

Blasting out 9,500 lumens, the Baja Designs XL80 LED offers lots of light from a nearly indestructible 8-inch cube. A hard-anodized body, billet machined aluminum bezel, and hardcoated polycarbonate lens encase the four Cree LEDs. It features built-in overvoltage protection, exceeds mil-spec MIL-STD810G testing, is water-proof up to 9 feet and pressure washable, and is also IK10 Mechanical Impact Testing compliant.



# A-PILLAR HEADLAMPS THAT BOOST NIGHT VISION

## Baja Designs' XL80 LED driving/combo lights mounted at the A-Pillar more than double the scene-drenching power of your Jeep

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If you're into night wheeling, or if you just want to make sure you're equipped with enough light power in case you don't get off the trail before sunset, you really do want more than the factory headlights to guide your way. Luckily, there are a lot of auxiliary lighting choices to help prep your Jeep for the night. Among the many lighting manufacturers to choose from is Baja Designs, a company that has been expanding and upgrading its product line in recent years.

Baja Designs offers a wide range of auxiliary lighting as well as some direct replacement headlight upgrades that can boost your rig's beams with high-power LED packages. Its auxiliary light catalog includes lights in numerous sizes, shapes, outputs, beam patterns, and designs; most of its auxiliary lights offer a choice of white or amber, and in some cases other colors such as red and blue.

The Baja Designs XL80 LED line caught our eye right away. It features four Cree LEDs for a total of 9,500 lumens and can be found in Driving/Combo or Wide Cornering designs in either white or amber. The XL80 is wrapped in a waterproof, hard-anodized, powder-coated cast-aluminum housing that measures about 4 1/2 by 3 1/2 by 5 inches with a billet machined bezel and hardcoated polycarbonate lens.

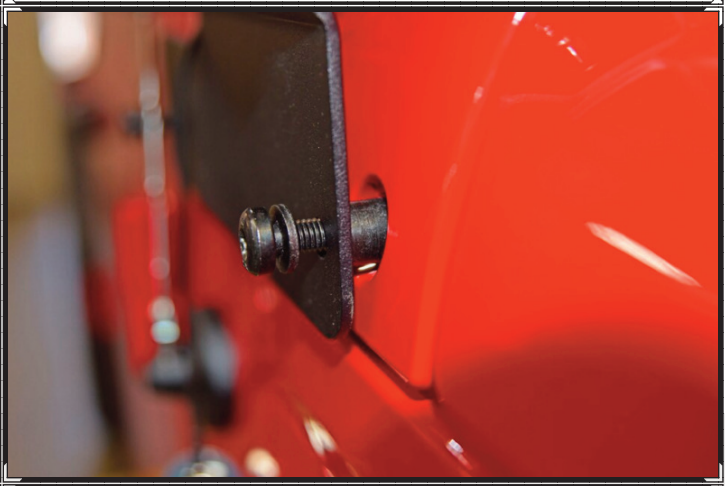
The Driving/Combo provides maximum trail coverage in one light, combining Wide Driving (44-degree spread) and a spot (6-degree spread). Wide Corner-

ing is specially designed to throw a wide and flattened horizontal beam good for cornering, dust, or fog. It's also offered as a Work/Scene light, which can be mounted strategically on your vehicle to provide a 180-degree-wide, 250-foot-deep workable glow that's perfect for night wrenching or winching, should that ever be necessary.

We decided to check out a pair of Baja Designs XL80 LED Driving/Combo white lights (PN 677803) for a project we were working on with Duval Offroad Designs (DOD), and to make it easy to mount and control them, we snagged a pair of Mopar A-Pillar Lamp Brackets for the JL/JT (PN 82215427) and looped the new lights into a Jeep JL/JT 8-Circuit sPOD Source SE w/ Touchscreen. Read on to find out more of what we learned during the installation of these night-blasting LED Driving/Combo lights.



The four factory bolts holding each of the cowl corners were removed. Then very carefully drilling with a pilot drill first, we made two 1/2-inch holes in each to thread the wiring through and used locking plastic grommets to protect the wiring. Our plan was to share space on the Mopar A-pillar lamp brackets for the Jeep's Ham and CB antennas, so they were wired up first.



Kit-supplied spacers keep the A-pillar light bracket off the sheet-metal and help to create a sturdy connection between the bracket and the body panel.



Our pair of XL80s came with a wiring look created specifically for them and the vehicle the lights were intended for. In this case, that vehicle was a 2020 Jeep Gladiator JT Rubicon, Vehicle-specific wiring kits are available for many Baja Designs lighting products, and "universal" wiring is available. As usual, Duval Offroad Designs went the extra mile on this installation, making a few custom alterations to the wiring look to better direct it for this specific application and resealing and securing all the split loom ends with heat shrink.



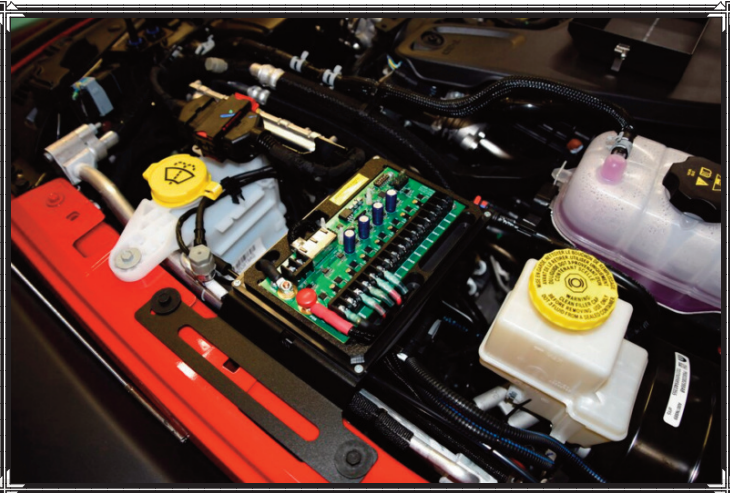
All-new replacement hardware for the cowl corners comes with the Mopar bracket kit. A ratchet with a T-30 for the top two bolts and a T-40 for the bottom two bolts gets the job done quickly.



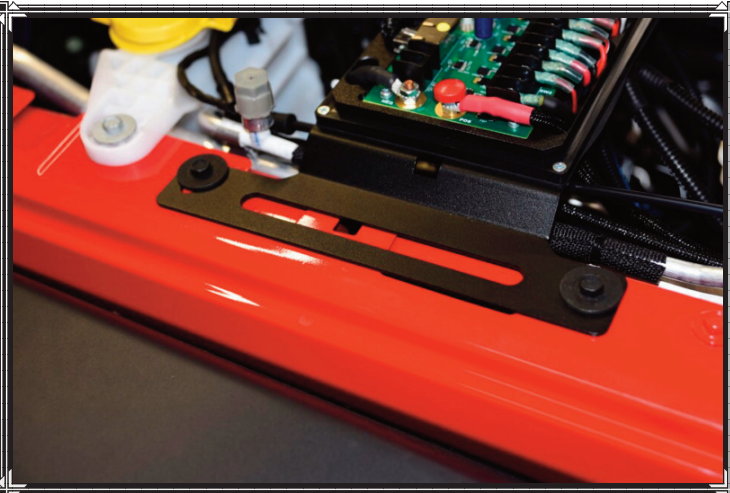
The broad upper platform and extended lower support of the Mopar A-pillar bracket design create a perfect station for our new Baja Designs XL80 LED lights.



Securing the Baja Designs XL80 light to the A-pillar bracket was more easily done by first attaching (not fully tightening) the small U-shaped bracket for the light's housing to the A-pillar bracket, and then mounting the housing to its small bracket. Once the light was aligned, the 1/4-20x1/2-inch bolt, washer and nut sets were tightened to secure the light to its bracket, and the 3/8-16dx7/8-inch hardware was fully tightened, fastening the light and its bracket to the A-pillar brackets below. The Baja Designs light wiring was run through the 1/2-inch holes drilled into the cowl and then under the hood.



On board to manage a multitude of electrics that are planned our currently installed on this Jeep was an sPOD 8-Circuit Source SE w/Touchscreen system. The wiring from the Baja Designs XL80 lights were routed into the engine compartment and fed into the circuit board of the sPOD system.



Installation of the sPOD system was incredibly simple, requiring nothing more than a few handtools, and then it was ready to hook up to battery power. Once it's live, power and control over accessories can be sourced from it directly.



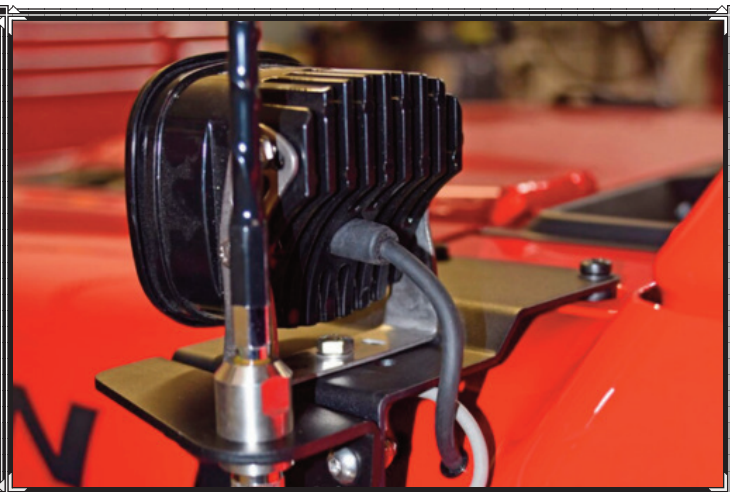
The Ethernet cable connecting the sPOD Source SE circuit boards to the touchscreen was strung through the cowl and then up through the bottom of the Gladiator's fold-down windshield.



Control of the sPOD 8-Circuit Source SE and the Baja Designs XL80 LED light is accessed through the system's touchscreen. We mounted ours onto the Jeep Gladiator's A-pillar, with a Ram Mounts Double Socket Arm securing it to a Carolina Metal Masters A-pillar Ball Mount attached to thread holes accessed under the plastic A-pillar cover.



The controls to the new Baja Designs XL80 LED lights were, quite literally, at our fingertips. Switching them on and off is as simple as tapping the screen, but the sPOD 8-Circuit Source SE touchscreen can also be used to make the lights strobe, flash, or come on momentarily, as well as allowing you to take advantage of the dimming (20 percent) feature of the Baja Designs XL80 LED lights.



With the driver-side (pictured) and passengerside Baja Designs XL80 LED lights mounted to the Mopar A-Pillar Brackets, plugged in and ready to go (along with our HAM and CB antennas sharing the Mopar mount platforms), we were ready for another testdrive.



The before (above left) and after Baja Designs XL80 LED lights (above right) illustrate a dramatic difference in illumination power and pattern. The boost in light power made by adding the pair of 9,500-lumen quad- Cree LED lights to our 2020 Jeep Gladiator was like night had turned into day.

## Sources

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**Duval Offroad Designs**  
805-375-7551  
dodoffroad.net

**Baja Designs**  
760-560-2252  
bajadesigns.com

**Carolina Metal Masters**  
704-213-4319  
carolinametalmasters.com

**Mopar**  
Mopar.com

**Ram Mounts**  
800-497-7479  
rammount.com

**sPOD**  
661-775-7799  
4x4spod.com