2012-2018 BMW 3-Series - Headlight Bulb Replacement

2012-2018 BMW 3-Series | Moderate | 30 minutes | $22 DIY

TOOLS
Flathead screwdriver T20 Torx driver

PARTS
H7 Halogen Bulb $22.00

STEPS

1. **Access Engine Bay - Identify your system before touching anything: halogen housings use** H7 12V/55W bulbs (low and high beam); xenon cars use a D1S low-beam capsule with a ballast module on the housing back. D1S runs off high voltage - disconnect the battery.
2. **Remove Access Cover - Reach the low beam through the wheel well: turn the wheel inward,** pop out the round fender-liner hatch. Twist the cover counterclockwise about 90 degrees and pull it off, setting it seal-side up - grit on the seal lets moisture in and fo...
3. **Disconnect Bulb - Press the release tab and pull straight back - never yank the wiring on** these brittle plastic connectors. On D1S cars disconnect the battery negative first (high-voltage ballast) and let the capsule cool fully. Seized? Rock it side to si...
4. **Remove Old Bulb - Squeeze the wire clip’s legs, swing it out, pull the bulb straight out.** Note the index tab’s position in the reflector notch - the new bulb must match it or the beam pattern will be wrong. D1S: release the metal bracket, twist the capsul...
5. **Install New Bulb - Handle the new bulb by its base only, or use a tissue or clean gloves** - skin oil on halogen glass creates hot spots that drastically shorten bulb life, and on a D1S capsule it can cause uneven output. Seat the bulb fully in its index not...
6. **Test the Bulb - Reconnect the battery, then test the headlights before refitting covers.** Confirm the new bulb matches the other side - new D1S capsules start pinkish-blue and settle to white within a minute. If it flickers or stays dark, reseat the conn...
7. **Refit Access Cover - Twist the access cover clockwise until it seats firmly - an unseated** cover is the number-one cause of F30 headlight condensation. Refit the wheel-well hatch and anything you moved. Close the hood, then check the cutoff line at night agai...

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