

## 1978 THROUGH 1982 CORVETTE T&T STEERING COLUMN DIMMER PIVOT, TURN SIGNAL SWITCH, AND TURN SIGNAL LEVER CONFUSION

Most 1978 through 1982 Corvettes had tilt & telescoping steering columns. This paper particularly discusses the differences with respect to dimmer pivots, turn signal switches, and turn signal levers for those columns. The standard (non-adjustable) steering columns during the 1978 and 1979 model years also had dimmer pivots but they were different from the T&T pivots. I have had great difficulty finding information them. The dimmer pivot angle on the standard columns was 21 degrees from the steering column centerline both years. Only the T&T steering columns are discussed here.

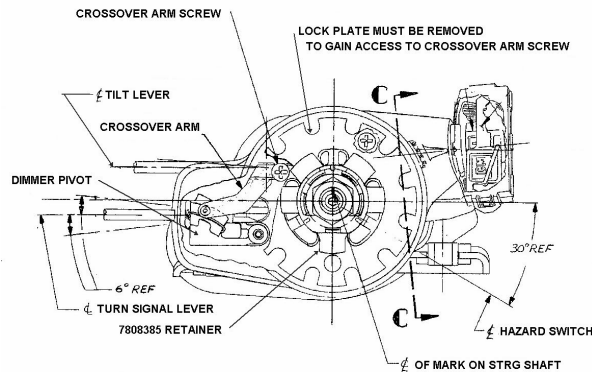
For the 1977 model year the Corvette windshield wash/wipe switch was moved from the instrument cluster and the headlamp dimmer switch was moved from the floor. Both switches were relocated to the steering column as part of the turn signal lever. This was a one year only design and is not discussed here.

Starting in 1978 (through 1982) the wash/wipe switch was returned to the dash. The headlamp dimmer continued as part of the steering column/turn signal lever system.

There is a common problem that seems to be prevalent through most Corvette supplier catalogues. There is mention of 1978 Early and 1978 Late turn signal switches. They make mention of "bent" and "straight" turn signal switch levers. Also there is a difference between 1978 Early dimmer pivots and 1978 Late pivots.

I have not found any difference in the actual Corvette turn signal switch from 1978 to 1979. There is a difference starting with the 1980-82 turn signal switches. Those later switches have an extra circuit and have extra wires for cornering lights. Those switches with the extra wires can be used in the 78-79 steering columns (there just isn't a vehicle cornering light harness to connect to the end of the "harmonica" connector on the column).

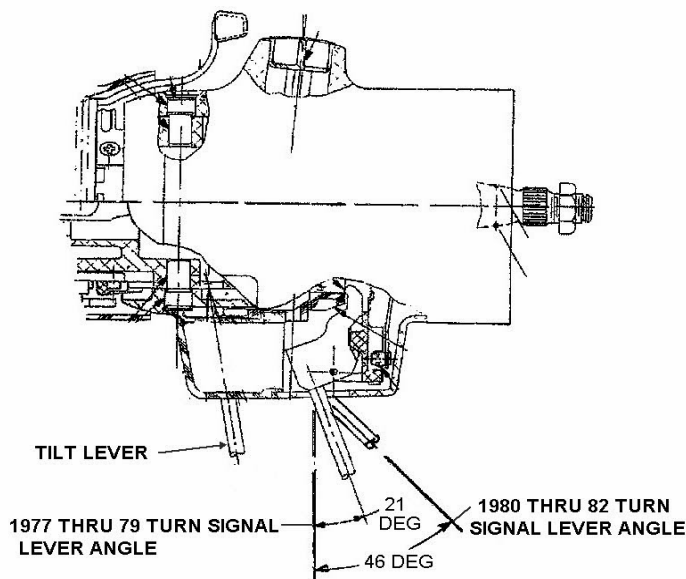
On the 1978 through 1982 Corvette steering columns, the turn signal lever snaps into a pivot assembly that is inside the steering column head. The pivot assembly then connects to the turn signal switch with a small adapter called a cross-over arm. So the turn signal switch doesn't care what type lever is being used. The bent and straight levers must match up to the type of dimmer pivot that is in the column NOT the switch itself.



SECTIONAL VIEW: CORVETTE 1977-82 TILT & TELESCOPING STEERING COLUMN TURN SIGNAL SWITCH CROSSOVER ARM

Here is another part of the problem; there are pivots that have a shallow (21 degree) angle so that the turn signal lever needs to be bent in order to end up close to the steering wheel rim and there are pivots with a steep (46 degree) angle where a straight lever is used. My information shows the 21 degree angle pivot being used 1978 and 1979. The 46 degree pivot starts the 1980 model year. (But could it have been pulled ahead into 1979.)

1977-82 CORVETTE T&T STEERING COLUMN  
TURN SIGNAL LEVER/DIMMER PIVOT COMPARISON



Note: It is possible that the 46 deg dimmer pivot was a pull-ahead into the 1979 model year.

The last confusing part to this whole saga is the fact that 1978 Early pivots attached inside the column head by means of a special screw. Late 1978 pivots attached inside the column head by means of a pressed-in pin. You need to know what type pivot and connection that you have because they do not interchange.

So I am suspecting that a long time ago, someone (maybe in the Chevrolet Service Department) may have gotten confused between levers, switches, and pivots and how they acted with each other. The suppliers picked up on the error and so we have confusion today.

Hopefully you might be able to describe to your supplier tech, exactly what you might need (i.e early, late, special screw, pressed-in pin, straight versus bent levers, and worst of all 21 versus 46 degree pivots.) Sorry about all of the bad, confusing news.

Jim Shea

CorvetteStrgColumnDimmerPivotConfusionRev14JL2010