that shows an image of a gas pump. Many think that the where the nozzle points is where the gas filler door is located. The nozzle on the gas pump icon is pointing toward the left side of the vehicle and this is where most of the filler doors are located. However, the icon is a standardized image used throughout the world to indicate the gas gauge and is therefore the same for all vehicles regardless of the location of the filler door. As a result, this seems to work for many vehicles (the direction that the nozzle is pointing) but not for all vehicles. Many vehicle manufacturers add an arrow under the icon pointing to the side where the fuel door is located.

Regarding the bright bluish headlights, I too have been blinded by some vehicles that have blue headlights. However, when they pass me, I have noticed that most are older vehicles that were not equipped with HID (xenon) headlights. In these cases, I think what I saw was a vehicle that had aftermarket high wattage bulbs installed rather than the factory HID headlights. Many of these aftermarket light bulbs, which are available on the Internet, are rated at 80 watts instead of the standard 55 watts for normal headlights. As a result, these lights do produce a much brighter light that can be blinding to on-coming drivers. By the way the extra current required for these brighter lights does tend to melt wiring, connectors, and damage the dimmer switch due to the increased current required. Factory HID headlights, while bluish, are not as bright as these aftermarket bulbs. Most vehicles equipped with HID headlights also are equipped with self-leveling headlights so that the lights will not shine higher than normal if the vehicle is loaded, causing the front of the vehicle to be higher than normal.

