

There are at least 4 relays used on various XJs that look identical: two different versions of the headlight relay, the ignition cut-off relay and the sidestand relay. While the connectors will allow you to mix and match, the relays are different internally. For example, a headlight relay has the identical pin-outs as a sidestand relay, but the coil is a much higher resistance. The headlight relay resistance is around 90 or 100 ohms while the sidestand relay is less than 1 ohm. If you were to install a sidestand relay in the headlight relay circuit, it would likely work for a short while and then burn out the coil. Also, there is no diode in the relay to latch it closed so the headlight would turn off when the engine quit running even with the key on. The contacts may be rated for different currents. The ignition cut-off relay is wired completely different inside and mixing the other two will result in either the circuit not working or destruction of the relay or both.

So, how to tell them apart? The logical thought is to look at the number stamped on the relay. Unfortunately Yamaha outsourced the relays and used different manufacturers at different times. For their own ease of identification, they seem to have used a colour code system. On the connector side of the relay, look for a dot of paint:

Yellow: Headlight relay for most XJs that have them
Red: Headlight relay for XJ900*
Blue: Sidestand relay
none: Ignition cut-off relay.

*The "Red" XJ900 relay will work in place of the "Yellow" relay but the headlight will not latch on when the engine dies.