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4007	0.13	4516	0.80	74LS11	0.12	74LS139	0.30
4009UB	0.25	4518	0.35	74LS12	0.12	74LS145	1.20
4010	0.30	4520	0.60	74LS13	0.20	74LS151	0.30
4011	0.11	4521	1.30	74LS14	0.30	74LS153	0.27
4012	0.14	4522	0.89	74LS20	0.12	74LS154	0.99
4013	0.25	4526	4.00	74LS21	0.12	74LS155	0.35
4016	0.22	4527	0.87	74LS22	0.12	74LS156	0.37
4017	0.40	4528	0.65	74LS26	0.14	74LS157	0.30
4019	0.38	4529	0.70	74LS27	0.12	74LS158	0.30
4020	0.55	4531	0.65	74LS28	0.15	74LS160	0.37
4021	0.55	4532	0.80	74LS30	0.12	74LS161	0.37
4022	0.85	4534	4.00	74LS32	0.12	74LS162	0.37
4023	0.15	4536	2.60	74LS33	0.15	74LS163	0.37
4024	0.33	4538	0.85	74LS38	0.14	74LS164	0.40
4025	0.15	4539	0.80	74LS40	0.13	74LS165	0.60
4026	0.26	4543	0.80	74LS42	0.30	74LS168	0.70
4030	0.35	4549	3.50	74LS47	0.35	74LS169	0.85
4043	0.30	4553	2.70	74LS48	0.45	74LS170	0.90
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4046	0.60	4555	0.35	74LS51	0.13	74LS174	0.40
4049UB	0.24	4556	0.40	74LS54	0.14	74LS175	0.40
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4071	0.16	4568	1.45	74LS85	0.60	74LS196	0.55
4072	0.16	4569	1.70	74LS86	0.14	74LS221	0.50
4073	0.16	4581	1.18	74LS90	0.28	74LS240	0.80
4075	0.16	4572UB	0.22	74LS92	0.31	74LS241	0.80
4076	0.55	4580	3.25	74LS93	0.31	74LS242	0.70
4077	0.18	4581	1.40	74LS95	0.40	74LS243	0.70
4078	0.18	4582	0.70	74LS96	1.20	74LS244	0.80
4081	0.12	4583	0.80	74LS107	0.25	74LS245	0.80
4093	0.30	4584	0.27	74LS109	0.20	74LS257	0.40
4175	0.80	4585	0.45	74LS112	0.20	74LS258	0.37
4502	0.60	40174	1.05	74LS113	0.20	74LS260	0.50
4503	0.50	40195	1.08	74LS114	0.19	74LS266	0.20
4506	0.70	74LS00	0.10	74LS122	0.35	74LS273	0.70
4507	0.37	74LS01	0.10	74LS124	1.80	74LS279	0.35
4508	1.50	74LS02	0.11	74LS123	0.35	74LS365	0.32
4510	0.55	74LS03	0.11	74LS125	0.24	74LS366	0.34
4511	0.45	74LS04	0.12	74LS126	0.24	74LS367	0.32
4512	0.55	74LS05	0.13	74LS132	0.42	74LS368	0.35
4514	1.25	74LS08	0.12	74LS133	0.24	74LS373	0.70

Memory Micros Linears:

LM10CN	3.88	SL1611	1.60	KB4433	1.52	U265	3.16
L149	1.86	SL1612	1.60	KB4413	1.95	U266	2.43
U237B	1.28	SL1613	2.06	KB4436	2.53	LC7137	7.50
U247B	1.28	SL1620	2.17	KB4437	1.75	ICM7216B	19.50
U257B	1.28	SL1621	2.17	KB4445	1.29	ICM7216C	19.95
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LM324	0.45	SL1625	2.17	NE5044	2.26	SP8647	6.00
LM339N	0.66	SL1630	1.62	MC5229	9.60	95H90	7.80
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LF351	0.49	TDA2002	1.25	SL6440	3.38	HD44015	4.45
LF353	0.76	ULN2242	3.05	SL6600	3.75	HD44752	8.00
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ZN419CE	1.98	CA3089	1.84	SL6640	2.75	Z80A	3.75
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NE544	1.80	CA3130T	0.80	SL6700	2.50	Z80A CTC	4.00
NE555N	0.20	CA3140E	0.46	SAS6710	1.48	Z80A DMA	9.95
SL560C	1.98	CA3189E	2.20	LS7225	3.65	Z80A DART	7.50
NE564	4.29	CA3240E	1.27	ICM7555	0.94	Z80A S10/1	11.00
NE567	1.30	MC3357	2.85	ICL8038CC	4.50	Z80A S10/2	11.00
UA741CN	0.20	ULN3859	2.95	TK10170	1.87	Z80A S10/9	9.95
TB820M	0.78	LM3900	0.60	TK10321	2.75	Z8001	65.00
ZNA1034	2.10	LM3909N	0.68	HA11223	2.15	8255	2.58
LM1035	4.50	LM3914N	2.80	HA11225	1.45	6800P	2.90
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MC1350	1.20	KB4424	1.65	LF13741	0.33	2114-L2	1.49
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CFSB10.7	0.50	MF45510AZ12118.55	1.95	LFB8	1.95
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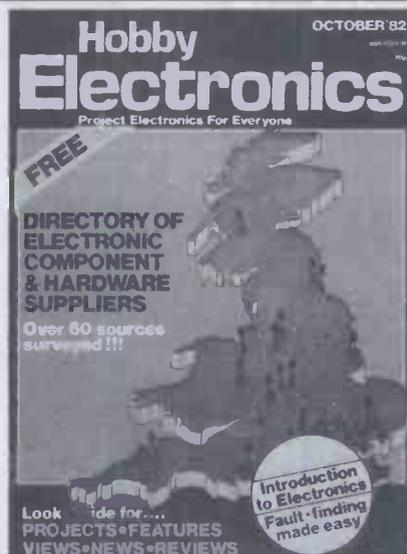
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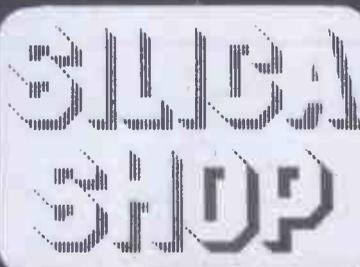
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160V: 10nF, 12n, 100n 11p, 150n, 220n 17p; 330n, 470n 30p; 680n, 39p; 1uF 42p; 1.5u 45p; 2u 48p.
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330n, 470n 13p; 680n 19p; 1uF 23p; 1.5u 40p; 2u 46p; 4u 60p.

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35V: 0.1uF, 0.22, 0.33 15p; 0.47, 0.68, 1.0uF, 1.5 16p; 2.2, 3.3 18p; 4.7, 6.8 22p; 10uF 25p; 16V: 2.2, 3.3 16p; 4.7uF, 6.8, 10 18p; 15, 36p; 22 30p; 33, 47 40p; 75p; 220 88p; 10V: 15, 22, 26p; 33, 47 35p; 100 55p; 6V: 10u 42p.

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5K-20K Double Gang D/P Switch 75p
5K-20K Double Gang 85p

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5K-50K Single Gang 70p
10K-50K Dual Gang 110p
Self Stick Graduated Bezel 40p

MYLAR FILM CAPACITORS
100V: 1nF, 2, 4, 4n7, 10, 16pF; 15nF, 22n, 30n, 40, 47 7p; 56, 100n, 200 9p; 470n/50V: 12p.

MINIATURE TYPE TRIMMERS
2.4pF, 2-10pF, 2-25pF, 5-50pF 30p.

COMPRESSION TRIMMERS
3.40pF, 10-80pF 20p; 20-250pF 28p; 100-580pF 39p; 400-1250pF 48p.

PRESET POTENTIOMETERS
Vertical & Horizontal
0.1W 50 M Miniature 7p
0.25W 100 M-3.3 MO horiz 10p
0.25W 200 M-4.7 MO vert 10p

VOLTAGE REGULATORS
1A TO3 +ve -ve
5V 7805 145p 7905 220p
12V 7812 145p 7912 220p
15V 7815 145p
18V 7818 145p

1A TO220 Plastic Casing
5V 7805 40p 7095 45p
12V 7812 40p 7912 45p
15V 7815 40p 7915 45p
18V 7818 40p 7918 45p
24V 7824 40p 7924 45p

100mA TO92 Plastic Casing
5V 78L05 30p 79L05 60p
6V 78L02 30p
8V 78L02 30p
12V 78L12 30p 79L12 60p
15V 78L15 30p 79L15 60p

CA3085 95p LM137P 99p T8A625B 75p
LM3080 170p LM323K 50p TDA1412 150p
LM305H 140p LM337 175p 78H05 50p
LM309K 185p LM723 35p 78M12 50p
LM317K 50p TAA550 50p 78H05 50p
78H05 78p

DIL SOCKETS
Low Wire Prof. wrap
8 way 8p 25p
14 pin 3p 35p
16 pin 10p 42p
18 pin 15p 52p
20 pin 22p 60p
22 pin 25p 70p
24 pin 27p 70p
28 pin 28p 80p
40 pin 30p 99p

PROTO DEC
Euroboard 520
S Dec 450
Bimboard I 600
Veroblock 375
Adventures with Electronics
by Tom Duncan
Complete Kit £15

DENCO COILS
'D' VALVE TYPE
Rd. 1 to 5 BL.
Rd. 1, 10, 12, 12p
6.7 B-Y-R 110p
1.5 Green 150p
T type to 1, 5, BL.
Rd. Wht. YI 150p
B9A Valve Holder
42p
RDT2 146p

VEROBOARD
0.1" Pitch clad plain
2 1/2 x 3 1/2" 73p 52p
2 1/2 x 5" 83p
3 1/2 x 3 1/2" 83p
3 1/2 x 5" 95p
3 1/2 x 17" 326p 211p
4 1/2 x 17" 426p
Pkt of 100 pins 50p
Spot face cutter 118p
Pin insertion tool 162p

COPPER CLAD BOARDS
Fibre glass
6 x 6" 90p
6 x 12" 150p
6A/100V 40p
6A/100V 50p
S.R.B.P.
9 x 8" 95p

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7400	74147	90	LS124	90	4053	50	CA3020	210	MC3886	250
7401	74150	50	LS125	24	4054	80	CA3023	210	MC1709G	90
7402	74151	40	LS126	36	4055	85	CA3026	36	MC1710	79
7403	74152	40	LS127	45	4056	85	CA3035	256	MC3302	150
7404	74153	40	LS128	55	4057	191	CA3045	365	MC3340P	120
7405	74154	30	LS129	26	4058	435	CA3046	70	MC3360P	120
7406	74155	80	LS130	28	4060	45	CA3048	220	MC3401	60
7407	74156	60	LS131	28	4061	1196	CA3059	286	MC3403	75
7408	74157	48	LS147	150	4063	85	CA3075	213	MC3405	110
7409	74158	48	LS148	150	4066	85	CA3080E	70	MC3407	60
7410	74159	48	LS149	150	4067	245	CA3081	150	MC3409	60
7411	74160	48	LS150	150	4068	14	CA3085	96	MC3412	60
7412	74161	48	LS151	40	4069	13	CA3089A	376	MM5303	635
7413	74162	48	LS152	30	4070	13	CA3090A	376	MM5307	1275
7414	74163	150	LS153	30	4071	13	CA3123E	150	MM5387	47
7415	74164	125	LS154	37	4072	13	CA3140	40	NE529	225
7416	74165	275	LS161	37	4073	13	CA3160	86	NE544	210
7417	74166	54	LS162	37	4074	13	CA3181	160	NE554	225
7418	74167	54	LS163	37	4075	50	CA3189	296	NE555	16
7419	74168	50	LS164	43	4076	50	HA1336W	240	NE556	32
7420	74169	45	LS165	60	4077	15	ICL7108E	750	NE560	325
7421	74170	80	LS170	70	4078	15	ICL7109	975	NE561	398
7422	74171	115	LS174	55	4085	50	ICM7204	560	NE562	420
7423	74172	40	LS175	40	4089	125	ICM7215A	1950	NE565	120
7424	74173	90	LS181	95	4093	20	ICM7217A	1950	NE567	140
7425	74174	35	LS190	35	4094	30	ICM7224	785	NE570	410
7426	74180	250	LS192	36	4095	75	ICM7555	80	NEB71	400
7427	74181	250	LS193	37	4096	290	ICM7556	160	NEB534	225
7428	74182	48	LS194	33	4097	190	LA3350	250	RC136	69
7429	74183	46	LS195	33	4098	75	LA4031	340	SN7613	89
7430	74184	46	LS196	33	4099	190	LA4032	295	SAB3209	425
7431	74185	46	LS197	48	4100	75	LA4040	340	SAB3210	325
7432	74186	46	LS221	65	4101	99	LC7120	300	SAB3271	485
7433	74187	46	LS240	55	4102	99	LC7137	395	SN7613	596
7434	74188	56	LS241	56	4103	99	LF347	150	SN7613	596
7435	74189	56	LS242	56	4104	105	LF351	150	SN7647	450
7436	74190	56	LS243	56	4105	105	LF353	50	SN7648	480
7437	74191	56	LS244	56	4106	105	LF355	50	SN7660	120
7438	74192	56	LS245	56	4107	105	LF356	90	SL490	350
7439	74193	56	LS246	56	4108	105	LF357	110	SP829	299
7440	74194	56	LS247	56	4109	105	LF358	475	TA4621	295
7441	74195	56	LS248	56	4110	105	LF359	475	TA7120	150
7442	74196	56	LS249	56	4111	105	LF360	475	TA7120	150
7443	74197	56	LS250	56	4112	105	LF361	475	TA7120	150
7444	74198	56	LS251	56	4113	105	LF362	475	TA7120	150
7445	74199	56	LS252	56	4114	105	LF363	475	TA7120	150
7446	74200	56	LS253	56	4115	105	LF364	475	TA7120	150
7447	74201	56	LS254	56	4116	105	LF365	475	TA7120	150
7448	74202	56	LS255	56	4117	105	LF366	475	TA7120	150
7449	74203	56	LS256	56	4118	105	LF367	475	TA7120	150
7450	74204	56	LS257	56	4119	105	LF368	475	TA7120	150

7ALS

7451	7452	7453	7454	7455	7456	7457	7458	7459	7460	7461	7462	7463	7464	7465	7466	7467	7468	7469	7470	7471	7472	7473	7474	7475	7476	7477	7478	7479	7480	7481	7482	7483	7484	7485	7486	7487	7488	7489	7490	7491	7492	7493	7494	7495	7496	7497	7498	7499	7500
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CMOS

4000	4001	4002	4003	4004	4005	4006	4007	4008	4009	4010	4011	4012	4013	4014	4015	4016	4017	4018	4019	4020	4021	4022	4023	4024	4025	4026	4027	4028	4029	4030	4031	4032	4033	4034	4035	4036	4037	4038	4039	4040	4041	4042	4043	4044	4045	4046	4047	4048	4049	4050	4051	4052	4053	4054	4055
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ICs

2114L-2	2708	2716	2728	4816 (BBC)	5116	6502	6503	6504	6505	6506	6507	6508	6509	6510	6511	6512	6513	6514	6515	6516	6517	6518	6519	6520	6521	6522	6523	6524	6525	6526	6527	6528	6529	6530	6531	6532	6533	6534	6535	6536	6537	6538	6539	6540	6541	6542	6543	6544	6545	6546	6547	6548	6549	6550	6551	6552	6553	6554	6555	6556	6557	6558	6559	6560
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TRANSISTORS

AC125	AC126	AC127	AC128	AC141/2	AC176/87	AC177/8	AC179/10	AC180/11	AC181/12	AC182/13	AC183/14	AC184/15	AC185/16	AC186/17	AC187/18	AC188/19	AC189/20	AC190/21	AC191/22	AC192/23	AC193/24	AC194/25	AC195/26	AC196/27	AC197/28	AC198/29	AC199/30	AC200/31	AC201/32	AC202/33	AC203/34
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MONITOR

BIMDAPTORS

All 2000 Series BIMBOXES from **Boss Industrial Mouldings** now include BIMDAPTORS, which enable flat mounting of PCBs by using the vertical slots moulded into the sides of the boxes (right).

The simple plastic adaptors have 1.5 mm wide horizontal slots spaced 5 mm apart, and are normally slid onto each corner of the PCB — or at closer intervals if required. Two or more PCBs can be sandwiched together and the whole assembly simply slipped into position in the box. The BIMDAPTORS are snipped off to length, just below lid-level, so that the units are firmly held down when the lid is screwed on.

Boss now offer six basic sizes within the 2000 Series, ranging from 100 x 50 x 25 mm to 190 x 110 x 60 mm. Available colours are blue, black, grey, orange or white; some have standard profile clear plastic lids and are the ideal containers for devices such as controller/timers, where it is necessary to see inside the box.

For further information, contact **Boss Industrial Mouldings Ltd**, James Carter Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk IP28 7DE; Tel. 0638 716101.

Save Your Memory

MEMIC, from **Cambridge Microelectronics**, is a family of CMOS memory units with an integral backup battery for saving up to 2K of program without the need to blow EPROMs. The units plug directly into 24-pin EPROM/ROM sockets or byte-wide RAM sockets. A flying-lead connector allows MEMIC to be used as random access memory even when plugged into a ROM socket.

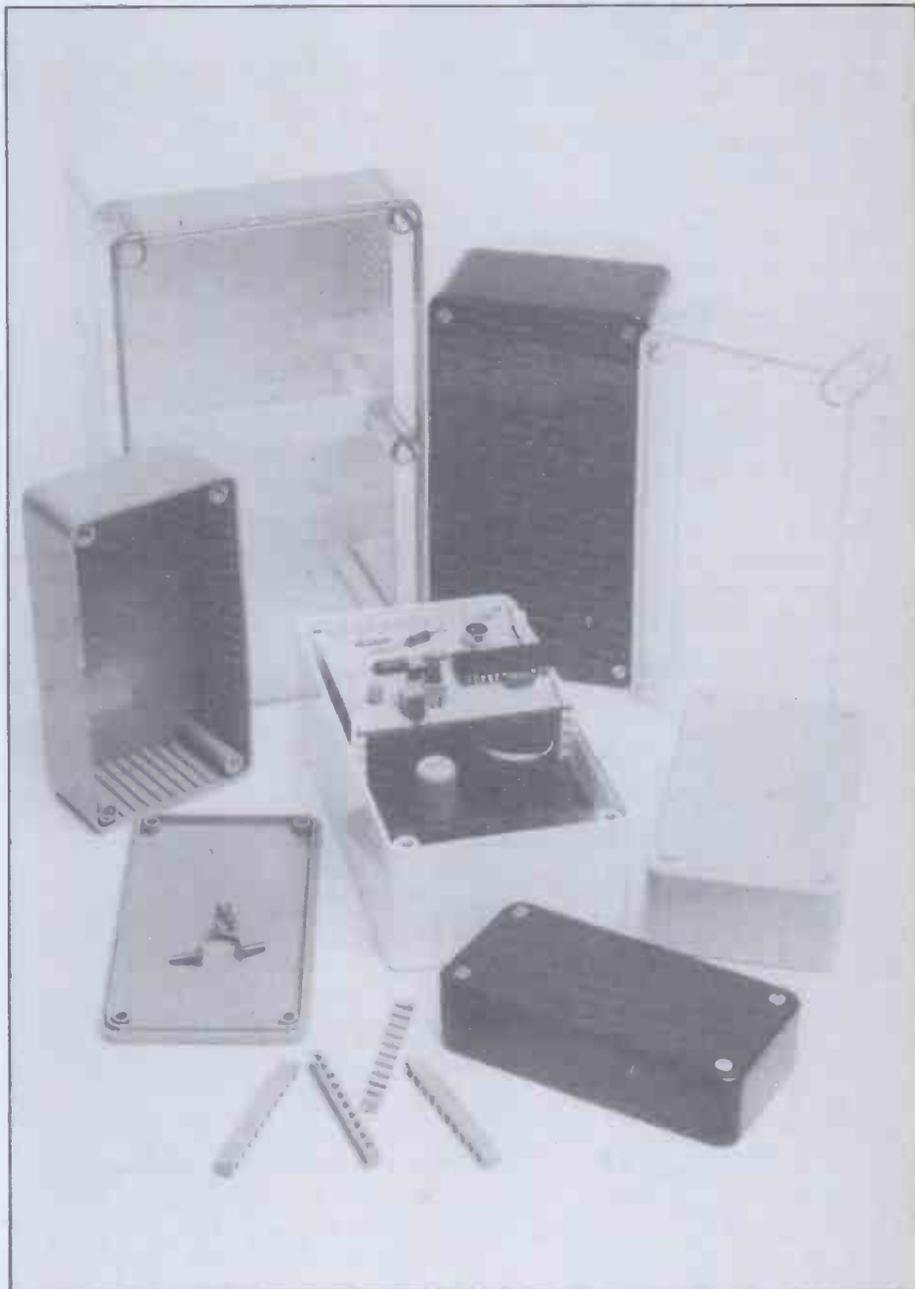
The 2K bytes of fast, static memory and the lithium backup battery are built into a box measuring must 4" x 2.4" x 1"; as many units may be used as there are spare sockets. The access time is better than 200 nS; no special signals or hardware are required for use with most systems and the very low power consumption on stand-by gives months of memory storage.

MEMIC units (right) are available for an all-inclusive price of £29.95, fully assembled, tested, and with clear operating instructions, from **Cambridge Microelectronics Ltd**, 1, Milton Road, Cambridge CB4 1UY; Tel. 0223 314814.

We also understand that a MEMIC unit for the ZX81 (the MEMIC 81), with up to 4K of memory, will shortly be available. It is expected to be in the same price range, so watch this space for further details!

The £50 Computer

Sinclair Research have broken the £50 barrier for personal computers by reducing the price of the ZX81 from £69.95 down to £49.95. The move reflects Clive Sinclair's belief that "The personal computer is no longer the preserve of the hobbyist but (is) rapidly becoming as much a



MONITOR

household item as the TV or hi-fi".

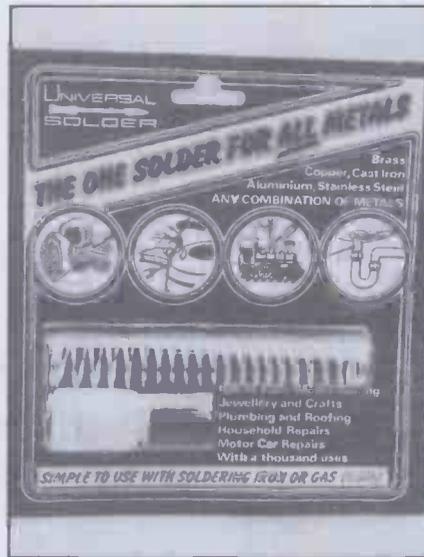
From August, the ZX81 will also be sold at selected branches of Boots and Greens (in Debenhams), as well as at branches of W.H. Smith.

Tooling Up

The only really essential tools of the electronics trade are a soldering iron, a pair of pliers, cutters and some screwdrivers. There are many other items, though, whose usefulness only becomes obvious if they aren't to hand when needed!

Miniature files, such as those (below) recently released by Neill Tools, are a good example; this new six-pack of Stubs precision needle files are ideal for construction and maintenance of electronic equipment of all kinds.

The clear plastic pack contains six 16 mm files — hand, flat, round, half round,



square and three-square — and sell at a recommended retail price of £9.45. Details from Neill Tools Limited, Napier Street, Sheffield S11 8HB; Tel. 0742 71281.

Hobbyists with a sideline in DIY or craft-work will also be interested in Universal Solder, from Jimi-Heat Limited; it has the ability to join all metals to themselves or to each other. The joint is formed at a temperature of 210° using either a low-pressure gas flame or soldering iron and it will join metals such as aluminium or zinc easily and without distortion.

The solder is non-toxic and is supplied in a pack together with the flux. It is available for £2.95, including VAT, from branches of Woolworth and Halfords.

Gold Tested Here

The Mitsubishi Electric Corporation have produced an Ultrasonic Gold Ingot/Bar Tester (below) that can be used by "the average person" to detect the presence of cavities or foreign matter inside gold bars/ingots, detect gold plating or pinpoint the presence of substances other than gold.

We would be happy to review a sample unit for the benefit of our many gold-investing readers, but it seems unlikely that we could persuade anyone to supply the several dozen pure gold bars that would be necessary for us to carry out a thorough test!

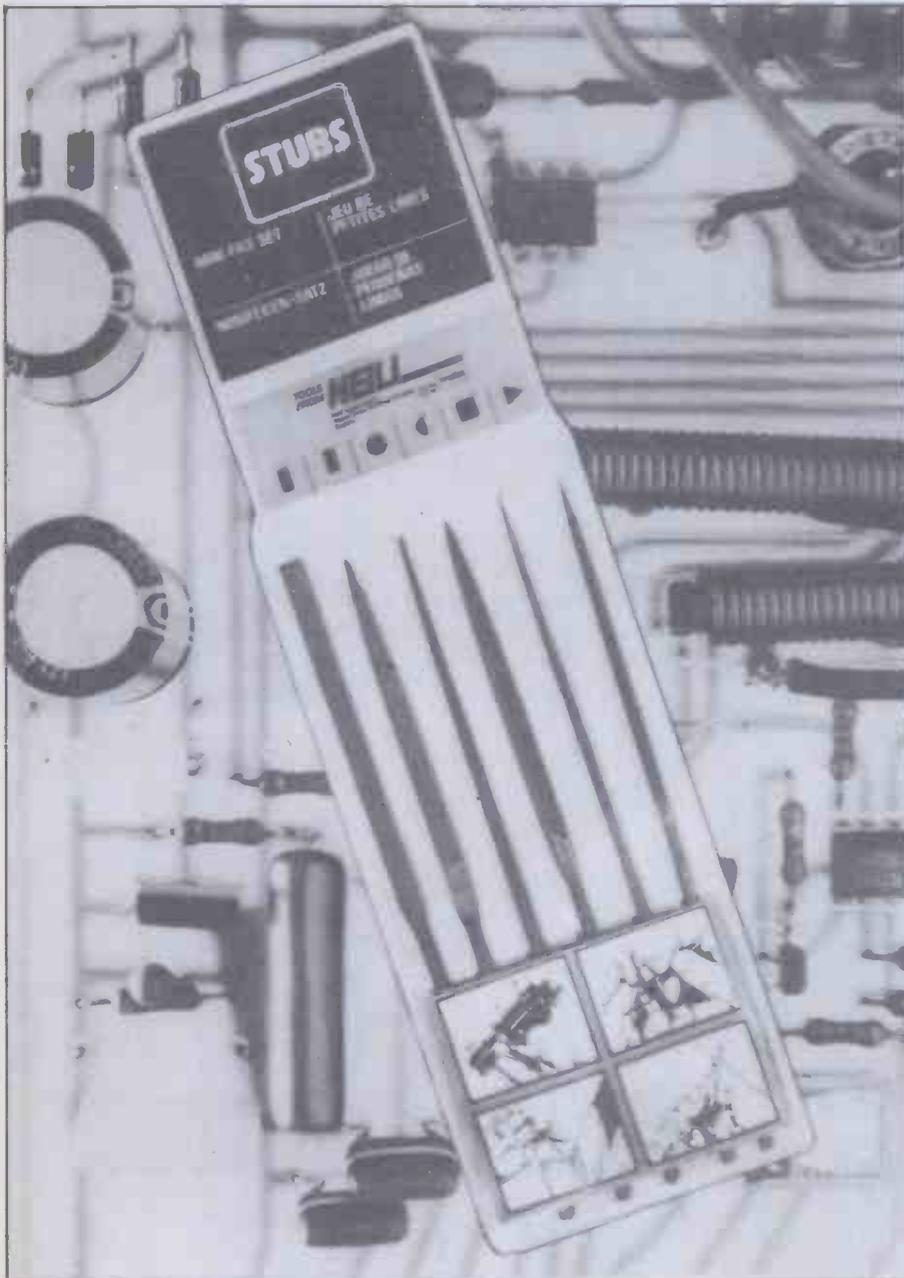


Double First

Murphy Electronics are currently leading the way in new developments in audio marketing techniques with the release of a twin-cassette recorder/radio. The MTC 2506 has a "double-play" facility which allows recording from one cassette deck to the other. Deck One functions in both play and record modes, while Deck Two works in playback only.

Also included in the set is a three-band stereo radio, tone and balance controls, auto-stop feature, twin condenser microphones, and sockets for headphones and extension speakers. The set operates either from mains or battery and will be available for around £99 at retail outlets.

HE



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1W 10% 1.0M 5% E24 2p		Guaranteed		If you don't see what you want please phone or write as follows		2N5416 1.54		BC121B 13p		4F 459 40p	
1W 10% 1.0M 5% E24 2p		500				2N5417 1.6p		BC121C 14p		4F 460 40p	
2W 10% 1.0M 5% E12 18p						2N5418 1.6p		BC121D 15p		4F 461 40p	
						2N5419 2.1p		BC121E 16p		4F 462 40p	
						2N5420 2.3p		BC121F 17p		4F 463 40p	
						2N5421 2.3p		BC121G 18p		4F 464 40p	
						2N5422 2.3p		BC121H 19p		4F 465 40p	
						2N5423 2.3p		BC121I 20p		4F 466 40p	
						2N5424 2.3p		BC121J 21p		4F 467 40p	
						2N5425 2.3p		BC121K 22p		4F 468 40p	
						2N5426 2.3p		BC121L 23p		4F 469 40p	
						2N5427 2.3p		BC121M 24p		4F 470 40p	
						2N5428 2.3p		BC121N 25p		4F 471 40p	
						2N5429 2.3p		BC121O 26p		4F 472 40p	
						2N5430 2.3p		BC121P 27p		4F 473 40p	
						2N5431 2.3p		BC121Q 28p		4F 474 40p	
						2N5432 2.3p		BC121R 29p		4F 475 40p	
						2N5433 2.3p		BC121S 30p		4F 476 40p	
						2N5434 2.3p		BC121T 31p		4F 477 40p	
						2N5435 2.3p		BC121U 32p		4F 478 40p	
						2N5436 2.3p		BC121V 33p		4F 479 40p	
						2N5437 2.3p		BC121W 34p		4F 480 40p	
						2N5438 2.3p		BC121X 35p		4F 481 40p	
						2N5439 2.3p		BC121Y 36p		4F 482 40p	
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						2N5441 2.3p		BC121AA 38p		4F 484 40p	
						2N5442 2.3p		BC121AB 39p		4F 485 40p	
						2N5443 2.3p		BC121AC 40p		4F 486 40p	
						2N5444 2.3p		BC121AD 41p		4F 487 40p	
						2N5445 2.3p		BC121AE 42p		4F 488 40p	
						2N5446 2.3p		BC121AF 43p		4F 489 40p	
						2N5447 2.3p		BC121AG 44p		4F 490 40p	
						2N5448 2.3p		BC121AH 45p		4F 491 40p	
						2N5449 2.3p		BC121AI 46p		4F 492 40p	
						2N5450 2.3p		BC121AJ 47p		4F 493 40p	
						2N5451 2.3p		BC121AK 48p		4F 494 40p	
						2N5452 2.3p		BC121AL 49p		4F 495 40p	
						2N5453 2.3p		BC121AM 50p		4F 496 40p	
						2N5454 2.3p		BC121AN 51p		4F 497 40p	
						2N5455 2.3p		BC121AO 52p		4F 498 40p	
						2N5456 2.3p		BC121AP 53p		4F 499 40p	
						2N5457 2.3p		BC121AQ 54p		4F 500 40p	
						2N5458 2.3p		BC121AR 55p		4F 501 40p	
						2N5459 2.3p		BC121AS 56p		4F 502 40p	
						2N5460 2.3p		BC121AT 57p		4F 503 40p	
						2N5461 2.3p		BC121AU 58p		4F 504 40p	
						2N5462 2.3p		BC121AV 59p		4F 505 40p	
						2N5463 2.3p		BC121AW 60p		4F 506 40p	
						2N5464 2.3p		BC121AX 61p		4F 507 40p	
						2N5465 2.3p		BC121AY 62p		4F 508 40p	
						2N5466 2.3p		BC121AZ 63p		4F 509 40p	
						2N5467 2.3p		BC121BA 64p		4F 510 40p	
						2N5468 2.3p		BC121BB 65p		4F 511 40p	
						2N5469 2.3p		BC121BC 66p		4F 512 40p	
						2N5470 2.3p		BC121BD 67p		4F 513 40p	
						2N5471 2.3p		BC121BE 68p		4F 514 40p	
						2N5472 2.3p		BC121BF 69p		4F 515 40p	
						2N5473 2.3p		BC121BG 70p		4F 516 40p	
						2N5474 2.3p		BC121BH 71p		4F 517 40p	
						2N5475 2.3p		BC121BI 72p		4F 518 40p	
						2N5476 2.3p		BC121BJ 73p		4F 519 40p	
						2N5477 2.3p		BC121BK 74p		4F 520 40p	
						2N5478 2.3p		BC121BL 75p		4F 521 40p	
						2N5479 2.3p		BC121BM 76p		4F 522 40p	
						2N5480 2.3p		BC121BN 77p		4F 523 40p	
						2N5481 2.3p		BC121BO 78p		4F 524 40p	
						2N5482 2.3p		BC121BP 79p		4F 525 40p	
						2N5483 2.3p		BC121BQ 80p		4F 526 40p	
						2N5484 2.3p		BC121BR 81p		4F 527 40p	
						2N5485 2.3p		BC121BS 82p		4F 528 40p	
						2N5486 2.3p		BC121BT 83p		4F 529 40p	
						2N5487 2.3p		BC121BU 84p		4F 530 40p	
						2N5488 2.3p		BC121BV 85p		4F 531 40p	
						2N5489 2.3p		BC121BW 86p		4F 532 40p	
						2N5490 2.3p		BC121BX 87p		4F 533 40p	
						2N5491 2.3p		BC121BY 88p		4F 534 40p	
						2N5492 2.3p		BC121BZ 89p		4F 535 40p	
						2N5493 2.3p		BC121CA 90p		4F 536 40p	
						2N5494 2.3p		BC121CB 91p		4F 537 40p	
						2N5495 2.3p		BC121CC 92p		4F 538 40p	
						2N5496 2.3p		BC121CD 93p		4F 539 40p	
						2N5497 2.3p		BC121CE 94p		4F 540 40p	
						2N5498 2.3p		BC121CF 95p		4F 541 40p	
						2N5499 2.3p		BC121CG 96p		4F 542 40p	
						2N5500 2.3p		BC121CH 97p		4F 543 40p	
						2N5501 2.3p		BC121CI 98p		4F 544 40p	
						2N5502 2.3p		BC121CJ 99p		4F 545 40p	
						2N5503 2.3p		BC121CK 100p		4F 546 40p	
						2N5504 2.3p		BC121CL 101p		4F 547 40p	
						2N5505 2.3p		BC121CM 102p		4F 548 40p	
						2N5506 2.3p		BC121CN 103p		4F 549 40p	
						2N5507 2.3p		BC121CO 104p		4F 550 40p	
						2N5508 2.3p		BC121CP 105p		4F 551 40p	
						2N5509 2.3p		BC121CQ 106p		4F 552 40p	
						2N5510 2.3p		BC121CR 107p		4F 553 40p	
						2N5511 2.3p		BC121CS 108p		4F 554 40p	
						2N5512 2.3p		BC121CT 109p		4F 555 40p	
						2N5513 2.3p		BC121CU 110p		4F 556 40p	
						2N5514 2.3p		BC121CV 111p		4F 557 40p	
						2N5515 2.3p		BC121CW 112p		4F 558 40p	
						2N5516 2.3p		BC121CX 113p		4F 559 40p	
						2N5517 2.3p		BC121CY 114p		4F 560 40p	
						2N5518 2.3p		BC121CZ 115p		4F 561 40p	
						2N5519 2.3p		BC121DA 116p		4F 562 40p	
						2N5520 2.3p		BC121DB 117p		4F 563 40p	
						2N5521 2.3p		BC121DC 118p		4F 564 40p	
						2N5522 2.3p		BC121DD 119p		4F 565 40p	
						2N5523 2.3p		BC121DE 120p		4F 566 40p	
						2N5524 2.3p		BC121DF 121p		4F 567 40p	
						2N5525 2.3p		BC121DG 122p		4F 568 40p	
						2N5526 2.3p		BC121DH 123p		4F 569 40p	
						2N5527 2.3p		BC121DI 124p		4F 570 40p	
						2N5528 2.3p		BC121DJ 125p		4F 571 40p	
						2N5529 2.3p		BC121DK 126p		4F 572 40p	
						2N5530 2.3p		BC121DL 127p		4F 573 40p	
						2N5531 2.3p		BC121DM 128p		4F 574 40p	
						2N5532 2.3p		BC121DN 129p		4F 575 40p	
						2N5533 2.3p		BC121DO 130p		4F 576 40p	
						2N5534 2.3p		BC121DP 131p		4F 577 40p	
						2N5535 2.3p		BC121DQ 132p		4F 578 40p	
						2N5536 2.3p		BC121DR 133p		4F 579 40p	
						2N5537 2.3p		BC121DS 134p		4F 580 40p	
						2N5538 2.3p		BC121DT 135p		4F 581 40p	
						2N5539 2.3p		BC121DU 136p		4F 582 40p	
						2N5540 2.3p		BC121DV 137p		4F 583 40p	
						2N5541 2.3p		BC121DW 138p		4F 584 40p	
						2N5542 2.3p		BC121DX 139p		4F 585 40p	
						2N5543 2.3p		BC121DY 140p		4F 586 40p	
						2N5544 2.3p		BC121DZ 141p		4F 587 40p	
						2N5545 2.3p		BC121EA 142p		4F 588 40p	
						2N5546 2.3p		BC121EB 143p		4F 589 40p	
						2N5547 2.3p		BC121EC 144p		4F 590 40p	

The Flash Point Alarm is designed to warn when the temperature of fat or oil in a chip pan or deep fryer reaches a dangerous level. It will not prevent fires — only you can do that.

WARNING

**NEVER TURN YOUR
BACK ON A CHIP PAN**



Flash Point Alarm

Owen Bishop

FIRE Statistics for the UK clearly show that a large and increasing proportion of fires in the home begin in the kitchen. Of these, about 90 percent are fat fires. It does not seem to matter what kind of cooking fat is used; it could be vegetable oil, lard, dripping or margarine. Most people prefer chips and other fried food to be crisp rather than soggy, and for this the fat must be made really hot before the food is put into it. This is where the danger arises. Fat takes an appreciable time to warm up to a suitable cooking temperature (about 205°C). While this is happening, the cook may decide to get on with some other job (or even to pop quickly down the road to the corner store!) leaving the fat unattended.

Though it may heat slowly at first, the rate increases as the cooker warms up. After cooking temperature has been reached, it does not take that much longer for the fat to reach a temperature at which it is likely to catch fire. At temperatures higher than 310°C the fat is above its flash-point and may ignite spontaneously, even though it is not in contact with a naked flame. When the cook returns from that task which was to take "only a moment", the fat may well be alight — and possibly the house as well.

This project won't prevent chip-pan fires but it will give an alarm when the temperature reaches a dangerous level. It uses a thermocouple to sense the temperature of the fat; a thermocouple was chosen because it is able to operate over the range 0°C to 400°C. The circuit is set to trigger an alarm when the temperature of the fat is more than about 200 degrees higher than room temperature. The temperature of most kitchens is

between 10°C and 25°C, so the alarm sounds when the fat is at about 210°C. This allows the optimum cooking temperature of 205°C to be attained without triggering the alarm, yet provides a good margin between the triggering temperature and the lowest flash-point of commonly-used cooking fats.

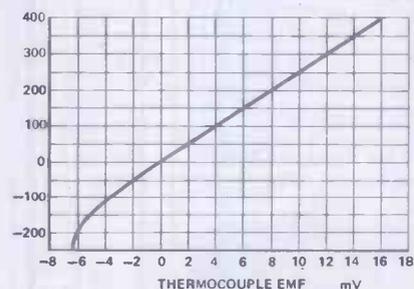
The alarm signal takes two forms. There is an intermittent audible alarm loud enough to be heard in the next room (though it is *not* loud enough to be heard when you are down at the corner store!) and for those who are hard of hearing, there is also a visual alarm of two lamps, which flash alternately. The alarms can be external

How It Works

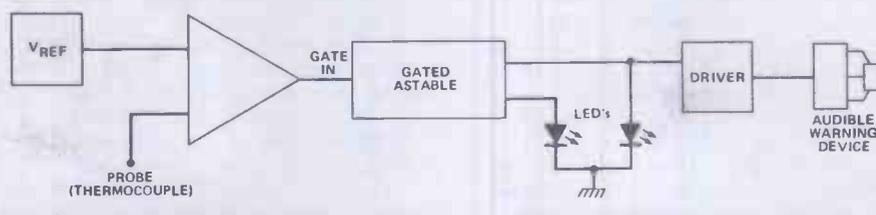
A THERMOCOUPLE is simply an electrical circuit formed by joining two dissimilar metals, eg copper and iron, into a loop. If the two junctions of the metals are held at different temperatures, an EMF is developed in the loop. The size of the EMF is proportional to the temperature difference between the junctions, so if one junction is held at a constant temperature, the EMF must be proportional to the temperature at the other junction.

The graph of the output of a Nickel-Chromium/Nickel-Aluminium thermocouple, similar to the type used in this project, shows the EMF developed versus the temperature difference between the thermocouple probe temperature and a reference temperature of 0°C.

The HE Flash Point Alarm uses room temperature as the reference



temperature, and compares the EMF developed by the thermocouple with a reference voltage. The Alarm is triggered when the EMF rises to about 8 mV, corresponding to a temperature around 200° above room temperature. Note that the unit itself must not be placed where it can become heated above room temperature!



Project

to the device if required; for example, you may prefer to site the audible alarm in the hall or living room, rather than in the kitchen.

The instrument is battery-powered and takes only 6mA quiescent current. In this condition, LED2 glows to indicate that the device is switched on. The amount of current required when sounding the alarm is rather greater, but the instrument should never be left for long in this state, for obvious reasons!

The Circuit

The temperature sensor used in this project is a thermocouple, made by joining together two wires of different metals or metal alloys. Usually the wires are twisted together, then welded and owing to the 'contact potential difference', an EMF appears across the junction of the dissimilar metals.

The size of the EMF increases with temperature and in the thermocouple used in this project, it increases by about 4 μV per degree Celsius. The circuit is designed to trigger at about 200 degrees above room temperature. This gives a triggering temperature of around 210°C to 225°C, which means that fat at cooking temperature (205°C) does not trigger the alarm but fat which is hot enough to catch fire spontaneously (310°C or hotter) readily triggers it.

The EMF generated by the thermocouple is detected by an operational amplifier, IC1. This has an extremely high input impedance (10^{12} ohms) so that the full EMF appears at the input pin. The op-amp is wired as a comparator and there is no feedback, so the full gain of the amplifier (about 100,000) is available. The EMF of the thermocouple is compared with a voltage reference generated by a potential divider, R1/RV1, set to give 8 mV at pin 2 of the op-amp. If the EMF of the thermocouple is less than 8 mV, the output of the comparator is -3 V; if the EMF exceeds 8 mV, even by a small amount, the output swings sharply from -3 V to +3 V, as a result of the high gain.

Because IC1 is a CMOS op-amp, the output swings fully between -3 V and +3 V, giving a clean signal to control the alarm logic. This is made up from four NAND gates in a single IC (IC2). Two of these gates, IC2a and b are wired as an astable multivibrator with a frequency of about 1 Hz. When the output of the comparator is low (-3 V), the astable is inhibited and its output (IC2a) is high. This is inverted by IC2d, the output of which (pin 11) is low. Thus no current flows to Q1 and the audible warning device is inactive. LED 1 connected to this output is not lit but the output from the other gate of the astable (IC pin 4) is low (0V); this is inverted by IC2c, causing LED 2 to light, indicating that the circuit is switched on.

When the EMF of the thermocouple exceeds 8 mV (at a temperature more than 200 degrees warmer than room

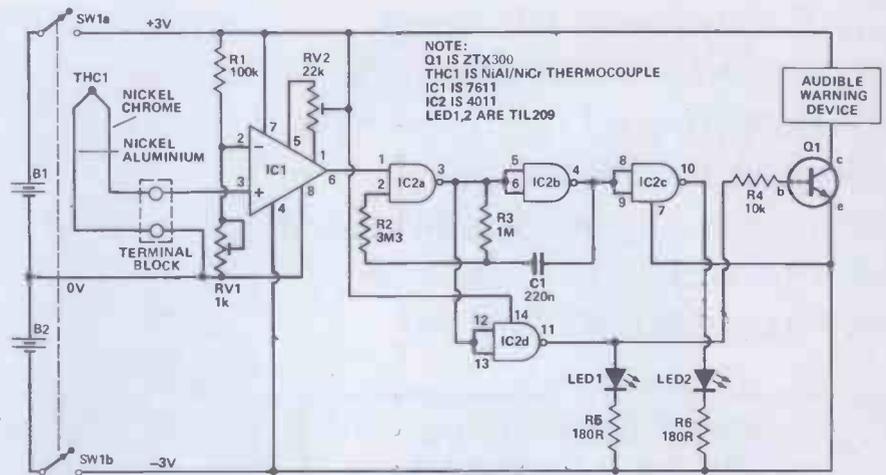


Figure 1. The circuit diagram.

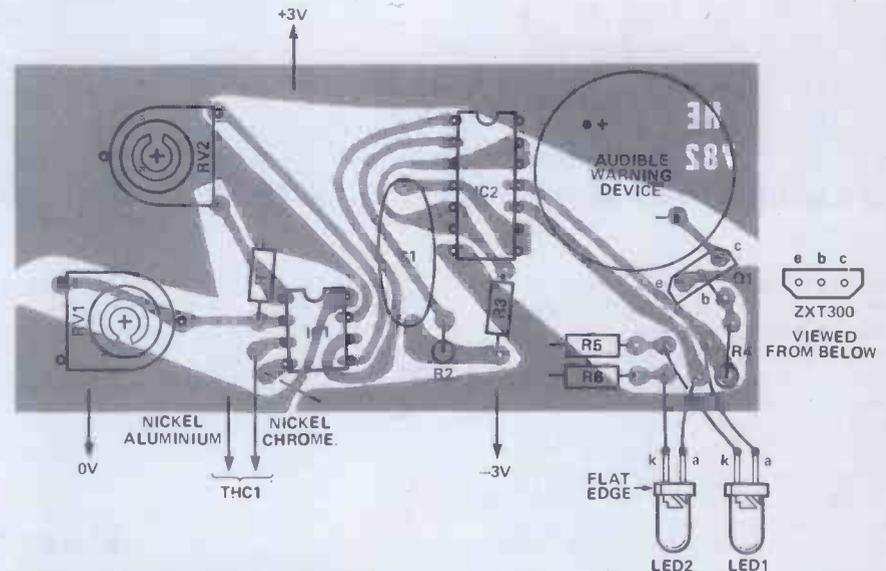


Figure 2. PCB assembly diagram. Remember not to handle the CMOS ICs!

temperature), the output of the comparator goes high, allowing the astable to oscillate. The LEDs flash alternately and the audible warning device is switched on intermittently, to give a bleeping alarm sound.

Construction

The layout (Figure 2) is designed for standard size presets, not the sub-miniature types. The ICs are both CMOS, so take the usual precautions to avoid static electrical charges on your clothes or body, and use a soldering iron with an earthed bit. Mount the ICs and all other on-board components except for R4 (the omission of R4 spares you, and your family, the piercing sound of the audible alarm while you are testing and setting up the remainder of the circuit). Note that single-sided terminal pins may be used, but those which connect to the LEDs should project through the copper side of the board, not the component side — the alternative is to use double-sided pins throughout.

The LEDs used in the prototype were a special kind, ready-mounted in a

chromium-plated bezel. These give a stylish appearance to the instrument, but the standard type with plastic mounts can be used instead. Mount the LEDs on the front panel and connect them by short wires to the pins on the circuit board.

The power supply is split to provide 3 lines; +3 V, 0 V and -3 V. The operational amplifier, IC1, was specially chosen for its ability to be able to operate from voltages as low as ± 3 V. The recommended case incorporates a battery compartment with metal tags, to which power leads may be soldered as shown in Figure 3. The switch is a double-pole double-throw (DPDT) type, connected to the +3 V and -3 V lines and mounted on the upper half of the case. Wire up the power lines at this stage, and connect them to the circuit board.

The circuit may be tested at this stage. Since the EMF of the thermocouple is only a few millivolts, the op-amp must be balanced by using the offset null adjustment, RV2, which connects pins 1 and 5 of the IC. While the op-amp is being balanced, both

Parts List

RESISTORS (All 1/4 W 5% carbon)
 R1 100k
 R2 3M3
 R3 1M
 R4 10k
 R5,6 180R

POTENTIOMETERS
 RV1 1k carbon preset
 RV2 22k carbon preset

CAPACITORS
 C1 220n
 C280 polyester

SEMICONDUCTORS
 Q1 ZTX300
 silicon NPN transistor
 IC1 7611
 CMOS op-amp
 IC2 4011B
 CMOS quad 2-Input NAND
 LED1,2 TIL209
 light emitting diode

MISCELLANEOUS
 S1 DPDT
 slide switch
 THC1 thermocouple
 (see Buylines)
 B1,B2 2 x 'AA' cells
 (3 V each pair)
 Audible warning device (see Buylines);
 case; two-way terminal block; veropins;
 plastic stick-on feet; connecting wire,
 solder etc.

BUYLINES page 30

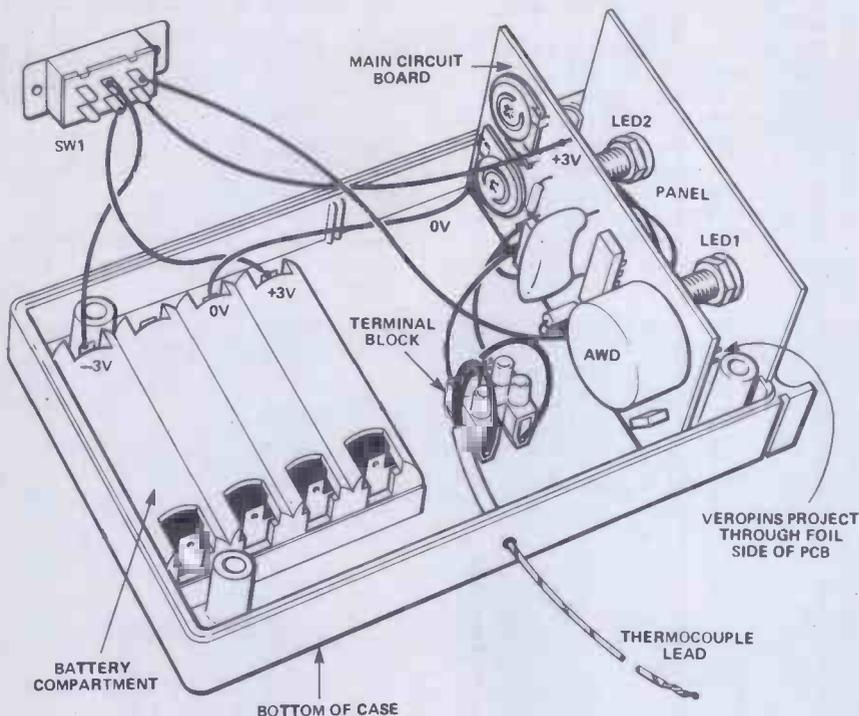


Figure 3. Fitting it all together.

inputs (pins 2 and 3) must be connected to the 0 V line using two test leads with crocodile clips. The easiest method is to join the two terminal pins (to which the thermocouple is to be attached later) with one lead and to connect the junction of R1/RV1 to 0 V with the other. A voltmeter or oscilloscope must be used to measure the output voltage between pin 6 of IC1 and the -3 V line. When all the above connections are made, switch on the power. LED2 comes on to show that the circuit is active. Ideally, RV2 should be adjusted so that the output is steady at 0V (the meter would read +3V, because you are measuring from the -3V line), but this is difficult. If it cannot be set exactly, adjust RV2 so that the output is just on the point of swinging from -3V to +3V (ie, 0V to 6V on the meter).

Remove the two test leads before proceeding further. Now connect the thermocouple (temporarily) to the terminal pins on the circuit board. A thermocouple normally has red (+ve) and blue (-ve) wires. The red wire (nickel-chrome) goes to pin 3 of IC1 and the blue wire (nickel-aluminium) goes to the 0V line. For the next stage, you will need a sensitive millivoltmeter with a high-impedance input - an ordinary low-cost multimeter may draw too much current to allow the levels to be set correctly. As an alternative, use an oscilloscope, but if neither of these instruments is to hand, you'll have to construct the HE Digital Millivoltmeter (August issue).

The first step is to set the potential at pin 2 of IC1; connect the millivoltmeter between the 0V line and pin 2, and adjust RV1 until the reading is 8 mV. Now attach the meter

between the 0V line and pin 3 of IC1 (the red wire of the thermocouple). It will probably show no reading at first, since the junction will be close to room temperature, so heat the junction by placing it in a hot oven (set to 230°C, 450°F or Gasmark 8).

As the temperature of the thermocouple rises, the reading on the meter should increase steadily. As the reading passes 8 mV, the circuit is triggered and the LEDs will begin to flash alternately, at about 1Hz. If you now remove the thermocouple from the heat, the flashing stops after a second or two.

If the LEDs fail to flash, check the operation of the oscillator, IC2a,b, by testing the output from pin 4. It should rise to +3 V and fall to -3 V sharply and regularly, at about 1Hz. The output at pins 10 and 11 (IC2c and d) should be similar, though 180° out of phase with pin 4.

If the circuit is not triggered by a thermocouple EMF of 8 or even 9 mV; it is likely that the offset null adjustment is not properly set. Keeping the thermocouple at a steady heat, so that its EMF is close to 8mV, adjust RV2 *very slightly* so that the output of IC1, at pin 6, swings from 0 V to +3 V and triggers the LEDs.

Assuming that all is in working order, solder R4 in position and re-test the circuit with the audible warning device (AWD) in operation. If it is to be mounted externally, solder long leads to the mounting holes on the PCB and run them through a hole cut in the side of the case. It is possible to wire two or more AWDs in parallel, all switched by Q1, should you want to make the alarm sound in several rooms at once.

Mount the two-way connector block on the lower half of the case and insert

the PCB and front panel in the slots. Run wires from the connector block to the thermocouple terminal pins on the PCB. The thermocouple itself is supplied with a long lead which may be cut shorter, if desired, but take care to insert the leads in the correct sockets; if the polarity is wrong the alarm will not be triggered, even by a raging inferno. For the same reason, make certain that the screws of the terminal block are firmly tightened. Every time you renew the cells, it is best to check that the connector block screws have not been loosened.

The two halves of the case may now be bolted together and stick-on feet applied to the lower surface. The Flash-Point Alarm is now ready for use. At this point, it would be advisable to make another test run, with the thermocouple in the oven as before, to check that all is as it should be. Always remember, the only certain way to prevent, a chip-pan fire is to keep a close watch on it at all times!

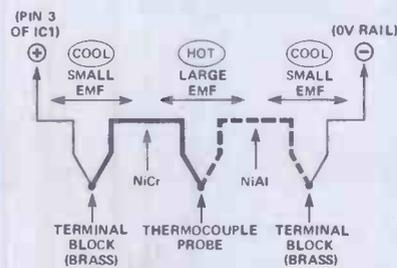


Figure 4. Three thermocouples.

Project

Three Thermocouples

Although you have purchased only one thermocouple, the circuit really contains three (Figure 4)! The other two are made when you screw the ends of the thermocouple wires into the metal contacts of the connector block; each of these wire-connector junctions is between dissimilar metals, so an EMF is produced. However, both of these junctions are at room temperature and their EMFs are relatively small; in addition, they are opposing EMFs, and so they cancel out. This leaves only the EMF at the nickel-chrome/nickel-aluminium junction in the chip pan, which is the one used to trigger the alarm.

Using It

The instrument should not be placed where it can be overheated by the cooker, because this could affect the triggering temperature. The thermocouple lead must be left long enough to allow the unit to stand on a table or work-top, a few feet from the cooking area. The lead can be bent into an inverted U shape, so that it hooks neatly on to the rim of the pan, with the thermocouple immersed in the fat (the lead could be clipped to the rim of the pan, using a small bull-dog clip). Switch on the instrument *before* beginning to heat the fat and check that the indicator, LED1, is glowing. The fat reaches cooking temperature before the circuit is triggered so, in

normal use, you should never hear or see the alarms in action.

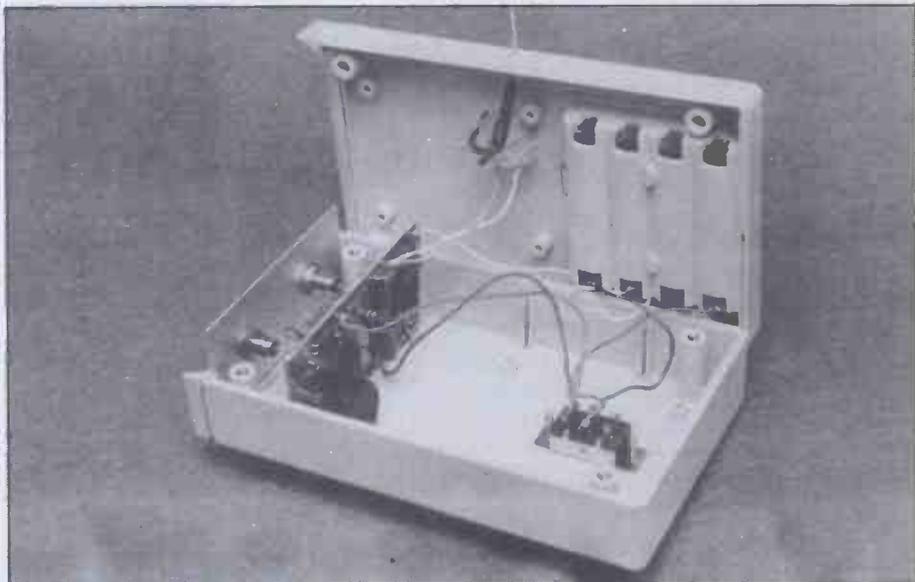
If the alarms are triggered, there is immediate danger of fire, especially if the alarm has been going for several minutes with the heat still on. Switch off the heat immediately and do not leave the pan unattended until the alarm has stopped. If you attend to the pan as soon as the alarm is raised, it should not be hot enough to ignite spontaneously but, if you leave it longer, it might! Should the fat catch

fire, this is how the deal with it:

- 1) Turn off the heat.
- 2) Cover the pan with a large lid or a large damp cloth, to keep air away from the fire.

Two things you should NOT do are to try to move the pan, or to throw water over it. And never panic! — but with the Flash-Point Alarm, you should never need to worry about anything except how brown you want the chips to be!

HE



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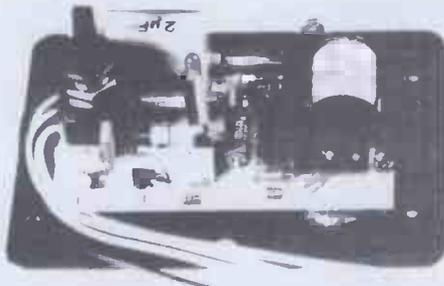
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C4700/63	Reservoir Capacitor and Clip	2.40	0.36	2.76 0.11
C4300/63	Reservoir Capacitor and Clip	2.60	0.39	2.99 0.11
CPS 80	Power Supply	22.82	3.42	26.24 2.10
CPS 80D	Dual Power Supply	27.63	4.14	31.77 2.25
CPS 150	Power Supply	25.86	3.88	29.74 2.50
CPS 150D	Dual Power Supply	31.65	4.75	36.40 2.60
CPS 250	Power Supply	32.03	4.80	36.83 3.50
CPS 250D	Dual Power Supply	39.43	5.91	45.34 3.65
TS 70	Thermal Switch 70°C	1.92	0.29	2.21 0.02
HS 50	50mm Heatsink	1.60	0.24	1.84 0.15
HS 100	100mm Heatsink	2.60	0.39	2.99 0.30
HS 150	150mm Heatsink	3.65	0.55	4.20 0.45
FM 1	Fan Mounted on 2 x HS 100	32.13	4.82	36.95 1.20
FM 2	Fan Mounted on 2 x HS 150	36.10	5.42	41.52 1.50
CPR 1X	Pre-Amplifier Module	31.30	4.70	36.00 0.15
MC 2	Moving Coil Pre-Pre-Amplifier Module	20.00	3.00	23.00 0.07
REG 1	Regulated Power Supply	8.09	1.21	9.30 0.07
TR 6	6VA Mains Transformer	2.87	0.43	3.30 0.21
XO 2	2 Way Crossover Module	17.39	2.61	20.00 0.07
XO 3	3 Way Crossover Module	26.09	3.91	30.00 0.07
MU 1	Muting Circuit for XO 2 or XO 3	8.35	1.25	9.60 0.04
CK 1010	Complete Pre-Amplifier Kit	78.26	11.74	90.00 2.50
CK 1040	Complete 40 Watt Power Amplifier Kit	103.48	15.52	119.00 7.30
CK 1100	Complete 100 Watt Power Amplifier Kit	129.56	19.44	149.00 7.30
MC 2K	Add On Moving Coil Kit	21.74	3.26	25.00 0.12
PSK	Pre-Amplifier Power Supply Kit	17.39	2.61	20.00 0.75

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PLUS

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it provides a top performance electronic ignition system at less than half the price of competing ready-built systems. The kit includes everything needed, even a length of solder and a tiny tube of heatsink compound. Detailed easy-to-follow instructions, complete with circuit diagram, are provided — all you need is a small soldering iron and a few basic tools.

AS REVIEWED IN

ELECTRONICS TODAY INTERNATIONAL June '81 Issue
and EVERYDAY ELECTRONICS December '81 Issue

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TECHNICAL DETAILS

The basic function of a spark ignition system is often lost among claims for longer 'burn times' and other marketing fantasies. It is only necessary to consider that, even in a small engine, the burning fuel releases over 5000 times the energy of the spark, to realise that the spark is only a trigger for the combustion. Once the fuel is ignited the spark is insignificant and has no effect on the rate of combustion. The essential function of the spark is to start that combustion as quickly as possible and that requires a high power spark.

The traditional capacitive discharge system has this high power spark but, due to its very short spark duration and consequential low spark energy, is incompatible with the weak air/fuel mixtures used in modern cars. Because of this most manufacturers have abandoned capacitive discharge in favour of the cheaper inductive system with its low power but very long duration spark which guarantees that sooner or later the fuel will ignite. However, a spark lasting 2000µs at 2000 rev/min. spans 24 degrees and 'later' could mean the actual fuel ignition point is retarded by this amount.

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TYPICAL SPECIFICATION

	TOTAL ENERGY DISCHARGE	ORDINARY CAPACITIVE DISCHARGE
SPARK POWER (PEAK)	140 W	90 W
SPARK ENERGY	36 mJ	10 mJ
(STORED ENERGY)	135 mJ	65 mJ
SPARK DURATION	500 µs	160 µs
OUTPUT VOLTAGE (LOAD 50pF EQUIVALENT TO CLEAN PLUGS)	38 KV	26 KV
OUTPUT VOLTAGE (LOAD 50pF + 500 KΩ EQUIVALENT TO DIRTY PLUGS)	28 KV	17 KV
VOLTAGE RISE TIME TO 20 KV (Load 50pF)	25 µs	30 µs

TOTAL ENERGY DISCHARGE should not be confused with low power inductive systems or hybrid so called reactive systems.

FAULT-FINDING FOR BEGINNERS

Fault-finding, on a newly completed project or even on commercial equipment, is easy — once you know the rules!

FAULT-FINDING on a project can be a time-consuming job. Even experienced electronics engineers will sometimes spend hours looking for a reason why a particular circuit doesn't work - so what chance has the hobbyist got, of quickly locating faults? Occasionally, a fault will be obvious, but more often than not it will remain hidden away, after many hours' of hard slog to detect and then repair it.

Prevention Is Better Than Cure

There are many categories of possible faults, but the more usual ones occur because of a mistake. For instance, it's all too easy to misread the resistor colour code and put an incorrect value into the circuit. Of course, in some cases a small change may not make any difference, but in other circuits resistances can be critical — and you may find that a project simply doesn't work at all just because you've inserted a 100k resistor instead of a 120k. The moral of the story is to *make sure you know the colour code.*

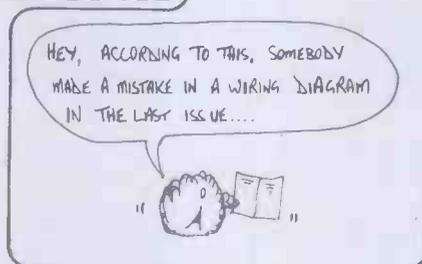
Similarly, an incorrect capacitor value may prevent a circuit from operating according to plan while polarised components ie, transistors, integrated circuits, diodes and certain capacitors, have to be inserted the right way round, for obvious reasons.

Another builder-originated source of faults is to do with soldering. A single dry-joint can affect performance and may prevent the circuit from working at all. Soldering technique improves with practice, so fewer and fewer soldering problems should arise the more projects you make. But dry-soldered joints aren't the only type of fault which can be caused by slap-happy soldering; in its hot state solder is, of course, molten, and unless care is taken it can form conducting bridges to copper tracks close by the soldering joint. Even a microscopically thin solder bridge can form a short circuit and prevent your project from working.

Occasionally, too, a circuit will malfunction due to a faulty component, but it is the exception to the rule.

Most suppliers thoroughly screen the components they sell and it is unlikely that a component will be faulty at the time of purchase. It can happen however, that a component may be damaged by mis-handling — some components are quite 'fragile'. Always take particular care with CMOS ICs, which can be easily destroyed by static discharge. Never touch the pins, and always solder the supply pins before moving onto the input/output connections.

Beasties



Begin At The Beginning

OK, you've taken all the right precautions, worked carefully and finally completed the project. Now the magic moment — power on! WAIT! There's something you should do first; *check everything once more.* Many faults can actually be detected before you switch on, and that's the best time to find them. A smoking resistor may precisely pinpoint a fault — but it could also destroy many valuable components in the process. Far better to check first.

- Look at the components; are they all in the right places, according to the component overlay diagram? Are all the polarised components inserted the right way round?
- Look underneath the PCB or Veroboard, on the copper side; check carefully for solder bridges or stray bits of wire, component leads not trimmed etc. Particularly check around the power supply connections; if something is going to 'blow', it will probably be caused by an incorrect connection to the power rails. Solder bridges can be very fine and difficult to detect, so if your project is using expensive components, the time spent going over the board (with a jeweller's eyeglass, if possible) is time well spent.
- Finally, check for dry joints. All soldering connections should be clean and bright. A dull, mottled joint is probably a dud, though they aren't always that obvious.

Once these pre-switch-on observations have been completed, it's time to apply the volts. But remember, those first few seconds, just after you hit the switch, can tell you a lot about the nature of a fault. For example, if the project is an amplifier, say, you might get a high pitched whine for a very few seconds, after which the project just lies there like a stale loaf in a bakers shop or it may be some other strange, unexpected results. The point is

that those first few moments just may be the only clue you have!

Crash, Bang, Wallop

There, you've done it, now. Switched on the power, only to find well, something other than what you expected. But wait a minute. What did you expect? Very few circuits will actually do anything, at first, since there are usually a series of adjustments, setting-up operations and so on to be completed before a project will 'work'. Never mind just for the moment, you are simply looking to see that nothing disastrous is happening. If it's a common or garden variety mutant-blaster (originally from the planet Zorg), then why is R23 glowing red hot?

If R23 is glowing, then switch off immediately. It takes only fractions of a second to 'cook' an expensive component so, at the first sign of a serious fault, the sooner you switch off the better.

At this stage you should be using your eyes, ears and nose (an overheated resistor has a very distinctive smell which you will probably come to recognise!) but not your fingers, please. It's a good idea to take notes, too, because it's all too easy to forget something which may provide the vital clue to the location of the fault.

What happens next depends on the results after power-on. If the project immediately began to smoke, then something is obviously very wrong. On the other hand, perhaps it just lays there, harmlessly. A third possibility is that everything looks alright but, after performing all the adjustments and so on, it still lies there, uselessly.

The Golden Rules

Assuming, for the moment, that something is drastically wrong, it's time to follow the First Rule of Fault-Finding, which is this: "Look For The Simplest Faults First". If the circuit was overheating, check the board again, looking

Feature

for incorrect resistor values, short circuits, incorrect supply connections etc. Here's where those first observations will pay off; if R23 was smoking then it's safe to assume that the fault lies in that area of the circuit.

Check the supply voltages; it's surprising how often a 'brand new battery' will turn out to be an old, overused one that should have been thrown out but somehow got mixed up with a new one! If the circuit is mains-powered, disconnect the DC supply to the circuit and check the off-load voltage. If the positive supply is fused, have you remembered to put a fuse in? (don't laugh, it could happen to you!).

After checking and re-checking all the obvious things, without finding a clue to the fault, it is time to consider the Second Law: "When In Doubt, Read The Manual" (or the Circuit Description/How It Works or whatever). Read all about it and try to understand, firstly, the result you should be getting and secondly, the result you are getting. You should assume, at this stage, that the fault is caused by an error on your part. Yes, of course you're perfect (aren't we all?) but it is nevertheless true that 99% of faults are caused by an error in construction, so don't immediately write off to the editor, or complain to the component supplier.

Even if you suspect that your problem is caused by that stray 1%, don't just give up. Study the circuit closely, comparing it with the component overlay and all the other information printed in the magazine. Errors in published projects are usually very obvious, once you know where and how to look. With stripboard construction, for example, a common problem is the omission of one or two track breaks — cuts in the copper strips — so if you suspect this, check the component layout against the circuit, making sure that there are no components connected on the board which are not connected in the circuit. Ask yourself, for example, should the collector of that transistor *really* be connected to the OV rail? This procedure will often produce results with projects on PCB, too.

Look for circuit blocks which are repeated, eg, op-amp units, and try to 'spot the difference'. The more work you can put in at this stage, the sooner your project will be alive and well — and the more you will learn about electronics, too. Also, a single dead component is a lot easier to replace than an entire circuit board!

Blocks And Chains

Now, we're just about out of rules. The remaining one is best expressed as "Divide And Conquer". It works like this.

Most circuits consist of a number of circuit elements — amplifiers, oscillators, filters and so on — linked in chains, or connected together in some other, more complicated fashion.

The block diagram, Figure 3, shows an example of the circuit blocks of HE's Echo-Reverb project, from the May '82 issue.

The principle of the last rule is simply to isolate sections of the circuit until the

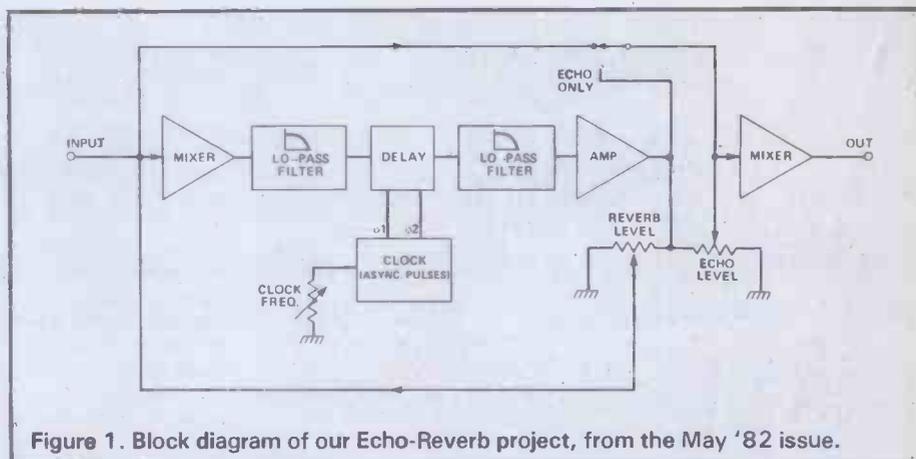


Figure 1. Block diagram of our Echo-Reverb project, from the May '82 issue.

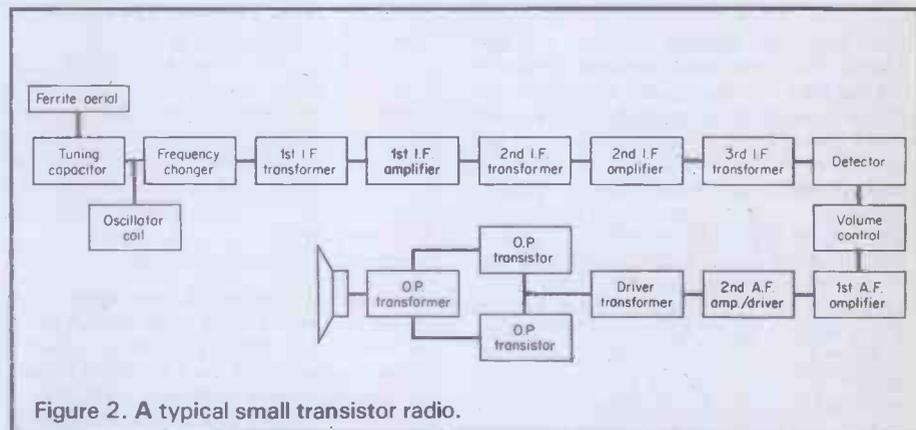


Figure 2. A typical small transistor radio.

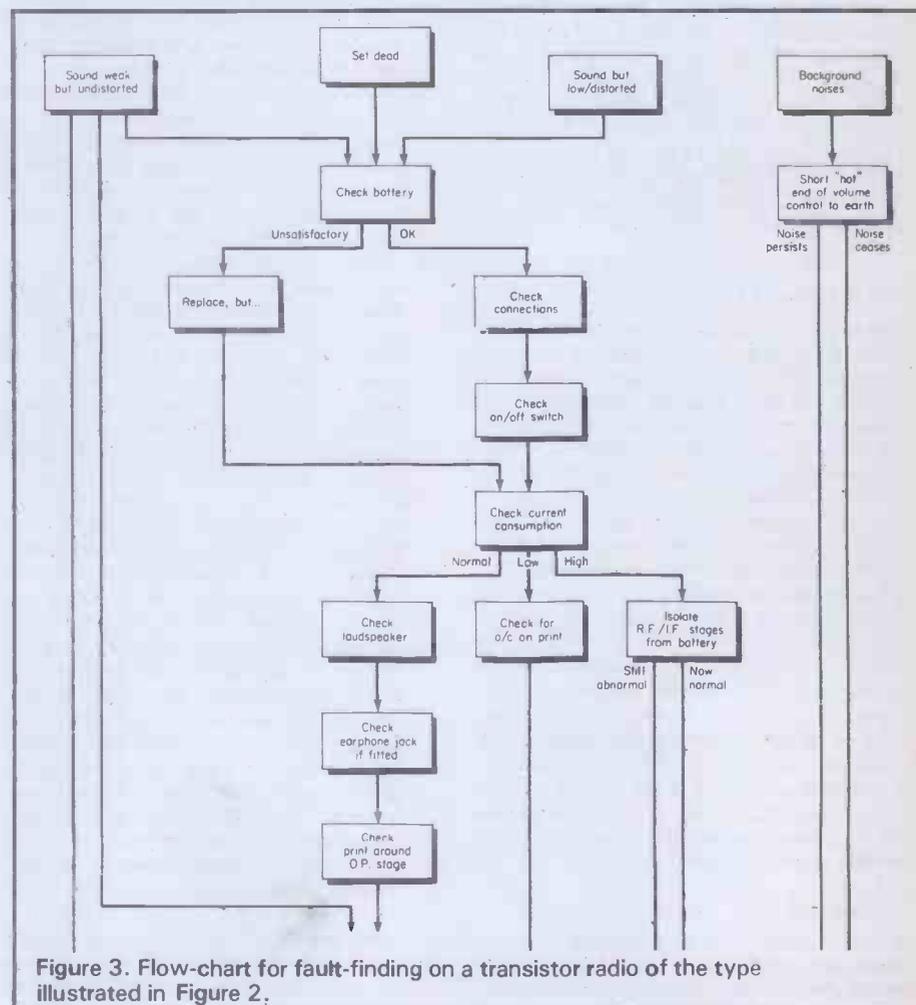
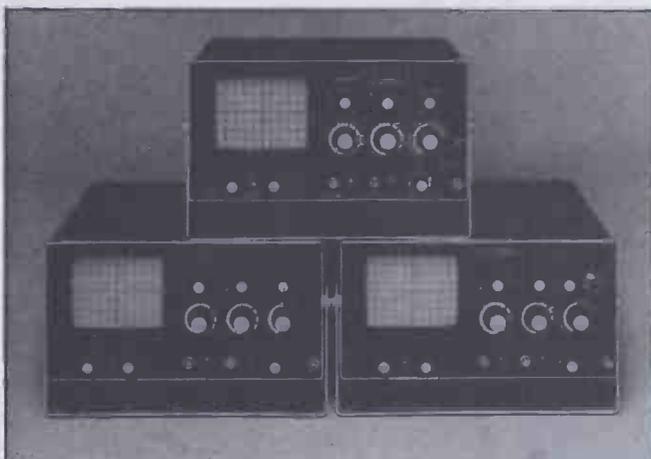


Figure 3. Flow-chart for fault-finding on a transistor radio of the type illustrated in Figure 2.



A 'scope is a technician's best friend! A small model, such as any one of the Scopex models shown, will more than repay the investment if you are working on a good number of projects, while for professional (or even semi-professional) work, a 'scope is essential.

fault has been pinned down to a single block. The exact method used depends on the type of circuit; with straight-chain circuits, such as an audio amplifier or an AM radio receiver, the recommended approach is to start in the middle. If the circuit is working correctly at that point proceed towards the output end, until you locate the stage where the signal is lost. If there is no signal present at the mid-point, then the fault obviously (well, probably) lies towards the 'input' end of the chain, so work back in that direction.

Above all, fault-finding at this level requires a calm, logical common-sense approach. If you know how the circuit works and what it is supposed to be doing, you stand a good chance of being able to figure out the block in which the fault lies. The diagrams of Figures 2 and 3 show the block diagram of a typical, small transistor radio, together with a section of a fault-finding chart. The chart illustrates the advantages of a logical approach; simply by asking the right questions, the correct answer becomes obvious and the location of the fault can be found.

What Next?

Once you've decided in which block the fault lies, look at the circuitry of the block itself and once again apply the Golden Rules. Carefully check the PCB area and each component for physical defects. You know the fault is there, somewhere — it's just a matter of finding it! Perhaps the body of a resistor is cracked, or one of the IC's pins has been bent underneath. Try tapping components very lightly with the insulated end of a small screwdriver; this trick will often turn up a bad solder joint or duff component. If overheating seems to be the problem, use an aerosol freezing spray to cool down the suspect component; if the fault suddenly vanishes, you've at least isolated the component. Now you only have to find out why its overheating! These two 'tricks of the trade' are the most effective methods for locating intermittent faults — those which come and go!

Tools of the Trade

Fault finding without instruments is impossible. If you've come this far without even a multimeter then you're some undiscovered genius who should be writing

this, rather than reading it!

A multimeter is simply the most common and most useful tool of the electronics trade. Already, a multimeter will have been used to isolate the fault to a particular circuit block, but it's when you're locating the faulty component that a meter is really essential for the following tests:

- Measure the supply voltages on all ICs; be sure to use probes with sharp points for this, to avoid bridging two adjacent pins. You should know the voltages (or range of voltages — they're rarely exactly as marked on the circuit) to expect, and where to find them. If you find an incorrect reading, track along the copper, looking for breaks, shorts etc.
- Measure the voltages around suspect transistors; although the actual readings will depend on the circuit configuration, in general the collector of an NPN transistor that is normally conducting will be positive with respect to the emitter (negative for PNP), but the voltage will be somewhat less than the positive rail. The base should be at least 0V6 more positive than the emitter (0V6 negative, for PNP). If the transistor is normally cut off, the base voltage will be less than 0V6 above the emitter, or even negative (for NPN), while the collector will be at the positive supply voltage, give or take a volt or so.
- Measuring in-circuit resistance, eg, when checking for a high resistance dry joint, it can be quite frustrating because the components in the circuit will obviously affect the reading; the only certain way to measure resistance in-circuit is to isolate, by lifting components or (in extreme cases only) cutting the circuit tracks. These measures may also be necessary if you suspect that a faulty component or group of components are responsible for an incorrect voltage reading (Divide And Conquer, remember?). Some meters, such as the Teston meter reviewed in last month's issue, have a special range for measuring in-circuit resistance, and this facility is very useful (as the reviewer mentioned) for taking resistance readings around transistors or diodes.

Scope For Improvement

For most hobbyists, owning test equipment other than a multimeter is something of a luxury. However, there are several other items which can be built cheaply; an audio signal generator (HE May 82 issue) is quite adequate for work on audio circuits. A simple audio amplifier with a high impedance, AC-coupled input (to isolate DC levels in the circuit under test) or even a high impedance earphone, is invaluable for tracing the signal path through an amplifier. An audio/RF signal injector/tracer (HE August 79; April 82) is slightly more versatile, as it can be used on AM radio circuits as well.

This list could go on indefinitely, because the more complicated circuit-require more specialised test equipment. In general, though, there is one item which, though expensive, is useful for almost all fault-finding and totally essential for work on some kinds of circuits, and that is an oscilloscope. If you are going to be 'into electronics', either as a long-term hobbyist or as a semi-professional, say, then a 'scope is a very worthwhile investment.

Extracting The Digit

A 'scope is usually necessary for fault-finding on digital circuits, where correct operation depends not on voltage levels but on the presence (or absence) of a fixed-level pulse which is too fast to register on a multimeter. The only way pulses can be observed is either on a 'scope, or by using a special logic probe. It is also important to understand the logic of the circuit, from the truth tables of simple AND, OR, NOR and NAND gates through flip flops, registers and so on, to the logical combination of the elements used in the circuits. The Model Train Lights Controller project, published last month, for instance, was a good example of a sequential logic circuit in which correct operation depends on the logic state of particular inputs and the state of the logic elements which resulted from the last sequence of inputs! The timing diagrams, tracing the effect on the circuit of a sequence of inputs, are an important fault-finding tool for this type of circuit!

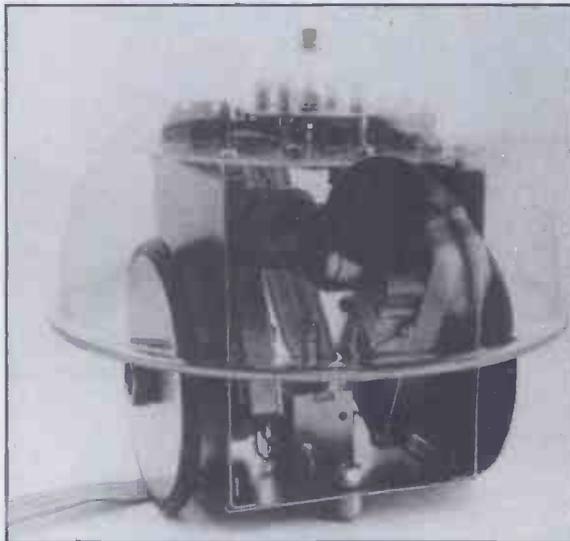
The Final Secret

To conclude, I will now reveal the most important secret of fault-finding: experience. There is no substitute, so when your project just lies there limply, don't get frustrated and annoyed, or throw it against the wall! Roll up your sleeves and get on with it. Sooner or later the circuit will burst into life, and you will discover that you've learned a lot about electronics, in the process. Happy Hunting!

Our thanks to Bernard Babani (publishing) Ltd. for permission to reproduce the diagrams of Figures 2 and 3 from their "Transistor Radio Fault-Finding Chart" by Chas E. Miller; publication number BP70, price 50p.

COMING SOON TO . . .

Hobby Electronics



HEBOT II

HEBOT Rolls Again

Way back in November 1979 we published one of the first ever mobile robot projects, which we christened HEBOT. It proved to be enormously popular and, judging by the mail we still receive, reader's enthusiasm for simple robotics has not decreased over the years!

HEBOT has long since 'passed on' but now, in conjunction with Powertran Ltd., we are proud to present its successor.

HEBOT II is a very similar animal — er, robot — but using today's more sophisticated circuitry and operating under the control of a microcomputer. Like the original, it is a 'turtle' robot, propelled by two large, independently controlled rubber wheels which enable it to perform a wide variety of movements. Obstacle-sensors allow it to explore its environment, discovering the limits of movement or the shape of a room, or it can draw patterns or graphs using a pen, which presses down on command. Its blinking eyes and on-board beeper can be programmed to communicate with the operator, eg to indicate that it has finished a task.

The projected cost of this educational and inspirational robot is around £75, and it is initially intended to be controlled via a Sinclair ZX81 microcomputer — though future developments will open still greater possibilities. Look out for HEBOT II in the November issue of Hobby Electronics.

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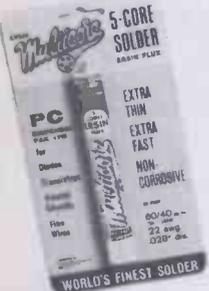
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The Jupiter Ace uses FORTH

The Ace is set apart from all other personal computers on the market by its use of a revolutionary language called 'FORTH'. Some computer languages are easy for humans to understand, others are easy for computers; FORTH is most unusual in being both. Its underlying principles are so simple that it takes even a newcomer to computers only a few minutes to learn how to do calculations on the Ace, yet the very same principles are powerful enough to allow you to invent your own extensions to the language itself.

At the same time, the memory-saving coded form used to store your programs inside the Ace allows it to obey them very fast — typically in less than a tenth of the time it would take to do the same thing using a different language. Amongst other things, this makes the Ace ideal for games.

FORTH's unique combination of speed, versatility and ease of programming has already made it a prime choice for professional applications as diverse as pub games and radio telescopes, and gained it an enthusiastic national user group. Now the Jupiter Ace can bring this addictive language into your own home.

Designed by Jupiter Cantab

Leading computer Designers Richard Altwasser and Steven Vickers have a reputation for pushing technology forwards. After playing the major role in creating the ZX Spectrum they formed Jupiter Cantab to develop their latest brainchild the Jupiter Ace.

Technical Specification

Hardware

Processor/Memory

Z80A running at 3.25 MHz.
8K bytes ROM 3K bytes RAM.

Input

40 moving-key keyboard with auto-repeat on every key.

Output

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Valdemar Poulsen

Ian Sinclair

The inventor of the wire-recorder (the precursor of the modern tape recorder) and the first practical method of modulating radio frequencies.

If you haven't heard of him, it's certainly not because of any lack of publicity. Poulsen's invention of magnetic recording, which is still the basis of most tape and magnetic disc recording systems, has been well-documented; but some of his work, notably such achievements as modulation of radio waves, are not quite so well-known. Poulsen was born in 1869 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He doesn't seem to have distinguished himself much at school, but was fascinated by telegraphs and telephones and so progressed from school to Technical College.

When he left College, Poulsen fulfilled his ambitions by joining the Copenhagen Telephone Co as a technical assistant, and it was during his time there that he invented a device to record telephone conversations, a device which he christened the Telegraphone. This was patented in 1898 and a working model of the device aroused considerable interest at the Paris Exposition in 1900. What exactly was it?

A Record First

The drawings are still around and there is absolutely no doubt that it was the first magnetic recorder. Since the discovery of magnetic hysteresis by Charles Steinmetz, engineers were much more aware of how to deal with magnetism, and Poulsen had thoroughly absorbed Steinmetz's work. He realised that if an AC signal were superimposed over DC in an electromagnet and if, at the same time, a magnetic material moved past the poles of the electromagnet then the material would be left permanently magnetised, but with different strengths of magnetism in different places. This remaining magnetism would surely bear some relationship to the amplitude of the AC signal at each instant.

Leading The Way

In any case, Poulsen was not just a theorist; he constructed a prototype in which the recording medium steel wire wound on a drum, with an electromagnet pressed against the wire. The poles of the electromagnet were shaped to fit closely to the wire, and the whole electromagnet (the record/replay head, as we would now call it) was raised or lowered by a lead-screw (as on a screw-cutting lathe) so that, as the drum revolved, the head was kept in contact with the wire. When the head reached the top of the drum, it was automatically lifted from the wire and returned to its starting position.

The prototype worked, and worked well enough to be a big success at the Paris Expo, but its uses were not so obvious. Home entertainment was out of the question, but Edison's Phonograph had

scooped the market and, in any case, the Phonograph had the great advantage that the sound output was loud enough for everyone in a room to hear it. Poulsen's Telegraphone gave only a feeble signal from its replay head, enough for a pair of sensitive earphones, but no more. Its advantage, though, was that the recording system was electrical, using a microphone. To cut a phonograph record, on the other hand, it was necessary for the singer to perform into the wide end of the large trumpet-shaped horn, at the other end of which was a diaphragm carrying a stylus which cut the wax of the recording cylinder directly.

Despite this advantage, Poulsen could not raise any finance for his invention in Europe and, like so many before and even more since, he travelled to the US with his patents. In 1903, with some newly-acquired US associates, he formed the American Telegraphone Co, for manufacturing and selling his recorder. The production model permitted 30 minutes of recording, much longer than was possible on any Phonograph wax cylinder; it achieved this by using fine steel wire, wound on reels, as the recording medium, moving past the record/replay head at the very high speed of 84 inches per second. The market he was aiming at was the rapidly expanding one of office dictaphones which, at that time, used wax cylinders or discs, with all of their disadvantages.

Private Practices

Poulsen's dictaphone offered: more private operation, using a microphone; the possibility of remote operation and even the recording of telephone conversations; private replay, using earphones; a very much longer playing time than rival machines based on wax cylinders or discs could offer. These advantages won the machine quite a substantial share of the booming office equipment market. A few of Poulsen's machines were still in use in the 30s, but when electrical recording and replay became possible on aluminium discs, using phonograph techniques, interest in Poulsen's recorder diminished.

For Better Or Morse

Poulsen's inventive life was by no means confined to the Telegraphone, however. Like most inventors of the time, he concentrated from 1902 onwards on radio communication and, in particular, on the problem of modulation. In the dawn of radio, only telegraphy was possible, and Morse ruled. Morse ruled, in fact, for so long, and became such a millstone round the neck of

amateur radio, that CB just *had* to come to prove that the 20th Century had arrived!

Poulsen also thought that Morse code was out of date by 1902—after all, teletypes using Baudot or Murray 5-bit digital codes had been in use for all of Poulsen's working life. He set out to go one step better and design a way of carrying speech by radio and, by chance, picked up a copy of a British Patent by W. Duddell for a 'singing arc'. This was a way of creating sound from an electrical discharge, similar to an arc lamp, using an electromagnet to move the discharge (which we now call a plasma) and so create the airwaves of sound.

Plasma loudspeakers, incidentally, are by no means completely dead—look out for developments! Duddell's device worked, but it needed large amounts of power and the principle, called the lonophone, was not greatly developed at the time. Poulsen realised that it might be possible to reverse the action of this 'singing arc' and, by having the arc as part of radio frequency circuit, modulate it by the effect of sound-waves on the arc.

His Latest Flame

His first experiments looked frighteningly dangerous. An induction coil was used to generate high frequency AC, and a pair of carbon electrodes provided the arc, with one electrode connected to the earth and the other to the aerial. By speaking into the flame of the arc, Poulsen achieved amplitude modulation of the signal, and his transmissions were received ten miles away using a crude crystal detector and earphones.

This modulator was not really a practical proposition, but Poulsen went on to develop an arc between copper electrodes in gas, held in a glass tube. With the gas at lower than atmospheric pressure, a steady arc could be achieved with lower voltages and modulated by an electromagnet connected to a microphone circuit. Using this arrangement, Poulsen was able to achieve enough depth of modulation to make long-wave broadcasting of sound signals possible, and his arc-modulation system was used until high-power transmitting valves became available.

Poulsen continued his inventive career, making small and generally unnoticed contributions to radio. He tended not to advertise his successes and it is for that reason his work is not widely appreciated. As it was, his working life covered all the pioneering days of electronics, though his death in 1942 robbed him of the chance to see his first invention reach its triumphant maturity, as the tape recorder.

LOOK

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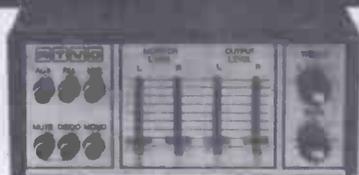
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Loads: 4 - 16 ohms.
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AC176	25	BC168C	10
AC187	22	BC169C	10
AC188	22	BC170	8
AD142	120	BC172	8
AD161	40	BC177	18
AD162	40	BC178	18
AF124	60	BC179	18
AF126	50	BC182	10
AF139	40	*BC182L	8
AF186	70	BC183	10
AF239	75	BC183L	10
BC107	10	BC184	10
BC107B	12	*BC184L	7
BC108	12	BC212	10
BC108B	12	BC213	10
*BC109	9	BC213L	10
BC109C	12	BC214	10
BC114	22	*BC214L	8
BC115	22	BC215	10
BC117	22	BC238	14
BC119	35	BC308	15
BC137	40	BC327	14
BC139	40	BC328	14
BC140	30	BC337	14
BC141	30	BC338	14
BC142	25	BC347	30
BC143	25	BC348	30
BC147	8	BC349	7
BC148	8	BC347	7
BC149	8	BC347	7

LINEAR			
*555CMOS	80	ICL7621	180
*555CMOS	150	ICL7622	180
709	25	ICL8038	320
741	14	ICL8211A	100
9400CJ	350	ICM7224	785
AY-3-1270	840	ICM7555	80
AY-3-8910	600	LF353	85
AY-3-8912	625	LF356	90
CA3046	60	LM10	360
CA3090	65	LM301A	25
CA3098	215	LM311	60
CA3099A	375	LM318	120
CA3130E	90	LM324	40
CA3140E	90	LM334Z	100
CA3161E	100	LM336Z	125
CA3169	280	LM339	280
CA3240E	110	LM348	60
ICL7610	790	LM358	50
ICL7611	95	LM377	150

CMOS			
4000	10	4019	45
*4001	10	4020	50
4002	12	4021	50
4005	50	4022	50
4007	15	4023	16
4008	48	4024	16
4009	24	4025	16
4010	24	4026	80
*4011	11	4027	24
4012	16	4028	50
*4013	25	4029	60
4014	60	4030	125
4015	50	4031	125
4016	20	4034	140

LS TTL			
*LS00	11	LS21	12
LS01	11	LS22	12
LS02	11	LS23	12
LS03	12	LS24	13
LS04	12	LS25	13
LS05	13	LS26	13
LS08	13	LS27	13
LS09	12	LS28	13
LS10	12	LS29	13
LS11	12	LS30	13
LS12	12	LS31	13
*LS13	22	LS32	13
LS14	38	LS33	13
LS15	12	LS34	13
LS20	12	LS35	13

TTL			
*7400	11	7416	24
7401	11	7417	24
7402	11	7418	24
7403	12	7419	24
7404	13	7420	24
7405	15	7421	24
7406	24	7422	24
7407	25	7423	24
7408	14	7424	24
7409	14	7425	24
7410	14	7426	24
7411	16	7427	24
7412	18	7428	24

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200KHz	370	6.144M	180
1MHz	300	7.0M	250
1.038M	370	8.0M	170
1.8432	300	10.0M	180
2.0M	270	12.0M	290
2.4576M	220	18.0M	240
3.276M	240	18.0M	240
3.579M	120	18.432	220
4.0M	180	38.687	320
4.194M	125	41.66M	300
4.43M	125	41.66M	300
5.0M	240		

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Construction

There is almost nothing to say about this, since it can be built up on almost any scrap of stripboard (Figure 2) or on

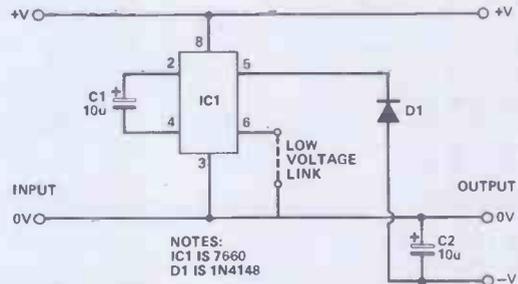
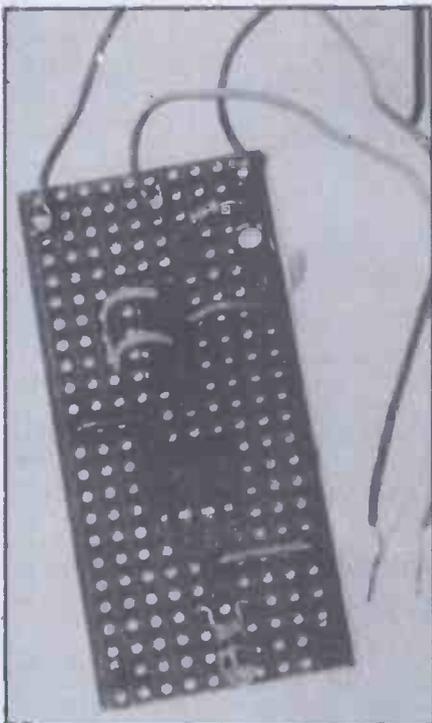


Figure 1. The circuit uses just one IC.

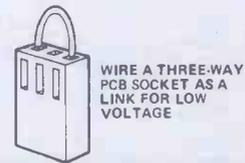


Figure 2. A three-way PCB socket can be used as the low-voltage link.

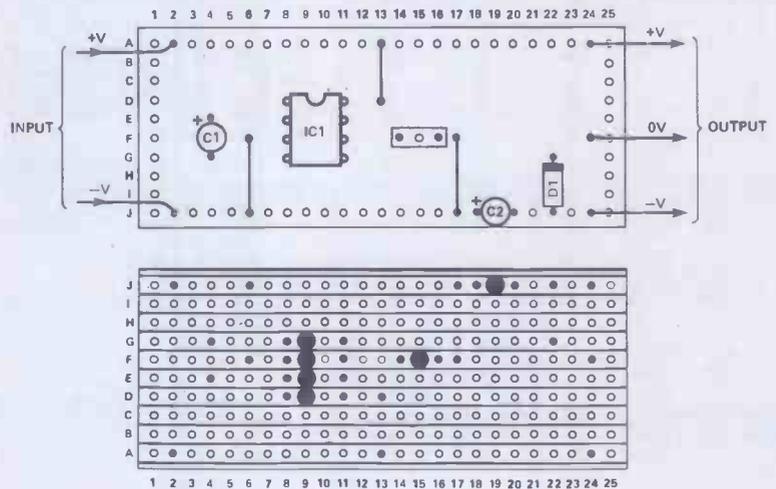


Figure 3. The Veroboard layout.

a PCB (Figure 3) the size of a postage stamp. Also, the circuit can be incorporated in any odd space on the main board of any other project that requires it.

It works for a wide range of supply voltages (+1V5 to +10V). Pin 6 must be joined to the 0V rail when the supply is less than +3V5 and for these low voltages, the diode may be omitted. The PCB design allows a wire link to connect pin 6 to the 0V rail for low-voltage operation. If the unit is to be used at various voltages, some high,

some low, a switch may be wired in place of the link.

The circuit works straight away — no adjustments are needed.

The Circuit

The positive voltage comes straight through from the supply, so there is no mystery about this. The negative voltage is generated by voltage level translation. See what happens when the unit is connected to a +6V supply. There are two stages in the operation (Figure 4):

Parts List

CAPACITORS

C1, 2 10 μ 16V
tantalum bead

SEMICONDUCTORS

IC1 7660
voltage converter (see Buylines)

D1 1N4148
signal diode

MISCELLANEOUS

Small veroboard or PCB; veropins;
3-pin PCB plug and socket, or SPST
switch; wire, solder etc.

Buylines page 30

Stage 1: C1 is charged directly from the power supply, so that its negative terminal is at 0V and its positive terminal is at +6V.

Stage 2: The switches are altered under the control of the logic circuits; the +6V plate of C1 is now connected to the 0V rail, resulting in a fall of potential of 6V. This causes a corresponding drop on its other plate, formerly at 0V but now forced down to -6V. Since this plate is now connected to C2, one side of C2 now becomes charged to -6V, the other side being at 0V.

The IC then returns to Stage 1, recharging C1 and leaving C2 charged

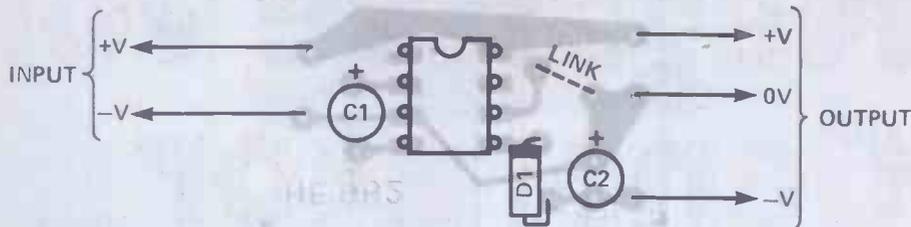


Figure 4. A full-sized PCB is reproduced on the PCB Printout page; note that the low-voltage link is hard-wired, here.

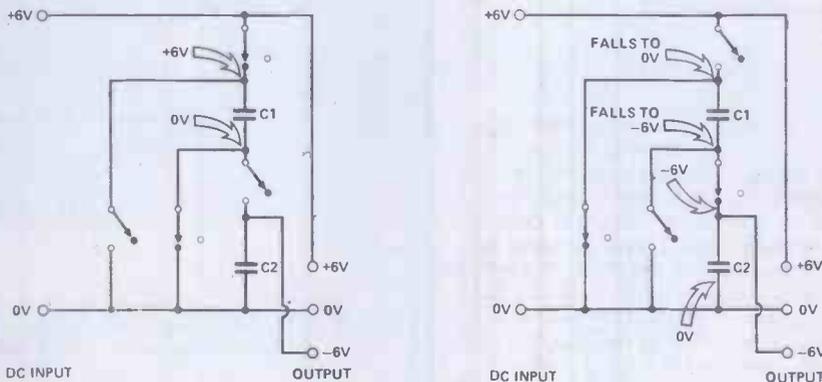


Figure 5. How the 7660 IC works: left, Stage 1; right, Stage 2.

to -6V. The states alternate very rapidly (at about 10kHz), under the control of an on-chip oscillator and various logic circuits, so that a virtually smooth DC supply is obtained. Naturally, if current is being drawn from C2 to supply the external circuit,

its charge may not be renewed sufficiently rapidly from C1 and the negative voltage may fall slightly. For many applications (eg, the DVM) the negative supply is called on for relatively small currents, so usually this effect can be ignored.

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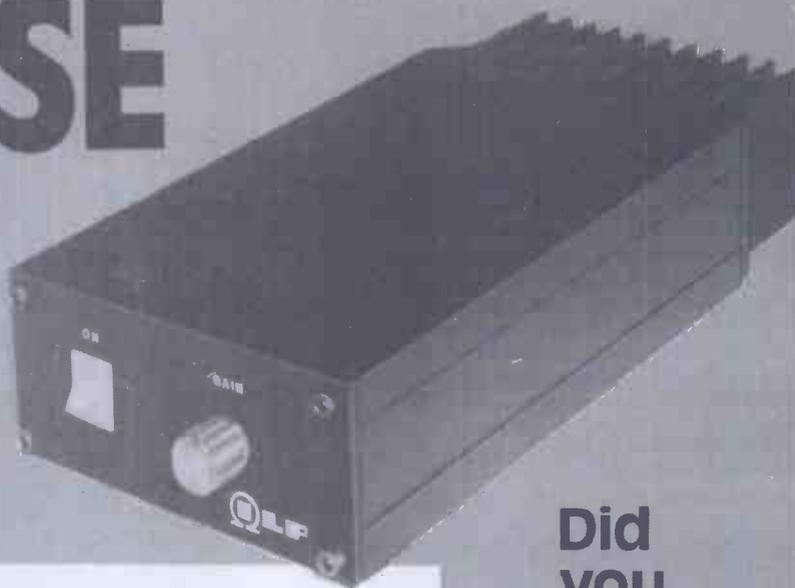
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POINTS OF VIEW

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Stretching A Point

Dear Sir,
I am writing to you for help in obtaining a reel of 35 SWG and 39 SWG enamelled copper wire. I have looked in many catalogues advertised in your magazine but they only stock 34 and 40 SWG wire. If you know of any company who could supply 35 and 39 SWG could you please inform me. I would be very grateful.
B. Cook,
Tamworth,
Staffs.

We can't imagine why you need 35 and 39 rather than 34 and 40 — the difference is 0.01 and 0.02 mm, respectively! However, the Scientific Wire Company (PO Box 30, London E4) will sometimes supply custom gauges. Ask them nicely and tell them Hobby Electronics sent you!

Getting Started

I have just completed my first year studying a broad engineering course which includes a substantial amount of electronics. I have found this part slightly difficult, mainly because I cannot get practice at its application.

I very much want to begin constructing electronic circuits but, being a complete novice, I have very little idea where to start! It seems that kits are the easiest initial projects.

I have a soldering iron and some screwdrivers, but would like advice on what tools to obtain and what projects to opt for first. Yours was the first electronics magazine I have ever bought. The theory I can understand but the practical details seem very difficult without knowledge of the components.

I would be most grateful if you could spare the time to advise me.
L.M. Gair,
London.

Difficult questions to answer in a few lines, but we'll try! First, our aim in HE is to present projects for the beginner in electronics, and many of our long-running feature series are devoted to introducing both the theory and practice of electronics. The best place to start, then, is in your local library! We suggest you look closely at lan

Sinclair's "Into Electronic Components" series (August '81 — July '82) which explains in detail what the various items are, and how and why they are used. On the practical side, we'd recommend Keith Brindley's "Building Site" articles, in issues from August 1980 through to December 1981. Any article you feel should be kept for future reference can be obtained from our Backnumbers Department.

The three essential tools for the electronics constructor are a soldering iron, sidecutters and a pair of long-nosed pliers. For mechanical assembly, you'll need a selection of screwdrivers, and there are many other tools which, while not "essential" are quite handy; nut drivers, small spanners, and so on. A set of miniature files is extremely useful, and so is a "seizer" or surgical clamp; the jaws clamp firmly together to hold wires for soldering, act as a heat sink etc, and are handy for retrieving small things that drop into inaccessible places! You'll find all these items in the catalogue published by Cooper Tools. Their address is: Sedling Road, Wear, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE38 9BZ.

Kit projects are probably simpler because all the components are supplied, along with the odds and ends that an inexperienced constructor would not have to hand. Kits are available for most Hobby Electronics projects, but pick an easy one to start on. Be sure to follow the instructions carefully; you'll make mistakes, of course, but there's no other way to go about it; experience is the best teacher, after all

Speakers Without Peer

Dear Sir,
Thank you for such an excellent magazine, Hobby Electronics.
We do have a problem though; quite a lot of the projects have certain components that are either not stocked at the local electronic shops, or the man behind the counter gives you a blank look when you ask for it. That usually means he hasn't got a clue what you're talking about.

Such was the case with your stereo hi-fi, System 5080A, in the March 1980 issue. After I had completed the preamp, power amp and the power supply, I started looking around for the speakers specified. Alas, nobody knew anything about a speaker called "Peerless".

I then decided to contact one of the

suppliers mentioned in *Buylines*. The company was Badger Sound Services Ltd. They sent me a price list as well as the order forms, which I completed and returned to them with my cheque. At this stage I thought my problems were over, when disaster struck. They sent me a letter to inform me that they were having difficulty in obtaining a set of the speakers, but that they expected them within two or three weeks.

That was six months ago, and I regret to say that my patience is running out. It seems to me that they are not eager to satisfy overseas customers because I last heard from them three months ago.

Are there other customers from foreign countries also experiencing problems in this respect, or has my luck run out? I always had my doubts about importing goods from other countries and after this I don't think I'll attempt such a thing again.

I have written to the company asking them if they can or cannot supply the goods within the next six months, because that is as long as I'll be able to wait. The project is costing me a fortune and the fact that I have to wait so long for these speakers makes it a total loss.

I sincerely hope there is someone who can help me with this problem, or to advise me on the true state of affairs.

H. Beukes,
Volksrust,
South Africa.

The speakers (or more accurately, the driver units) are still manufactured by Peerless, but the number of tweeters being produced keeps them in short supply and this is where the problem lies. We have contacted Badger Sound and they have assured us that they are doing everything possible to obtain the units for Mr. Beukes. We understand that they have written to explain the situation, and have offered alternative drivers which would suit the system.

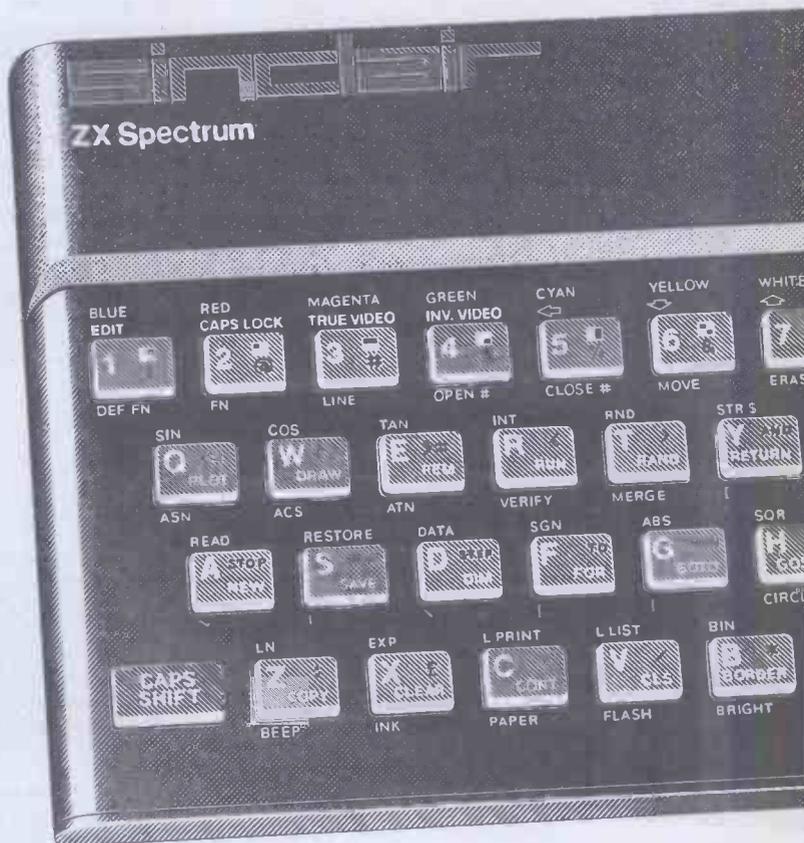
We fully appreciate the difficulties sometimes experienced by our overseas readers, but there is very little we can do about it other than point out that it would be safer to make enquiries about the supply of unusual components before actually sending off for them.

For our South African readers, we can pass on the name of a shop recommended by an expatriate colleague; it is: A1 Radio of West Street, Durban 4001.

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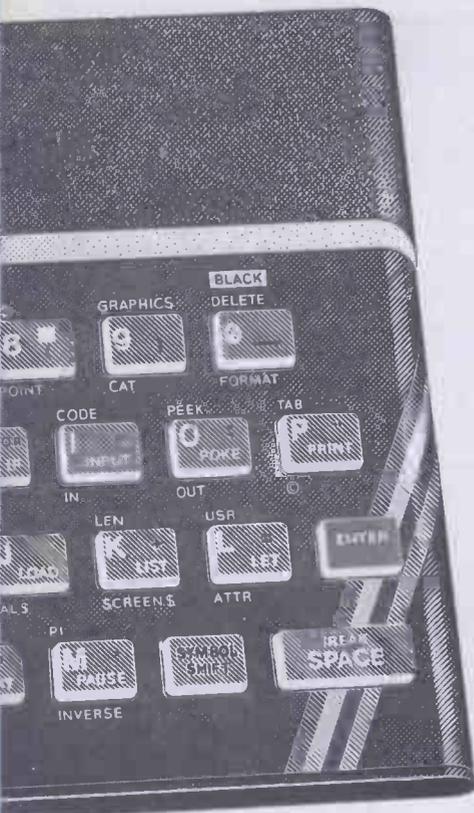
There's no need to stop there. The ZX Printer—available now—is fully compatible with the ZX Spectrum. And later this year there will be Microdrives for massive amounts of extra on-line storage, plus an RS232 / network interface board.



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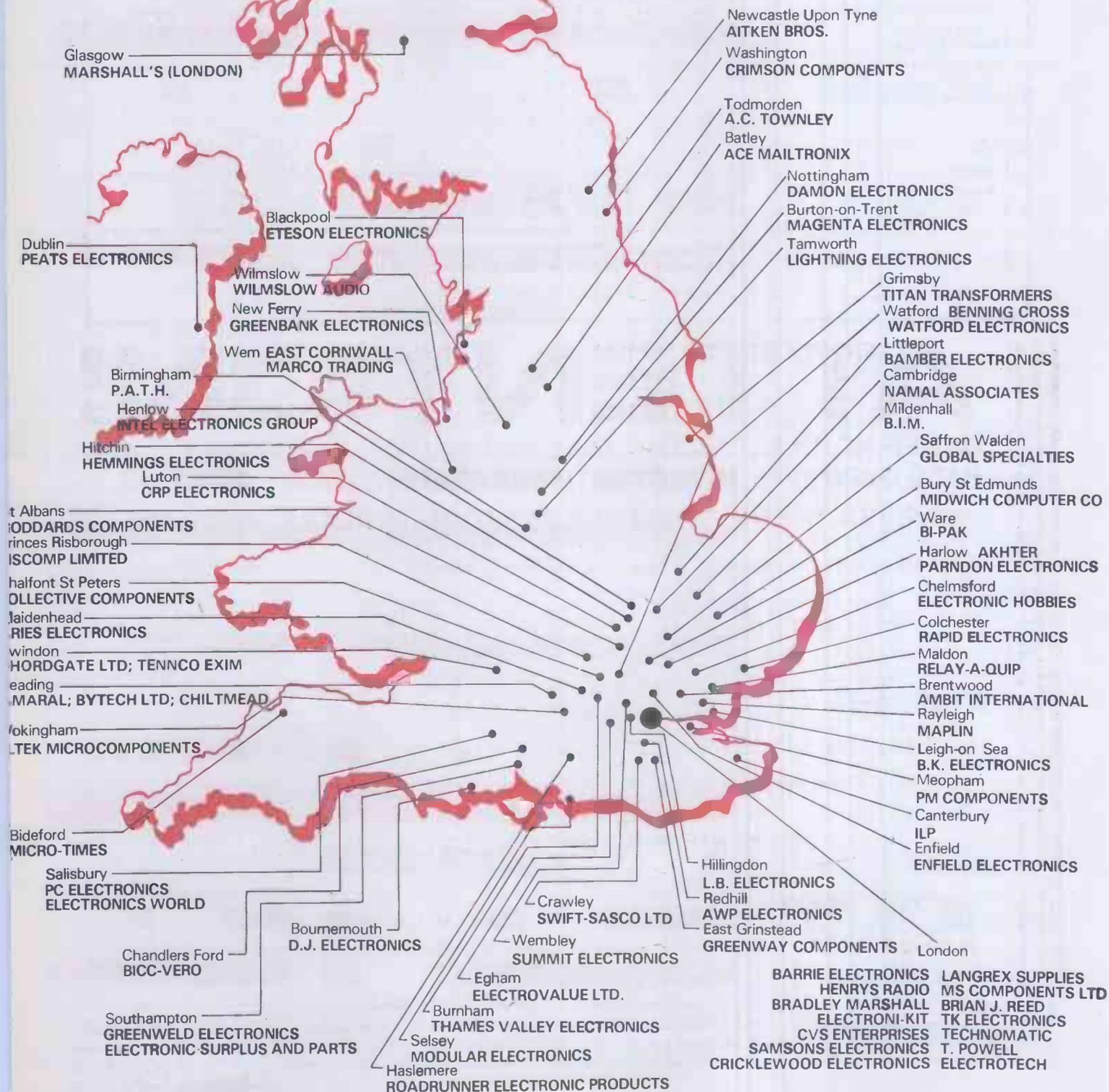
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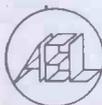
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7400	11p	74181A	36p	74LS73	18p	74LS377	60p	4553	245p	LM391	150p	TL430C	70p	8279	560p	KEYBOARD ENCODER	AY-6-2376	700p	2N3702/3	12p	1A 600V	30p
7401	11p	74153	40p	74LS74	16p	74LS378	60p	4556	35p	LM393	150p	UA2240	160p	MJ2955	75p	MJ3001	220p	2N3794/5	12p	2A 50V	30p	
7402	11p	74156	40p	74LS76	16p	74LS380	60p	4556	35p	LM394	300p	UAA170	170p	MJ4502	£4	MJ4503	£4	2N3796/7	14p	2A 100V	35p	
7403	12p	74157	30p	74LS83	36p	74LS383	45p	4560	120p	LM709	36p	UDN6118	320p	MJ4508	60p	MJ4509	60p	2N3708/9	12p	2A 400V	45p	
7404	12p	74158	30p	74LS85	48p	74LS386	48p	4568	250p	LM710	50p	UDN6184	320p	MJ2991B	£8	MJ2992	£8	2N3773	225p	3A 200V	60p	
7405	15p	74159	75p	74LS86	16p	74LS389	160p	4569	170p	LM723	70p	ULN2003	100p	ZBOP10	250p	MJ2993	£8	2N3819	25p	3A 600V	72p	
7406	20p	74161	48p	74LS90	22p	74LS392	22p	4572	30p	LM733	70p	ULN2068	200p	ZBOPCTC	250p	MJ2994	£8	2N3823	40p	4A 100V	95p	
7407	20p	74162	48p	74LS93	22p	74LS395	22p	4583	90p	LM741	18p	ULN2802	200p	ZBOPACTC	200p	MJ2995	£8	2N3866	90p	4A 50V	80p	
7408	14p	74163	48p	74LS96	40p	74LS398	40p	4585	75p	LM747	70p	UPC575	400p	ZBODART	700p	MJ2996	£8	2N3902	70p	6A 100V	100p	
7409	14p	74164	48p	74LS99	40p	74LS401	40p	4585	75p	LM748	36p	UPC592H	200p	ZBODAMA	£10	MJ2997	£8	2N3903/4	18p	6A 400V	120p	
7410	14p	74165	48p	74LS102	40p	74LS404	40p	4585	75p	LM750	36p	UPC1156H	300p	ZBODAO	£10	MJ2998	£8	2N3905/6	20p	10A 400V	200p	
7411	18p	74166	150p	74LS103	27p	74LS407	27p	4585	75p	LM751	36p	XR204	300p	ZBODAO-0/1/2	£7	MJ2999	£8	2N4027	40p	25A 400V	400p	
7412	18p	74167	150p	74LS109	27p	74LS410	27p	4585	75p	LM752	36p	XR221	600p	CRT CONTROLLER		MJ3000	£8	2N4123/4	20p			
7413	18p	74170	120p	74LS113	22p	74LS413	22p	4585	75p	LM753	36p	XR2216	675p	AD161/2	46p	MJ3001	£8	2N4401/3	27p			
7414	20p	74172	275p	74LS114	22p	74LS416	22p	4585	75p	LM754	36p	ZN414	22p	BC107/8	13p	MJ3002	£8	2N4427	90p			
7415	20p	74173	60p	74LS122	28p	74LS419	28p	4585	75p	LM755	36p	ZN419C	22p	BC107/9	14p	MJ3003	£8	2N4871	60p			
7416	20p	74174	60p	74LS123	34p	74LS422	34p	4585	75p	LM756	36p	ZN424E	13p	BC117	20p	MJ3004	£8	2N5006	60p			
7417	20p	74175	60p	74LS124	34p	74LS425	34p	4585	75p	LM757	36p	ZN426E	35p	BC169C	12p	MJ3005	£8	2N5089	27p			
7420	15p	74176	40p	74LS125	24p	74LS428	24p	4585	75p	LM758	36p	ZN427E	62p	BC172	12p	MJ3006	£8	2N5172	27p			
7421	20p	74177	40p	74LS126	24p	74LS431	24p	4585	75p	LM759	36p	ZN428E	50p	BC177/8	17p	MJ3007	£8	2N5194	30p			
7422	20p	74178	80p	74LS132	35p	74LS434	35p	4585	75p	LM760	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC177/9	17p	MJ3008	£8	2N5194	30p			
7423	20p	74179	80p	74LS133	25p	74LS437	25p	4585	75p	LM761	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC178	19p	MJ3009	£8	2N5298	65p			
7426	28p	74180	40p	74LS136	25p	74LS440	25p	4585	75p	LM762	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC182/3	11p	MJ3010	£8	2N5401	60p			
7427	28p	74181	115p	74LS138	27p	74LS443	27p	4585	75p	LM763	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC187	30p	MJ3011	£8	2N5457	30p			
7428	26p	74184A	90p	74LS139	27p	74LS446	27p	4585	75p	LM764	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC212/3	11p	MJ3012	£8	2N5460	30p			
7430	14p	74185	90p	74LS145	70p	74LS449	70p	4585	75p	LM765	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC214	12p	MJ3013	£8	2N5460	30p			
7432	22p	74186	470p	74LS147	120p	74LS452	120p	4585	75p	LM766	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC217	15p	MJ3014	£8	2N5460	30p			
7433	22p	74187	470p	74LS148	120p	74LS455	120p	4585	75p	LM767	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC218	11p	MJ3015	£8	2N5460	30p			
7434	25p	74189	45p	74LS151	70p	74LS458	70p	4585	75p	LM768	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC219	11p	MJ3016	£8	2N5460	30p			
7435	25p	74190	45p	74LS153	60p	74LS461	60p	4585	75p	LM769	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC220	11p	MJ3017	£8	2N5460	30p			
7438	15p	74192	45p	74LS156	30p	74LS464	30p	4585	75p	LM770	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC221	11p	MJ3018	£8	2N5460	30p			
7441	55p	74193	48p	74LS156	30p	74LS467	30p	4585	75p	LM771	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC222	11p	MJ3019	£8	2N5460	30p			
7442A	32p	74194	45p	74LS156	30p	74LS470	30p	4585	75p	LM772	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC223	11p	MJ3020	£8	2N5460	30p			
7443	32p	74195	45p	74LS157	27p	74LS473	27p	4585	75p	LM773	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC224	11p	MJ3021	£8	2N5460	30p			
7445	50p	74196	45p	74LS157	27p	74LS476	27p	4585	75p	LM774	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC225	11p	MJ3022	£8	2N5460	30p			
7446A	60p	74197	45p	74LS158	30p	74LS479	30p	4585	75p	LM775	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC226	11p	MJ3023	£8	2N5460	30p			
7447A	36p	74198	85p	74LS160	36p	74LS482	36p	4585	75p	LM776	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC227	11p	MJ3024	£8	2N5460	30p			
7448	46p	74199	85p	74LS162	36p	74LS485	36p	4585	75p	LM777	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC228	11p	MJ3025	£8	2N5460	30p			
7451	15p	74221	55p	74LS163	36p	74LS488	36p	4585	75p	LM778	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC229	11p	MJ3026	£8	2N5460	30p			
7452	15p	74225	55p	74LS164	36p	74LS491	36p	4585	75p	LM779	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC230	11p	MJ3027	£8	2N5460	30p			
7454	15p	74273	140p	74LS164	40p	74LS494	40p	4585	75p	LM780	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC231	11p	MJ3028	£8	2N5460	30p			
7460	17p	74278	100p	74LS165	50p	74LS497	50p	4585	75p	LM781	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC232	11p	MJ3029	£8	2N5460	30p			
7470	36p	74279	50p	74LS170	70p	74LS500	70p	4585	75p	LM782	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC233	11p	MJ3030	£8	2N5460	30p			
7472	25p	74283	50p	74LS173	55p	74LS503	55p	4585	75p	LM783	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC234	11p	MJ3031	£8	2N5460	30p			
7473	25p	74284	160p	74LS174	40p	74LS506	40p	4585	75p	LM784	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC235	11p	MJ3032	£8	2N5460	30p			
7474	20p	74290	100p	74LS175	40p	74LS509	40p	4585	75p	LM785	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC236	11p	MJ3033	£8	2N5460	30p			
7475	30p	74293	100p	74LS175	40p	74LS512	40p	4585	75p	LM786	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC237	11p	MJ3034	£8	2N5460	30p			
7476	30p	74298	100p	74LS176	40p	74LS515	40p	4585	75p	LM787	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC238	11p	MJ3035	£8	2N5460	30p			
7480	48p	74351	190p	74LS191	36p	74LS518	36p	4585	75p	LM788	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC239	11p	MJ3036	£8	2N5460	30p			
7481	100p	74356	35p	74LS192	36p	74LS521	36p	4585	75p	LM789	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC240	11p	MJ3037	£8	2N5460	30p			
7482	55p	74366	35p	74LS193	36p	74LS524	36p	4585	75p	LM790	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC241	11p	MJ3038	£8	2N5460	30p			
7483A	36p	74368	35p	74LS194	36p	74LS527	36p	4585	75p	LM791	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC242	11p	MJ3039	£8	2N5460	30p			
7484	65p	74368	35p	74LS194	36p	74LS530	36p	4585	75p	LM792	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC243	11p	MJ3040	£8	2N5460	30p			
7485	90p	74376	100p	74LS195	36p	74LS533	36p	4585	75p	LM793	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC244	11p	MJ3041	£8	2N5460	30p			
7486	20p	74390	70p	74LS197	45p	74LS536	45p	4585	75p	LM794	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC245	11p	MJ3042	£8	2N5460	30p			
7489	170p	74393	90p	74LS221	50p	74LS539	90p	4585	75p	LM795	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC246	11p	MJ3043	£8	2N5460	30p			
7490A	20p	74490	95p	74LS240	55p	74LS542	55p	4585	75p	LM796	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC247	11p	MJ3044	£8	2N5460	30p			
7491	35p	74492	95p	74LS241	55p	74LS545	55p	4585	75p	LM797	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC248	11p	MJ3045	£8	2N5460	30p			
7492A	25p	74493	95p	74LS242	55p	74LS548	55p	4585	75p	LM798	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC249	11p	MJ3046	£8	2N5460	30p			
7493A	24p	74494	24p	74LS243	55p	74LS551	55p	4585	75p	LM799	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC250	11p	MJ3047	£8	2N5460	30p			
7494	36p	74495	36p	74LS244	55p	74LS554	55p	4585	75p	LM800	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC251	11p	MJ3048	£8	2N5460	30p			
7495A	35p	74496	35p	74LS245	70p	74LS557	70p	4585	75p	LM801	36p	ZN434E	70p	BC252	11p	MJ3049	£8	2N5460	30p			
7496	40p	74497	40p	74LS246	70p	74LS560	70															

NOTES:

- (1) Including ferrites, RF chokes etc.
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CRICKEWOOD ELECTRONIC																				
CRIMSON COMPONENTS																				
CRIMSON ELECTRIK																				
CRP ELECTRONICS																				
CVS ENTERPRISES																				
DAMON ELECTRONICS																				
D.J. ELECTRONICS																				
EAST CORNWALL																				
ELECTRONIC HOBBIES																				
ELECTRONIC SURPLUS																				
ELECTRONICS WORLD																				
ELECTRONI — KIT																				
ELECTROTECH																				
ELECTROVALUE LTD.																				
ENFIELD ELECTRONICS																				
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GODDARDS COMPONENTS																				
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NOTES:
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 (2) Discrete devices.
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EXP-650	15mm	91mm	61mm	270	54	1 40pin	\$4.14
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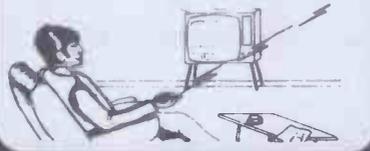
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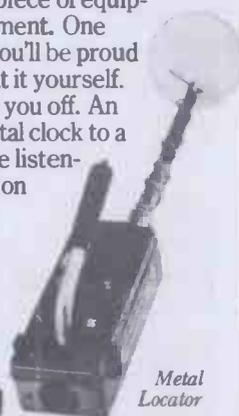
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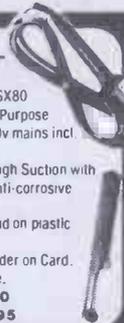
FB4	2	14 x 4"	110	£2.00
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SILICON POWER TRANSISTORS — T03

NPN like 2N3055 — but not full spec
 100 watts 50V min.
 10 for **£1.50** — Very Good Value
 100s of uses — no duds
 Order No. SX90

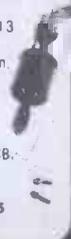
BI-PAK SOLDER-DESOLDER KIT

Kit comprises ORDER NO. SX80
 1 High Quality 40 watt General Purpose Lightweight Soldering Iron 240v mains incl 3/16" (4.7mm) bit.
 1 Quality Desoldering pump. High Suction with automatic ejection. Knurled, anti-corrosive casing and teflon nozzle.
 1.5 metres of 0e-soldering braid on plastic dispenser.
 2 yds (1.83m) Resin Cored Solder on Card.
 1 Heat Shunt tool tweezer Type.
 Total Retail Value over **£12.00**
 OUR SPECIAL KIT PRICE **£8.95**



BI-PAK PCB ETCHANT AND DRILL KIT

Complete PCB Kit comprises
 1 Expo Mini Drill 10,000RPM 12v Dc incl 3 collets & 1 x 1mm Twist bit
 1 Sheet PCB Transfers 210mm x 150mm.
 1 Etch Resist Pen.
 1 1/2 lb pack FERRIC CHLORIDE crystals
 3 sheets copper clad board.
 2 sheets Fibreglass copper clad board.
 Full instructions for making your own PCB boards.
 Retail Value over **£15.00**
 OUR BI-PAK SPECIAL KIT PRICE **£9.75**
 ORDER NO. SX81



PROGRAMMABLE UNIJUNCTION TRANSISTOR "PUT" case T0106 plastic MEU22 Similar to 2N6027/6028 PNP Silicon
 Price: 1-9 10-49 50-99 100+
 Each: 20p 18p 15p 13p Normal Retail Price **£0.35** each

SX33A	6 small (min) (SDST/SPDT Toggle Switches 240v Samp	£1.00
SX35A	6 small (min) Rocker Switches 240v Samp	£1.00
SX32A	12 Assorted Jack & Phono plugs, sockets and adaptors, 2.5m, 3.5m and standard sizes	£1.00
SX71	50 BC108 "Fallouts" Manufacturers out of spec on volts or gain You test.	£1.00
SX72	A mixed bundle of Copper clad Board Fibre glass and paper. Single and double sided. A fantastic bargain	£1.00

5 watt (RMS) Audio Amp

High Quality audio amplifier Module. Ideal for use in record players, tape recorders, stereo amps and cassette players, etc. Full data and back-up diagrams with each module.

Specification
 • Max Power Supply 30v • Power Output 5 watts RMS • Load Impedance 8-16 ohms • Frequency response 50Hz to 25KHz—3db • Sensitivity 70mv for full output • Input Impedance 50k ohms • Size 85 x 64 x 30mm • Total Harmonic distortion less than 5%
 BI-PAK'S give away price

£2.25

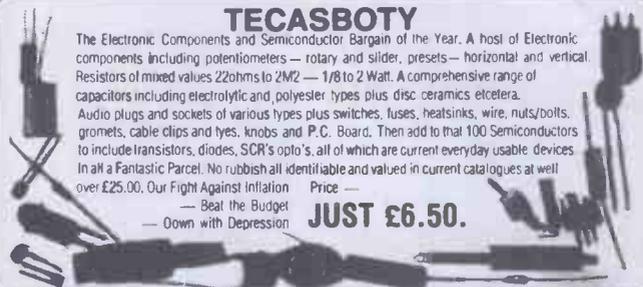
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Price —
JUST £6.50.



SX38 100 Silicon NPN Transistors—all perfect Coded mixed types with data and eqvt sheet. No rejects. Real value. **£3.00**
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2N3055 The best known Power Transistors in the World — 2N3055 NPN 115w.
 Our BI-PAK Special Offer Price:
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B0312 COMPLIMENTARY PNP POWER TRANSISTORS: TO 2N3055.
 Equivalent MJ2955 — B0312 — T03
 SPECIAL PRICE **£0.70** each
 10 off **£6.50**



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SX59	20 Assorted Flip Flops and MSI TTL	£1
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BI-PAK

Send your orders to Dept ET1 10, BI-PAK PO BOX 6 WARE HERTS SHOP AT 3 BALDOCK ST WARE HERTS
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NOTES:

- (1) Including ferrites, RF chokes etc.
- (2) Discrete devices.
- (3) Other than optoelectronic.
- (4) Access and Barclaycard, where marked.
- (5) See company listing.
- (6) In pence unless otherwise noted.
N = NIL (no charge).

	RESISTORS	CAPACITORS	POTENTIOMETERS	TRANSFORMERS	INDUCTORS (1)	DIODES, SCRs TRIACS	TRANSISTORS (2)	LINEAR ICs	DIGITAL ICs	LINEAR MSI/LSI	DIGITAL MSI/LSI	OPTOELECTRONICS	VALVES	RELAYS	SWITCHES	FUSES AND PROTECTION	BATTERIES AND PSUs	ANALOGUE PANEL METERS	TRANSDUCERS (3)	PCB HARDWARE
NAMAL ASSOCIATES																				
PARNDON ELECTRONICS																				
P.A.T.H.																				
PC ELECTRONICS																				
PEATS ELECTRONICS																				
PM COMPONENTS																				
T. POWELL																				
RAPID ELECTRONICS																				
BRIAN J. REED																				
RELAY-A-QUIP																				
RISCOMP LIMITED																				
ROADRUNNER PRODUCTS																				
SAMSONS ELECTRONICS																				
SUMMIT ELECTRONICS																				
SWIFT-SASCO LTD																				
TECHNOMATIC																				
TENNCO EXIM																				
THAMES VALLEY																				
TITAN TRANSFORMERS																				
TK ELECTRONICS																				

PLUGS AND SOCKETS	ENCLOSURES, CASES	HEATSINKS	KNOBBS, MISC. HARDWARE	CABLE AND WIRE	BREADBOARDS	TOOLS	PCBs and/or MATERIALS	CHEMICALS	CUSTOM KITS, MODULES	SURPLUS SUPPLIES	BARGAIN PACKS	BOOKS	CATALOGUE/PRICE LIST	MAIL ORDER MINIMUM (6)	P&P (6)	OVERSEAS ORDERS	CREDIT CARDS (4)	SHOPS	OTHER
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NOTES:
 (1) Including ferrites, RF chokes etc.
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 (3) Other than optoelectronic.
 (4) Access and Barclaycard, where marked.
 (5) See company listing.
 (6) In pence unless otherwise noted.
 N = NIL (no charge).

													£10	£1		(5)			NAMAL ASSOCIATES
													£1	N					PARNDON ELECTRONICS
													N	80					P.A.T.H.
													£10	£1					PC ELECTRONICS
														50					PEATS ELECTRONICS
														N	50				PM COMPONENTS
													£1	50					T. POWELL
													1	(5)					RAPID ELECTRONICS
													(5)	(5)					BRIAN J. REED
													N	(5)					RELAY-A-QUIP
													N	50		(5)			RISCOMP LIMITED
													(5)	(5)		(5)			ROADRUNNER PRODUCTS
													£2						SAMSONS ELECTRONICS
													N	40					SUMMIT ELECTRONICS
													25	£2					SWIFT-SASCO LTD
													N	40					TECHNOMATIC
													£10	£1					TENNCÓ EXIM
													N	45					THAMES VALLEY
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In order to maintain our standard of service and house our ever growing range of stock, we've moved to larger premises. You can still use our old telephone number for a limited period, but please make a note of our new one and our address.

To celebrate the move we have reduced our prices still further. We know this will dispense our competitors, but we'd rather please our customers.
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Be happy — move with Midwich. And remember, we always try to give you the best deal and the best service. If we fail just let us know — we will always try to make amends.

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*2716 450ns (5V)	2.10	*2532 450ns	3.60	*4816/4516 100ns	3.25
*2716 350ns (5V)	3.50	*4116 200ns	0.70	*5516 200ns	9.38
*2716 450ns (3 rail)	5.95	*4116 150ns	1.10	*6116P3 150ns	4.30
*2732 450ns	3.90	*4118 150ns	3.38	*6116LP3 150ns	5.75

BBC MICRO UPGRADE KITS ** NEW LOWER PRICES **

BBC1 4516/4816 X 8 100ns	25.50	BBC21 Printer cable complete	13.00
BBC2 Printer/User I/O kit (IC69.70 + PL9,10)	8.00	BBC22 Connector for user port with	2.00
BBC4 Analogue input kit (IC73.77 + SK6)	6.70	BBC44 "36" cable	
BBC5 Serial I/O and RGB kit (IC74.75 + SK3.4)	11.45	BBC55 Analogue input plug with cover	2.25
BBC6 Expansion bus and tube kit (IC71, 72, 76 + PL11, 12)	8.25	BBC66 Connector for bus port with cable	3.50

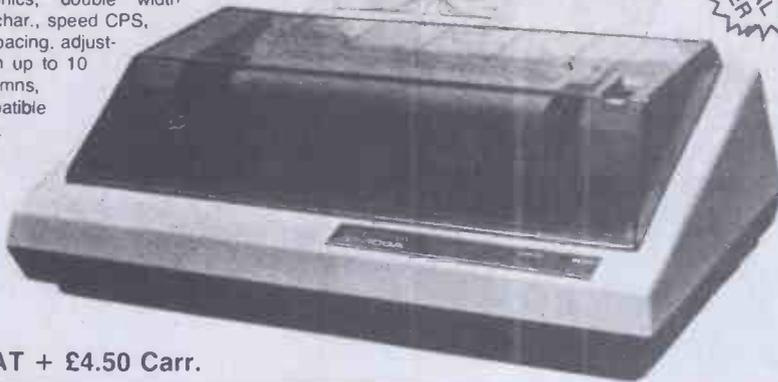
MOST KITS ARE NOW EX-STOCK!

*** We've done it again! Massive price reductions on LPS and CMOS ****

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*280 FAMILY		*WD1391 KIT 45.50	45.50	CRYSTALS		09	0.11
*280CPU	3.15	*WD1393 KIT 45.50	45.50	1MHz	2.90	10	0.11
*280CPU	3.50	*WD1395 KIT 45.50	45.50	1.008MHz	2.90	12	0.11
*280CTC	2.75	*WD1397 KIT 45.50	45.50	1.8432MHz	2.20	13	0.15
*280ACT	2.95	(KITS INCLUDE		3.6864MHz	2.95	14	0.33
*280DART	5.70	FD179X + WD2143		4MHz	1.45	15	0.12
*280ADMA	11.95	+ WD1691)		6MHz	1.75	20	0.12
*280PIO	2.75			8MHz	1.70	21	0.12
*280PIO	2.95					26	0.12
*280ASIO-0	11.99					27	0.12
*280ASIO-1	11.99					28	0.12
*280ASIO-2	11.99					30	0.12
*MK3886	11.00					32	0.12
*MK3886-4	14.47					37	0.12
						38	0.12
						40	0.12
						42	0.27
						47	0.34
						51	0.14
						54	0.14
						75	0.19
						77	0.16
						9	0.14
						13	0.15
						16	0.15
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						28	0.25
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						40	0.35
						41	0.35
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						47	0.34
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SEIKOSHA GP-100A GRAPHIC PRINTER

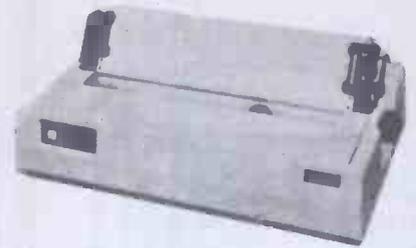
Features: Graphics, double width char., standard char., speed CPS, selectable line spacing, adjustable paper width up to 10 inches, 80 columns, centronics compatible parallel interface. 90 day warranty.



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Features: As above but with tractor or friction paper feed.
PRICE £325 + VAT + £4.50 Carr.

MX100-3

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PRICE £429 + VAT + £4.50 Carr.

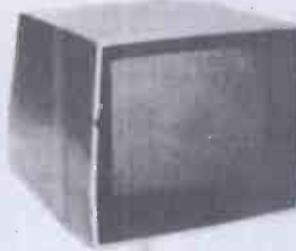
MX82

Features: 80 CPS, plotter print, bit image printing, bi-directional printing with logic seeking.
PRICE £329 + VAT + £4.50 Carr.

MX82 F/T

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GREEN MONITORS



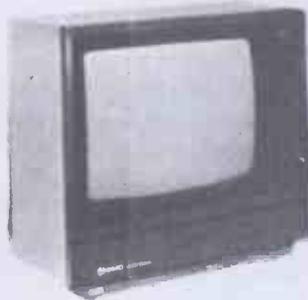
SANYO PROFESSIONAL MONITOR

SM12H — Green/black 12 inches screen, 18 MHz bandwidth, removable antiglare filter, ideal for high res graphics, attractive beige case — illustrated above.
1 year warranty (SANYO)
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12 inch green/black screen, 80 x 24 char. format, composit video input. 15 MHz bandwidth.
1 year warranty (BMC)
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BM1401 RGB COLOUR

Medium resolution RGB colour monitor, 15 MHz.
400 dots (at the centre)
40 x 25 characters, 5 x 7 dot format.
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TOSHIBA DOUBLE SIDED/DOUBLE DENSITY 5 1/4" DISK DRIVES FOR THE PRICE OF A SINGLE SIDED/SINGLE DENSITY.



Industry standard interface, compatible with VIDEO GENIE, ATOM, TRS80, BBC COMPUTER, SUPER BRAIN, NASCOM, and lots of others. 3.5 MEGABITS. Unformatted storage capacity, track density 48 TPI. Daisy chain up to 4 drives.

90 day warranty.

DISK DRIVE ND-02D

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£199 + VAT + £4.50 Carr.
DUAL BOXED WITH POWER SUPPLY
£369 + VAT + £4.50 Carr.
2 DRIVE CABLE
£15 + VAT + £1 Carr.

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1 - 9 **£2.75 + VAT + 50p Carr.**
10-49 **£2.50 + VAT + £1 Carr.**

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Dual time, 12 or 24 hour option, countdown timer with memory function, chronograph with lap time, optional hourly time signal, daily alarm, 3 optional melodies or ordinary bleeper. Calendar display, lithium battery. Stainless steel br.

THE BEST SELLING WATCH

AX-210 or AX-250 **£21 + VAT + 50p Carr.**

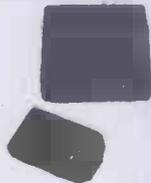
WATER RESISTANT ALARM/CHRONO

W20 Black resin case **£10 + VAT + 50p Carr.**
W30 Metal case **£16 + VAT + 50p Carr.**

SILENT ALARM/POCKET PAGER

This is an individually coded 4 WATTS Radio transmitter and pocket pager receiver. The alarm system has connections for door contacts and vibration sensors. 2 vibration sensors are included. It has a range of 2 miles. Ideal for protection of vehicle or property. Power requirements for transmitter is 12V dc. Not licensible in UK.

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S101	AA	500 mA	£0.75
C1200	C	1200 mA	£1.90
D1200	D	1200 mA	£2.05
RX22	PP3	110 mA	£3.50
BC2204	Universal Charger for AA, C, D & PP3		£9.50

Please add VAT to all above prices plus 75p Carr per order

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COMPLETE WITH 32K RAM

Extended micro soft, colour Basic parallel printer Interface. High resolution colour graphics (256 x 192) UHF or colour monitors, cassette recorder interface and mains adapter included.

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Please add 15% VAT to all prices. All orders which accompany a cheque or cash are carriage free. Please add carriage for all other orders as specified on each item.

WE ACCEPT BARCLAYCARD AND ACCESS

NOTES:

- (1) Including ferrites, RF chokes etc.
- (2) Discrete devices.
- (3) Other than optoelectronic.
- (4) Access and Barclaycard, where marked.
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	RESISTORS	CAPACITORS	POTENTIOMETERS	TRANSFORMERS	INDUCTORS	DIODES, SCRs TRIACS	TRANSISTORS (2)	LINEAR ICs	DIGITAL ICs	LINEAR MSI/LSI	DIGITAL MSI/LSI	OPTOELECTRONICS	VALVES	RELAYS	SWITCHES	FUSES AND PROTECTION	BATTERIES AND PSUs	ANALOGUE PANEL METERS	TRANSDUCERS (3)	PCB HARDWARE	
A.C. TOWNLEY																					
WATFORD ELECTRONICS																					
WILMSLOW AUDIO																					

DIRECTORY OF ELECTRONIC

Listing over 80 companies supplying electronic components

If the name of your favourite component supplier does not appear in these pages, please write and tell us about him.

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Aitken Bros. can also supply schools, colleges and other companies, and can quote special prices for larger quantities. They also sell a good range of test equipment: analogue and digital multimeters, frequency meters, function generators, pulse generators, signal generators and oscilloscopes. Their shop is in Newcastle upon Tyne, at the above address. Post and packaging charges are 75p for orders under £10.

ACE Mailtronix Ltd.

3A, Commercial Street, Batley, West Yorks WF17 5HJ. Tel: 0924 441129. ACE mention that they specialise in resistors, transformers, transistors, linear and digital ICs, optoelectronic devices and tools. "In addition, we specialise in 'hard to get' items. Enquiries for quotation should include an SAE".
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Akhter Instruments Ltd.,

Unit 19, Arlinghyde Industrial Estate, South Road, Harlow Essex. Tel. 0279 412639.
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Altek Microcomponents Ltd.,

22, Market Place, Wokingham, Berks RG11 1AP. Tel. 0734 791579.
Distributors for Mitsubishi and Sharp LSI products. Post and packaging is charged pro-rata.
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26, Highfields, Earley, Reading, Berks. Tel. 0734 864745.
P&P 50p minimum.

Ambit International,

200, North Service Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4SG. Tel. 0277 230909.
Specialists in inductors, ferrites etc, but, "it's all a bargain at Ambit". See for yourself at their Brentwood headquarters or at the franchised shop in Acton.

Aries Electronics Ltd,

159 Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 4DT. Tel. 0628 37431.
"Specialists in optoelectronic devices and power diodes".

AWP Electronics Ltd.,

Dalma House, Kings Mill Lane, South Nutfield, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5ND. Tel. 073 782 3421.
AWP are specialists in coaxial and multiway plugs and sockets, ribbon and coaxial cables, crimp tools and custom made patch panels and cable assemblies.
"Whilst the majority of our business is applicable to industry, we find that the growth of electronics generally has created a need for assisting any customer, however large or small."

AWP's head office is in Surrey and they have further premises at Alva, in Scotland.

Bamber Electronics,

5, Station Road, Littleport, Cambs CB6 1QE. Tel. 0353 860185.
Specialists in surplus equipment and components, particularly for radio telephones and test equipment.

Barrie Electronics,

3, The Minorities, London EC3. Tel. 01 488 3316.
Specialists in transformers; p&p charges are at cost.

Benning Cross Electronics,

67, Vicarage Road, Watford, Herts. Tel. 0923 36234.
"All brand new, full-spec components, manufacturer guaranteed". Other items stocked include test equipment, hand-held CB gear, headphones, aeriels and audio tapes.

BICC-VERO Electronics Ltd.,

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Vero are well known for their breadboarding systems, eg Verobloc and Veroboard, and their range of enclosures and cases.
Vero products are available world-wide from retail stockists and mail-order companies.

BI-PAK,

3, Baldock Street, Ware, Herts. Tel. 0920 3182.

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													£5 (5)						A.C. TOWNLEY
													N	50					WATFORD ELECTRONICS
													N	(5)	(5)				WILMSLOW AUDIO

NOTES:
 (1) Including ferrites, RF chokes etc.
 (2) Discrete devices.
 (3) Other than optoelectronic.
 (4) Access and Barclaycard, where marked.
 (5) See company listing.
 (6) In pence unless otherwise noted.
 N = NIL (no charge).

COMPONENT AND HARDWARE SUPPLIERS

and hardware to the electronic enthusiast.

RETAILERS! If your company is not included, please write and tell us about yourself, in time for the next edition of this Directory.

"BI-PAK have now been serving the public for 18 years, and the range of products over the years have ever increased — and continues to do so". From their shop in Ware, BI-PAK also supply CB accessories, radio aerials, leads, styli and cartridges, cassettes and hifi accessories, headphones and multimeters. They are a specialist supplier of many components (see main listings).

B.K. Electronics,
 Electronic Components and Equipments,
 37 Whitehouse Meadows, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 5TY. Tel. 0702 527272.

"B.K. Electronics specialise in:

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2. Test equipment, ie oscilloscopes, signal generators, pulse generators, frequency meters, digital and analog multimeters, digital thermometers etc." Turntables and cassette decks, in chassis form, are also stocked at their shop in Southend, Essex. Post and packaging charges for mail order transactions range from 50p to £3.

Boss Industrial Mouldings Ltd.,
 (David George Sales Ltd.), James Carter Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk. Tel. 0638 716101.

"We service the electronics industry mainly through a network of distributors, but we are also happy to accommodate the hobbyist".

B.I.M also carry a very large range of filament and neon indicators.

S & R Brewster,
 86-88 Union Street, Plymouth, Devon. Tel. 0752 665011.

"We are soldering specialists, manufacturing our own range, and we can offer advice on any soldering problems. We are also the main specialist retailer of electronic components in the locality".

All components in the RS catalogue can be despatched by S & R Brewster within 48 hours of ordering; there is a 15% handling charge on this service. Normal P&P is charged at cost.

Bytech Ltd,
 57, Suttons Industrial Park, Reading, Berks. Tel 0734 61031.

Bytech are franchised distributors of Fairchild components, Intel systems, single-board computers and components, Hitachi colour monitors and DEC, QUME and Centronics printers.

Chiltmead Ltd.,
 Norwood Road, Reading, Berks. Tel. 0734 669656.

Specialists in surplus electronic equipment and components.

Chordgate Ltd.,
 75, Farringdon Road, Swindon, Wilts. Tel. 0793 33877.

Their retail shops in Swindon and Deptford (London) carry a changing stock of new and surplus material. Mail order charges are dependent on the weight of the package, and Chordgate welcome official orders from schools, colleges etc.

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Collective Components,
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Cricklewood Electronics,
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4060	55p
4063	98p
4066	30p
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74LS38	14p
74LS42	30p
74LS47	36p
74LS73	16p
74LS74	24p
74LS90	22p
74LS93	27p
74LS107	40p
74LS122	26p
74LS123	42p
74LS125	24p
74LS132	40p
74LS138	35p
74LS151	40p
74LS155	32p
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37mm		
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180	120	90	21039	£4.89
155	85	39	21040	£3.31
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155	85	80	21042	£4.30
125	65	30	21047	£2.22
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	1a011	9+9	1.66	
	1a012	12+12	1.25	
	1a013	15+15	1.00	
	1a014	18+18	0.83	
	1a015	22+22	0.68	
	1a016	25+25	0.60	
1a017	30+30	0.50		
50 VA 80 x 35mm 0.9 Kg Regulation 13%	2a010	6+6	4.16	£5.70 + p/p £1.30 + VAT £1.05 TOTAL £8.05
	2a011	9+9	2.77	
	2a012	12+12	2.08	
	2a013	15+15	1.66	
	2a014	18+18	1.38	
	2a015	22+22	1.13	
	2a016	25+25	1.00	
2a017	30+30	0.83		
2a028	110	0.45		
2a029	220	0.22		
2a030	240	0.20		
80 VA 90 x 30mm 1 Kg Regulation 12%	3a010	6+6	6.64	£6.08 + p/p £1.67 + VAT £1.16 TOTAL £8.91
	3a011	9+9	4.44	
	3a012	12+12	3.33	
	3a013	15+15	2.66	
	3a014	18+18	2.22	
	3a015	22+22	1.81	
	3a016	25+25	1.60	
3a017	30+30	1.33		
3a028	110	0.72		
3a029	220	0.36		
3a030	240	0.33		
120 VA 90 x 40mm 1.2 Kg Regulation 11%	4a010	6+6	10.00	£6.90 + p/p £1.57 + VAT £1.29 TOTAL £9.86
	4a011	9+9	6.66	
	4a012	12+12	5.00	
	4a013	15+15	4.00	
	4a014	18+18	3.33	
	4a015	22+22	2.72	
	4a016	25+25	2.40	
4a017	30+30	2.00		
4a018	35+35	1.71		
4a028	110	1.09		
4a029	220	0.54		
4a030	240	0.50		
160 VA 10 x 40mm 1.8 Kg Regulation 8%	5a011	9+9	8.89	£7.91 + p/p £1.67 + VAT £1.64 TOTAL £11.02
	5a012	12+12	6.66	
	5a013	15+15	5.33	
	5a014	18+18	4.44	
	5a015	22+22	3.63	
	5a016	25+25	3.20	
	5a017	30+30	2.66	
5a018	35+35	2.28		
5a028	40+40	2.00		
5a029	110	1.45		
5a029	220	0.72		
5a030	240	0.66		

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	6a013	15+15	7.50	
	6a014	18+18	6.25	
	6a015	22+22	5.11	
	6a016	25+25	4.50	
	6a017	30+30	3.75	
	6a018	35+35	3.21	
6a026	40+40	2.81		
6a025	45+45	2.50		
6a033	50+50	2.25		
6a028	110	2.04		
6a029	220	1.02		
6a030	240	0.93		
300 VA 110 x 50mm 2.6 Kg Regulation 6%	7a013	15+15	10.00	£10.17 + p/p £2.00 + VAT £1.83 TOTAL £14.00
	7a014	18+18	8.33	
	7a015	22+22	6.82	
	7a016	25+25	6.00	
	7a017	30+30	5.00	
	7a018	35+35	4.29	
	7a026	40+40	3.75	
7a025	45+45	3.33		
7a033	50+50	3.00		
7a028	110	2.72		
7a029	220	1.36		
7a030	240	1.25		
500 VA 140 x 60mm 4 Kg Regulation 4%	8a016	25+25	10.00	£13.53 + p/p £2.35 + VAT £2.38 TOTAL £18.76
	8a017	30+30	8.33	
	8a018	35+35	7.14	
	8a026	40+40	6.25	
	8a025	45+45	5.55	
	8a033	50+50	5.00	
	8a042	55+55	4.54	
8a028	110	4.54		
8a029	220	2.27		
8a030	240	2.08		
625 VA 140 x 75mm 5 Kg Regulation 4%	9a017	30+30	10.41	£16.13 + p/p £2.50 + VAT £2.79 TOTAL £21.42
	9a018	35+35	8.92	
	9a026	40+40	7.81	
	9a025	45+45	6.94	
	9a033	50+50	6.25	
	9a042	55+55	5.68	
	9a028	110	5.68	
9a029	220	2.84		
9a030	240	2.60		

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A handy little device for CBers and radio enthusiasts alike.

WHEN USING a transmitter in a noisy environment (such as a moving vehicle or a room in which a television set is operating, for example) the intelligibility of the transmitted signal can be severely impaired by the high background noise level. Even if the words can be heard, the background noise is rather tedious for anyone trying to copy the transmission!

This problem can become more severe when using a speech processor, a transmitter having built-in speech processing or automatic modulation level control. During the brief pauses that occur during normal speech, the audio sensitivity can rise quite significantly as the audio processing circuits try to modulate the transmitter with the signal produced by the background noise!

There are several ways of combatting this problem, such as the use of a noise cancelling microphone which phases out signals that emanate some distance from the microphone, but not those which originate quite close to the microphone. There is also an electronic method of giving an apparent reduction in the transmitted ambient noise level, and this is achieved using a form of Squelch or Noise Gate circuit. A circuit of this type normally attenuates the

How it Works

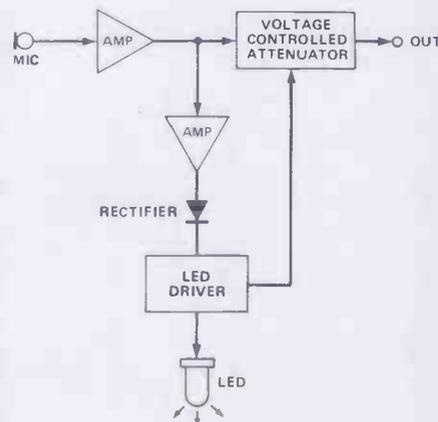
The Block Diagram of the Squelch Unit is very similar to that of the Stereo Noise Gate and, in fact, it operates in a similar manner, too. The main signal path contains an amplifier, a voltage controlled attenuator and a fixed attenuator. The gain of the amplifier is balanced by losses through the attenuator so that the unit has unity gain overall. Pre-amplification is necessary to provide a high signal level to the VCA input, so that unwanted switching pulses generated by the circuit are small in comparison to the speech signal. The attenuator then restores the signal to its original level.

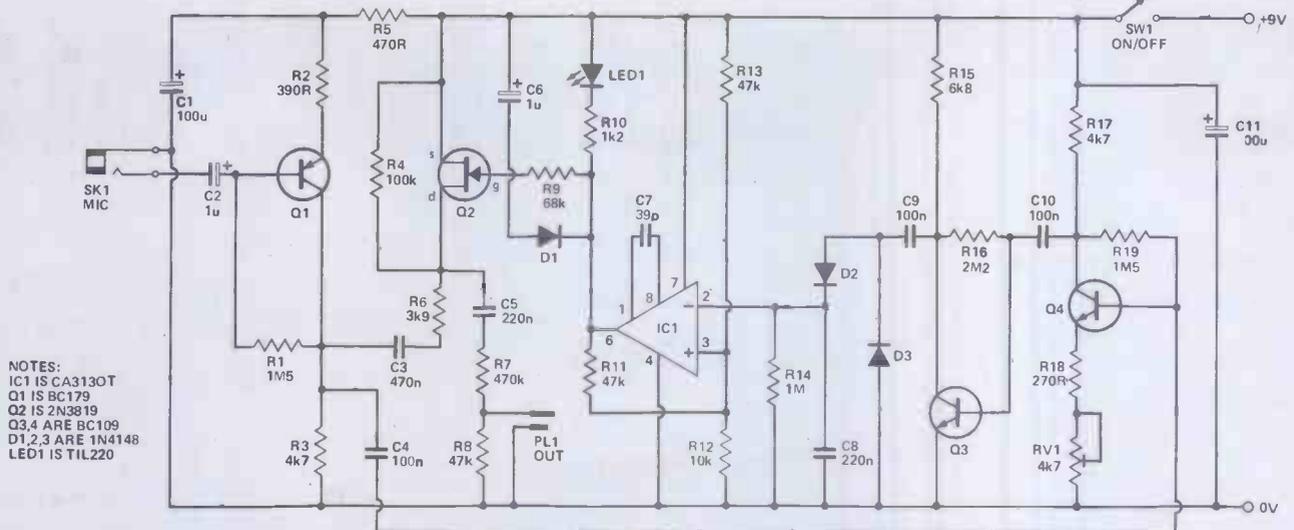
Some of the pre-amplifier output is amplified further, then rectified and smoothed to give a DC signal which is proportional to the average input level. This drives a trigger circuit whose output switches from a high to a low when the DC signal is more than about 2V5

positive. The output from the trigger controls the VCA and an indicator LED; a low output turns on the LED and switches the VCA to its zero attenuation state. When the trigger output is high, the LED is switched off and the VCA gives about 20 dB or so attenuation of the audio input.

The unit is adjusted so that with only noise present, the VCA is in the high attenuation condition, but when there is a voice signal, the trigger switches the VCA to zero attenuation. The LED is ON when the unit is passing a signal.

The smoothing circuit is designed to give a fast attack time, switching rapidly as soon as it detects a speech signal, but a slow decay so that the ends of words are not chopped off by too rapid switching back to the high attenuation state.





NOTES:
 IC1 IS CA3130T
 Q1 IS BC179
 Q2 IS 2N3819
 Q3,4 ARE BC109
 D1,2,3 ARE 1N4148
 LED1 IS TIL220

Figure 1. The circuit for the CB Squelch Unit.

processed signal, say by about 20 dB, but gives no attenuation when the operator is speaking into the microphone and there is somewhat higher input level.

This greatly reduces the background noise level during pauses in the speech signal, which is when the noise is most obtrusive. There is no reduction when the speech signal is present, but this signal tends to largely mask the noise and make it comparatively unimportant. The result is an apparent reduction in the noise level, with the wanted signal tending to stand out more clearly.

This Squelch Unit is designed for use with a high impedance dynamic microphone, but its sensitivity is high enough to permit its use with most low impedance dynamic types as well. The circuit is battery powered and simply connects between the microphone and the transceiver. Of course, the unit could

possibly be used to advantage with public address or disco equipment, though its companion unit, the Stereo Noise Gate, which is specifically designed for wide-band audio rather than narrow-band communications use, will give much better results. It is based on special ICs, which have excellent noise and distortion figures, operated as voltage controlled *amplifiers*, rather than as attenuators.

The Circuit

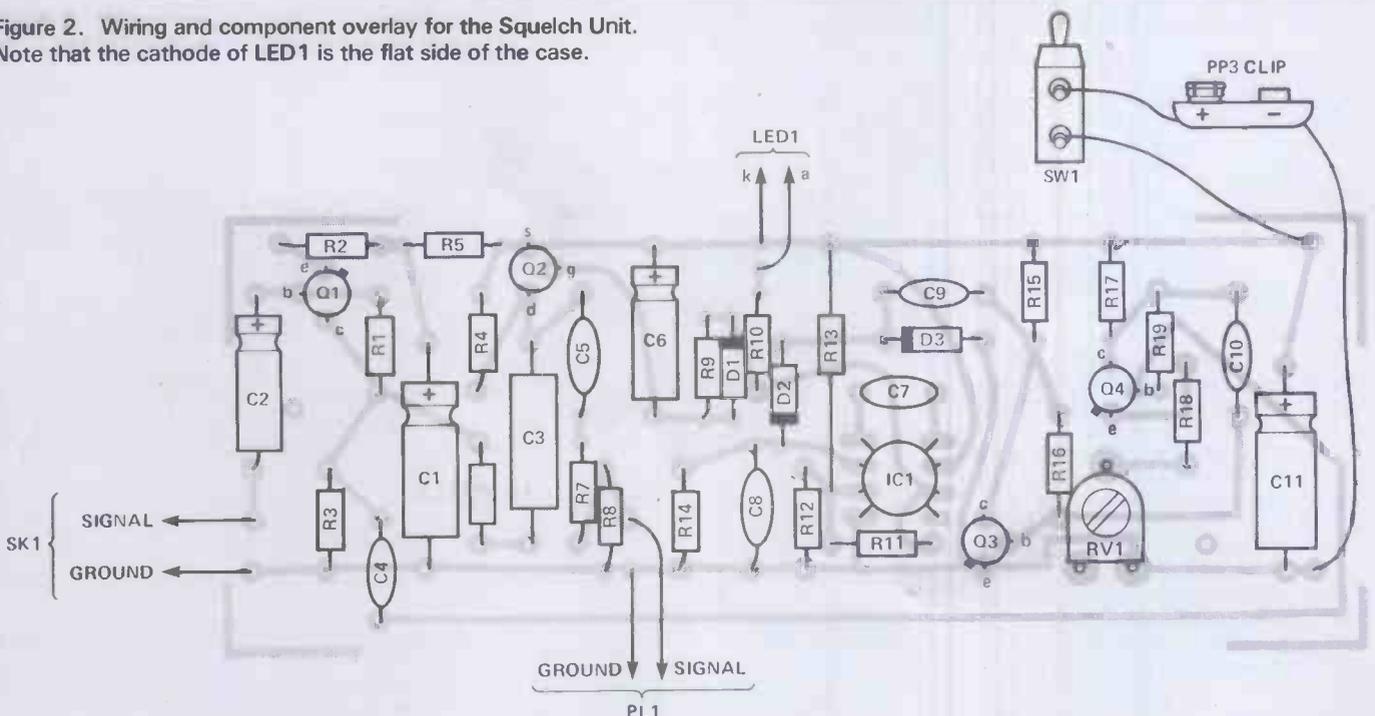
The full circuit diagram of the Squelch Unit is shown in Figure 1. The input preamplifier uses Q1 in the common emitter mode, with R2 to provide negative feedback; this boosts the input impedance of the unit to a suitably high level to match a high impedance dynamic microphone.

A simple JFET VCA is used, formed

by R6 and the drain-to-source resistance of Q2. With the gate of Q2 at or near the positive supply potential, Q2 is biased hard on and has a drain-to-source resistance of only a few hundred ohms; this gives a loss of about 20 dB or so through the VCA. When Q2 is cut off, it exhibits a drain-to-source resistance of about a thousand megohms (if its gate is taken to almost the negative supply potential) and losses through the VCA are then negligible. R7 and R8 form the output attenuator.

Some of the output from Q1 is coupled by C4 to another common emitter stage based on Q4, and from here the signal is coupled by C10 to a further common emitter amplifier, this time using Q3. A controlled amount of negative feedback is applied to Q4 by RV1 so that the gain of this stage can be varied from a little less than unity, at

Figure 2. Wiring and component overlay for the Squelch Unit. Note that the cathode of LED1 is the flat side of the case.



Into Radio: Project

maximum value, to around 24 dB (16) at minimum resistance. By adjusting RV1 it is possible to set the sensitivity of the unit at the correct level.

The output of Q3 is fed to the inverting input of op-amp IC1 via a rectifier and smoothing circuit consisting of D2, D3, R14 and C8. The positive output of this network will be sufficient to activate IC1 when there is a speech signal present, but not when there is only the weaker, background noise signal.

The op-amp, IC1, is used here as a variety of Schmitt Trigger. When there is no speech signal, the output is in a high state so that indicator LED1 is switched off. The JFET Q2 is biased on, providing a low impedance path to OV through Q2 and the battery, thus heavily attenuating the input (noise) signal. However, when the inverting input goes more than about 2V5 positive, as it will when there is a speech input, the output of IC1 goes low; LED1 turns on and Q2 is biased off, removing the low impedance path to OV and producing minimum attenuation of the signal.

The attack time—the time taken by the VCA to switch from low to high impedance—is very rapid, whereas the decay time is slowed down by R9 and C6; this ensures that there is minimal noise generated by the VCA as it returns to the high attenuation (low impedance) state. It can sometimes happen that, due to the nature of the input signal, the VCA will switch rapidly between states, several times in succession, the slow decay time set by R9 and C6 also prevents this undesirable effect. Diode D1 ensures that R9 and C6 do not effect the rapid attack time.

Construction

All the components, including the battery, will readily fit into an aluminium box measuring about 133 x 70 x 38mm. SK1, D4, and SW1 are mounted on the front panel; SK1 is a four-way DIN type on the prototype, however, this should obviously be varied to suit the plug fitted to the particular microphone used. An exit hole for the output lead is drilled in the rear of the case and this lead is fitted with a plug of the same type as fitted to the microphone. Many communications microphones have a press-to-talk switch and consequently use a 4 way lead and plug. If the unit is used with a microphone of this type, the appropriate two pins of SK1 simply connect direct to the corresponding two leads of the output cable.

The printed circuit board is detailed in Figure 2. Construction is mostly straight forward; IC1 is a CMOS device, though, and it is thus necessary to observe the normal handling precautions. Use pcb pins at points on the board which will later be connected to off-board components.

Mount the finished board on the base panel of the case using 6BA fixings, including spacers to prevent connections on the underside of the board short circuiting through the case. Leave sufficient space for the PP3 battery at one side of the component board. The remaining wiring is then completed, as shown in Figure 2.



Parts List

RESISTORS

(All ¼ watt 5% carbon)

R1, 19	1M5
R2	390R
R3, 17	4k7
R4	100k
R5	470R
R6	3k9
R7	470k
R8, 11, 13	47k
R9	68k
R10	1k2
R12	10k
R14	1M
R15	6k8
R16	2M2
R18	270R

POTENTIOMETERS

RV1	4k7 miniature horizontal preset
-----	------------------------------------

CAPACITORS

C1, 11	100u 10V axial electrolytic
C2, 6	1u 63V axial electrolytic
C3	470n C280 polyester
C4, 9, 10	100n C280 polyester

C5, 8	220n C280 polyester
C7	39p ceramic disc

SEMICONDUCTORS

IC1	CA3130T MOSFET op-amp
Q1	BC179 silicon PNP transistor
Q2	2N3819 silicon N-channel FET
Q3, 4	BC109 silicon NPN transistor
D1, 2, 3	1N4148 signal diode
LED1	TIL220 5mm red light emitting diode

MISCELLANEOUS

SW1	SPST miniature toggle switch
SK1	4-pin DIN socket (see text)
Aluminium case; PP3 battery clip; PCB LED fixing washer; output lead; output plug (as required); wire, solder etc.	

BUYLINES 30

Setting Up

It is only necessary to set RV1 to the correct level before the finished unit is ready for use. This is adjusted by trial and error so that the ambient noise level does

not trigger the VCA but the speech signal does so reliably. Indicator LED1 lights up when the unit is activated and this greatly simplifies setting up. Ten-Four!

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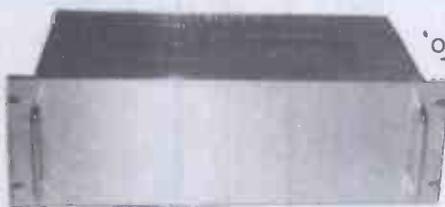
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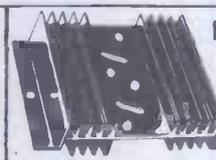


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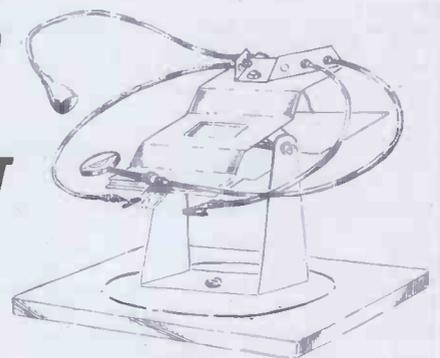
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CM100 CIRCUIT MAKER REVIEW

Can you resist this new photo-etching kit?

IT EVOKED the atmosphere of a Christmas Day many years ago, the day on which I was given my first chemistry set. Today, the postman dumped this enormous package on the doormat and I was soon picking over the exciting assortment of items inside. In some ways the CM100 Circuit Maker is a chemistry set, for there is a lot of chemistry in the process of making a PCB by photo-etching techniques. But instead of the slightly squashed cardboard box full of logwood chips (do they still have those in modern chemistry sets?) and the little packet containing six strips of rather blotchy litmus paper, I now had in my hands a bottle of photo-resist etchant crystals and a packet of autopositive film. Then there were all the fascinating variety of bits and pieces (what's that for? And what on Earth is *that* for?) one hopes to find in a really good kit. And it turned out that this kit contains everything that you need for making your own photo-etched PCBs, even including a couple of high-speed twist drill bits for making the holes in the board after it is etched.

Why PCBs?

Before going on to discuss the process in detail and the merits or otherwise of this kit, let us look into the question of why we use PCBs at all. At some time between the arrival of my chemistry set and the arrival of the CM100 kit there was the arrival of the PCB, an invention that was hailed as a major break-through in electronics construction techniques. Until then all electronic circuits had to be laboriously hand-wired. This meant long assembly time, high labour costs and a high rate of defective circuits due to wiring mistakes, bad joints and all the other bugs which attend hand-wiring. The great advance of the PCB was that it was now possible to virtually print them by the tens of thousands; all exactly alike and free from defect. All that had to be done was to drop the components into the holes and solder them in place. The new technique meant lower labour costs, more rapid production and fewer faults. It lent itself to automation of the assembly of electronic circuits and has been a prominent factor in the lowering of their price, coupled with the improvement in specification and performance over the past few decades.

The PCB owes its success to the demands and rewards of mass production. It seems strange, therefore, that it has found favour with the lone hobbyist who rarely builds more than one device of any given design. There are several reasons for this:

1) It gives the amateur's product a professional appearance. But we don't expect a home-cooked apple pie to look or taste like a factory-made one, and would be rather disappointed if it



did! So is this a valid reason?

- 2) It makes it easier for firms to mass-produce PCBs of popular designs published in magazines such as HE, and sell them to amateurs who are too busy (or lazy?) to make their own. Without decrying the excellent service these firms render to their thousands of customers, my personal view is that using ready-made PCBs almost reduces electronics construction to the level of painting by numbers.
- 3) Editors of magazines prefer them (I'll have to be very careful what I say here!). Once a master overlay has been drawn, and a prototype built using that master then, if the prototype works, all other models built using that master will work. At least, all the connections will go to the right places and odd effects dependent upon component layout (eg, inter-lead capacitance) will be the same for all. It is notoriously difficult to ensure that a circuit diagram or strip-board layout drawing is entirely free from errors, but a verified master overlay can be reprinted in a magazine without error of any kind. This is a valid reason for favouring PCBs, but is it sufficient to account for their wide popularity?
- 4) It's fun. For me, it is reason number four which counts. I'll leave you to make your own choice, or to think up some other reasons of your own!

Making PCBs

Having found a PCB design in a magazine, or having designed one of your own, how can you get it on to the copper-clad board, ready for etching? Except for the very simplest of circuits, the hand-drawn design using a special resist pen or nail-varnish is almost out of

the question. Most circuits rely on at least one IC and it becomes very difficult to lay out the terminal pads with sufficient accuracy. The use of rub-down etch-resist transfers does a lot to improve appearance, gives accurate registration for ICs and edge-connector patterns, and makes it possible to cram lots of narrow tracks into a relatively small space. In an hour or so you can copy a published design on to your copper-clad board and have it ready for etching. This is the method I have used for several years with very satisfactory results. There really is a sense of achievement when the board is done and this is even more the case when working out one's own designs. The preliminary laying out of the main components, followed by the art-work with the transfers are something a little different from the usual run of electronics construction techniques. They are a refreshing change, though there is always the worry of making a mistake which can not easily be corrected once the board is etched. Unfortunately, thorough checking before etching does not necessarily reveal all the errors!

Copying by photographic means is a little more complicated and requires more equipment. It costs more to set yourself up with the equipment, but remember that this kit includes expendable materials such as a plentiful supply of double-sided copper-clad fibre-glass boards and the chemicals for etching, which you would have to buy for any method of PCB production. The special equipment costs relatively little.

It takes longer to produce a board by photo-etching than by other means, though if you also have photography as a hobby (developing your own film and making your own prints, I mean, not

simply snapping away and sending the film to Kodak!), you will find that the processing of the film and the resist-coated board are already familiar. A reasonable degree of judgement is required, but the process is not over-dependent on this. It is certainly an interesting procedure and gives yet another dimension to that fabulous hobby, electronics.

There is the advantage that once the master film is developed, you can produce dozens or hundreds of identical etched boards. You will probably not find this feature of benefit, unless you are intending to enter the PCB business, but a friend might appreciate a copy of one of your boards, on occasion.

One advantage of the photo-resist method is that the master drawing can be made on plain white paper. You can draw with pen and black ink, and use rub-down transfers for the more complex items. It is much easier to do this than to work directly on a copper surface as with the ordinary rub-down method. For instance, there is no need to worry about keeping greasy fingers away from the copper. If you make a mistake, you can easily correct it by scraping away the transfers or whitening out the error with Tipp-Ex or Liquid Paper. If a mistake is discovered *after* a board has been etched you do not have to start all over again, as with the rub-down-on-copper method. You simply modify the original master drawing (no need to re-draw the whole thing unless you have made a really ghastly error) and then quickly make a new photo-positive copy of this and etch a new board. The same applies if you subsequently improve the design. The original master drawing can be revisited to provide the master drawing for the improved version.

The Kit

The discussion above is intended to help you to decide whether or not you wish to delve further into the subject of photo-resist etching. If you have already decided that it is not for you, then please read no further. If, as is likely, you are keen to find out more, or are still undecided, read on. We will look at the CM100 kit in particular, to see how well it caters for the process and, in doing so, describe the main steps.

The kit is packed in a strong cardboard carton, well able to stand up to the ravages of postal transport and suitable for storing all the items of the kit before and after use. Inside, there are a number of stout cardboard trays to hold the various items, to make sure that they all stay in place and remain undamaged during transit. Some items are packed in plastic envelopes and the processing solutions are in five plastic screw-topped bottles. Each has an inner plastic plug to keep the bottle securely sealed during transit. The solutions are all concentrates, so the kit contains enough for making plenty of boards. The photoresist developer is a solution of sodium hydroxide (caustic soda) but, for safety, this is supplied in its bottle as a quantity of sodium hydroxide flakes. You are required to prepare the solution by adding water (more about this later).



The sleeve around the carton carries a full list of contents. One section of it is printed as a work-chart suitable for mounting on your workshop wall. It summarises every stage of operations, including what to do with everything at the end of the session.

Making PCBs by this method is done in four main stages. The first of these is drawing the master. You can do this on paper, using pen and black ink, rub-down transfers or any other method which produces a sharp black-and-white result. You could also make the drawing on transparent film. Alternatively you can, as I did for this review, cut a PCB design from a magazine. At this point the kit takes over.

Making the Film

This consists of making a copy of the master drawing on positive film. The copy is the same size as the master, and is a positive copy, not a negative. In other words, the tracks and pads (black on the master) come out black on the film. The kit includes a supply of auto-positive film and a special frame for holding the film and master in contact. You do not need a dark-room. You can work in an ordinary kitchen with curtains drawn during the day, or with artificial light coming through an open doorway from an adjacent room at night. The film is exposed by placing it face-down on the master (reflex printing) and exposing it to the light from a photoflood lamp (included in the kit, but you need to supply the lamp-holder, flex and plug). Full instructions are given in the manual supplied with the kit, which includes several trouble-shooting charts. It tells you how to find the correct exposure by exposing a test-strip and special test-strips are included in the packet of film (you see? They have thought of everything! — well almost). Having found the best exposure time, you can then expose a piece of film cut to the same size as the PCB design. A full sheet of film measures 100 mm x 160 mm (Eurocard size), so this is the

largest size of board that can be made with this kit. The boards provided measure 127 mm x 160 mm, thus allowing extra at the long edges for mounting the boards.

Processing the exposed film follows the normal photographic sequence of developing, rinsing and fixing. Development time depends on temperature; there is a liquid crystal thermometer in the kit and using this I found it easy to ascertain the correct time for development and soon had a crisp, high-contrast copy of the master design drying beside the sink. Incidentally, the kit includes developing dishes, film, forceps and plastic gloves (substantial ones, not the flimsy throw-away kind supplied with home perm kits).

Should the clear areas of the positive show a slight mistiness, this may be cleared by treating the film with the special Clearing Solution. The film may then be set aside to dry.

Photo-resist

At this stage it is necessary to prepare the boards by coating the copper with a photo-resist. This comes as a blue solution which is applied to the cleaned and scoured copper surface using a plastic sponge applicator. Coating must be done in a semi-darkened room and the coated boards must be stored in a light-proof box. Coating was the operation I found most difficult — especially obtaining an even coating. However, this would probably become easier with practice; if I failed to improve it is possible to buy boards already coated with resist, though these are rather more expensive than ordinary boards. You can coat several boards at once and keep them for several months.

Making the PCB

When the film and coated boards are dry, the next step is to find the correct

**TROUBLE SHOOTING CHART FOR PRODUCTION
OF PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARDS**

FAULT	CAUSE	REMEDY
1. PHOTORESIST WILL NOT 'TAKE' ON PARTS OF BOARD	GREASY PATCHES ON COPPER, PROBABLY CAUSED BY HANDLING	CLEAN BOARD THOROUGHLY. AVOID TOUCHING SURFACE BEFORE COATING
2. DIRT BURIED IN PHOTORESIST COATING	(a) SURFACE OF BOARD DUSTY BEFORE COATING (b) DUST SETTLING BEFORE PHOTORESIST COATING DRY	(a) INSPECT BY OBLIQUE LIGHT. CLEAN WITH LINT-FREE CLOTH (b) DRY IN DUST FREE CONDITIONS
3. BACKGROUND WILL NOT CLEAR COMPLETELY	(a) UNDER EXPOSURE (b) DEVELOPER EXHAUSTED (c) DEVELOPER COLD	(a) GIVE MORE EXPOSURE (sometimes an under-exposed result can be saved by slightly increasing developer concentration). (b) CHANGE DEVELOPER (c) WARM TO 20°C
4. PARTS OF COPPER WILL NOT ETCH	(a) UNDER EXPOSED PHOTORESIST (b) CONTAMINATED BOARD	SEE 3a) ABOVE SEE 1 ABOVE
5. COPPER TRACKS BROKEN AND RAGGED	(a) FAULT ON FILM MASTER (b) PHOTORESIST COATING TOO THIN (c) GROSS OVER EXPOSURE OR FILM MASTER NOT DENSE ENOUGH (d) DEVELOPER TOO STRONG	(a) INSPECT AND CORRECT (b) APPLY THICKER COATING (c) REDUCE EXPOSURE — THIS MAY ALSO 'SAVE' A THIN FILM MASTER (d) USE WEAKER DEV. AND/OR SHORTER TIME.
6. COPPER SPECKS BETWEEN TRACKS AFTER ETCHING	(a) DIRT ON EXPOSURE FRAME GLASS OR FILM MASTER (b) DIRT IN PHOTORESIST COATING	(a) CLEAN GLASS OR SCRAPE SPOTS FROM FILM MASTER (b) SEE 2 ABOVE.
7. PHOTORESIST COMES OFF COMPLETELY IN DEVELOPER	(a) PHOTORESIST 'FOGGED' BY TOO MUCH EXPOSURE TO ROOM LIGHT OR DAY-LIGHT BEFORE OR AFTER EXPOSURE (b) DEVELOPER TOO STRONG (c) BADLY CONTAMINATED COPPER SURFACE	(a) THE COATED BOARD SHOULD BE PROTECTED COMPLETELY FROM DAY-LIGHT OR STRONG FLUORESCENT LIGHT (b) FOLLOW RECOMMENDED DILUTION (c) CLEAN BOARD THOROUGHLY AND RINSE. TRACES OF DEVELOPER OR ALKALINE ON THE BOARD BEFORE COATING WILL ALSO GIVE THIS EFFECT.

exposure for the photo-resist. A coated board is used for this; its coating can be removed after the test and the board reused. The resist is sensitive to ultra-violet radiation; you can use a UV lamp or place the exposure frame outdoors in sunlight. I used sunlight and found that an exposure time of 20 minutes was correct. During this time the film is held in contact with the coated board — make sure the film is placed emulsion-side down on the board!

On the first time of use, the resist-developer solution has to be made up. Although the manual and the labels of each chemical container prominently display warnings of hazards of a general kind ("avoid eye, mouth or skin contact", "keep out of reach of young children"), there was no reference to the specific hazard of adding water to the sodium hydroxide flakes. When sodium hydroxide dissolves in water, a large

amount of heat is generated and the solution becomes very hot; in fact the bottle could become too hot to hold and this should have been mentioned in the manual. Luckily I was prepared for this event and added the water gradually, keeping the solution cool by holding the bottle under a running cold tap. The instructions stated that the cap of the bottle was to be screwed on securely, so I did this. When the cap was released the expansion of the air inside the bottle caused an outrush, carrying with it a spray of droplets of caustic soda solution. This could have damaged clothing or furniture if I had not been holding it in a sink at the time. Here we have an example of the present pre-occupation with blanket warnings covering unlikely events (such as the 1 person in 10000 who might have a skin allergy to one of the chemicals) or events which should not occur (such as bringing up children

who think it within their rights to fiddle with anything placed within their reach) while overlooking a real source of danger. It is a case of 'crying wolf'; my chemistry set had no blanket warnings yet I never came to grief! In this instance, the making up of the developer solution requires full specific warnings, especially as the identity of the solution is not disclosed. Adding water to flakes generates excessive heat; to avoid overheating, the flakes should be added to the water, a few at a time. But do not touch the flakes with bare fingers!

Once the board is exposed, it is developed for a few minutes. This removes the resist from the exposed areas (between tracks and pads), which show up as bright copper. The unexposed areas remain covered and the resist becomes black. I found that the recommended development time was rather short and that it could be trebled or quadrupled to clear the copper area completely without danger of removing the resist from unexposed areas.

Etching

The CM100 kit includes a complete PCB etching kit almost identical to the Seno System which was reviewed in HE earlier this year. I have used the Seno System for several years with good results; it avoids any handling of the ferric chloride etchant, which is very corrosive, allowing the process to be safely carried out in the kitchen. As in the Seno Kit, the CM100 kit includes a pack of neutraliser for solidifying the exhausted etchant solution; the instructions for safe disposal of the spent etchant were comprehensive, and included clear warnings of all possible hazards.

After cleaning the etched boards of photoresist, you coat the copper with the flux laquer provided. This refinement protects the copper from atmospheric corrosion and also assists the flow of solder when the components are being mounted. All you have to do then is to drill holes for the components and terminal pins (bits provided) and a perfectly etched board is ready for receiving the components.

Summing Up

This is a most comprehensive kit with clear step-by-step instructions. It can be considered to be good value for money. Any person capable of assembling an electronic circuit should be able to use the kit effectively and safely and enjoy this new aspect of the hobby. Although the process involves more stages (which at least gives you something extra to do to occupy your spare time) it has several advantages over the other methods of PCB preparation.

The CM100 Circuit Maker kit is manufactured and distributed by Electrolube Limited, Blakes Road, Wargrave, Berkshire RG10 8AW. Phone Wargrave (073 522) 3014. Contact them for the name of a retail supplier near you. Recommended retail price is £69.95 including VAT and handling. Our thanks to Electrolube Limited for supplying the kit which was the subject of this review.

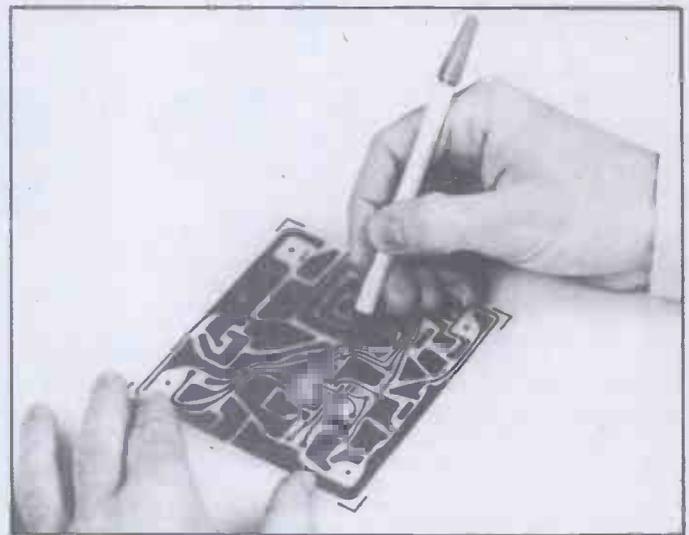
Selected stages in the production of printed circuit boards using the CM100 Circuit Maker kit.



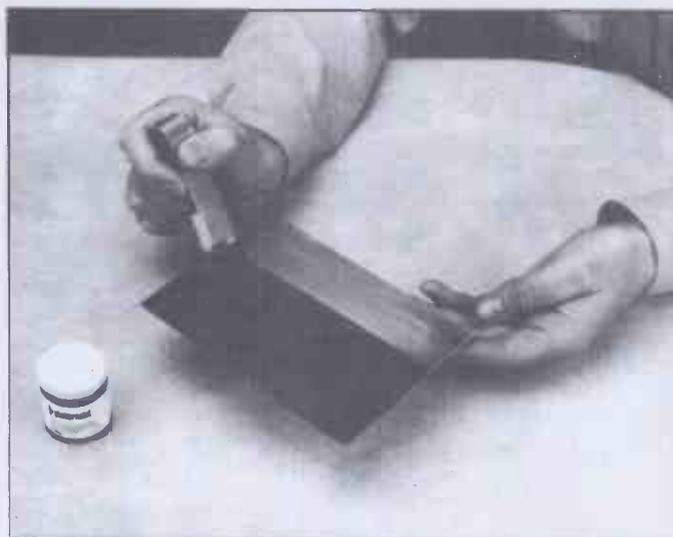
Exposing the auto-positive film to produce a film positive master. The circuit layout can be from a publication, or your own design.



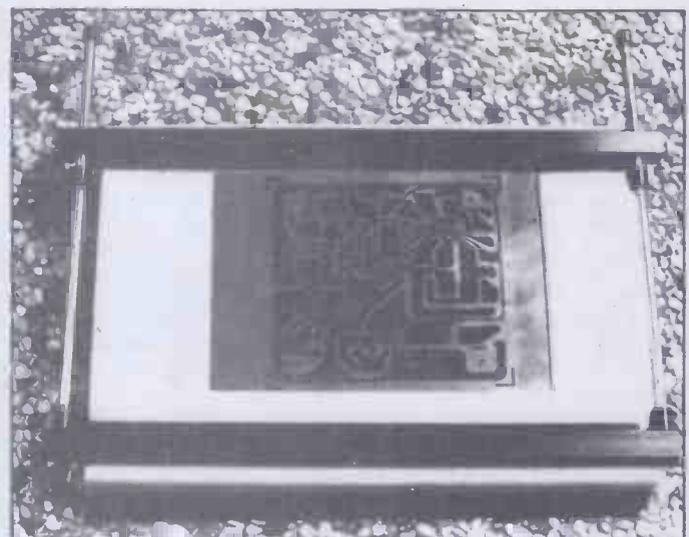
Developing and fixing the positive master film.



After cleaning, small flaws can be touched-up with the retouching pen.



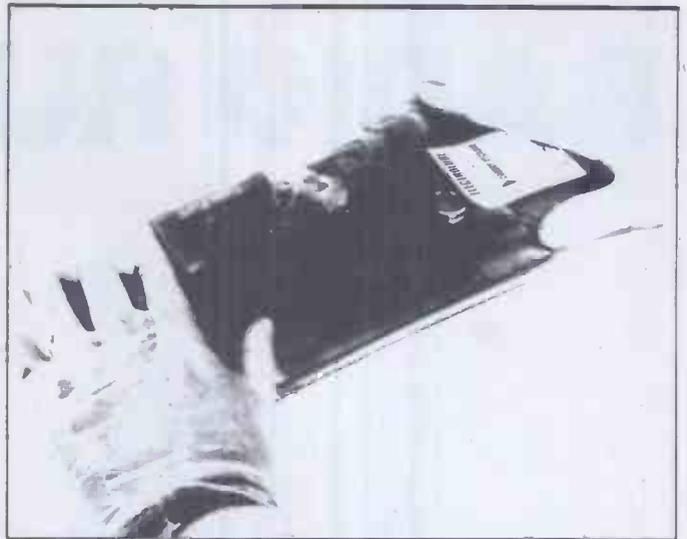
The copper-clad board is cleaned and the photo-resist solution wiped on with a sponge applicator.



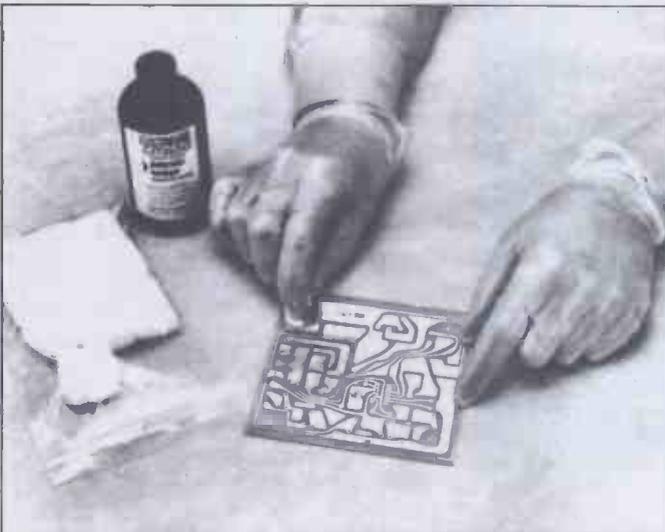
The film master and resist-coated board are exposed to transfer the layout to the PCB.



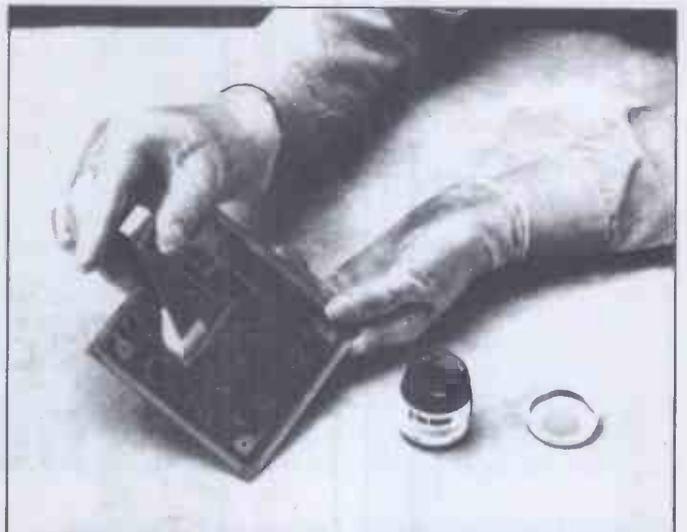
The exposed board is developed to reproduce the circuit layout.



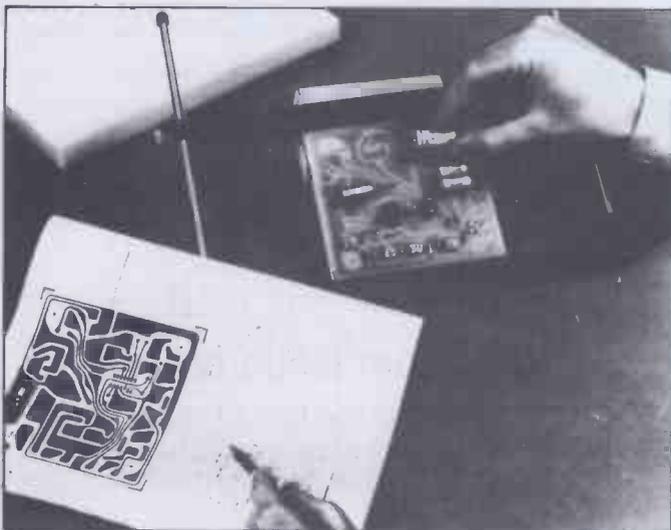
Etching the board in the sealed bag.



After etching, the board is washed and dried and the remaining photo-resist is removed to expose the copper tracks.



Coating the copper with a protective laquer/solder flux solution.



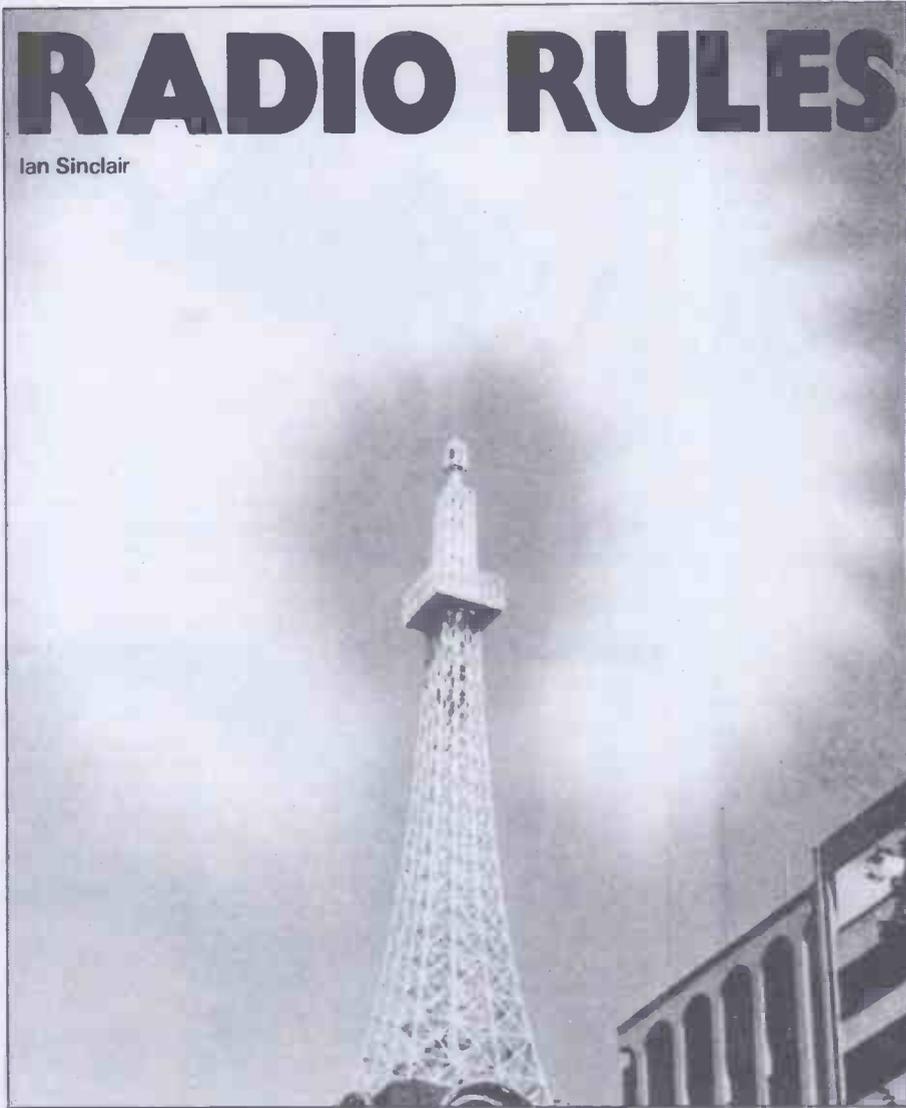
The universal exposure frame doubles as an assembly jig for mounting components.



Finally, the component leads are cropped, ready for soldering.

RADIO RULES

Ian Sinclair



Modulation and other matters

NOW we're getting a bit closer to real radio! This month, we're going to look at AM transmitters; how they work, and what's involved. We'll kick off with a block diagram, Figure 1.

It shows a master-oscillator, which could be crystal controlled if you are operating on one frequency only, but is more likely to be variable so that you can use a number of frequency bands and be able to shift frequency within a band, to avoid interfering with somebody else. The master oscillator may be followed by buffers and multipliers, to generate the correct frequency. The signal which is to be modulated onto the carrier is your voice, so a microphone is the starting point for this signal, which is amplified and applied to the modulator. The traditional position for this kind of modulator is at the final output (power amplifier) stage, where the carrier is at its maximum amplitude.

It all looks fairly straightforward, as it was, once, but with the increasing use of radio wavebands, there are problems and restrictions which have been attended to. One restriction is 'input power', the maximum permitted DC power fed to the final amplifier (PA) stage for operation on the popular amateur radio bands (between

3.5 MHz and 29.7 MHz) is set by regulation at 150 W. This power level is more likely to be achieved by the use of valves, rather than transistors, in the PA stage, but it must not be exceeded. That's a legal restriction which isn't difficult to keep to—but some other factors are more of a worry. One major problem has been TVI (Television Interference), particularly on the older Band 1 frequencies between 45 MHz and 67 MHz, because these frequencies lie in the range of harmonics of the 14 MHz and 28 MHz amateur bands.

Harmonics, remember, are frequencies which are multiples of the operating frequency to which you are tuned, and these are generated in substantial quantities by any stage which is not operating in pure Class A conditions. Since the efficiency of a Class C final stage is a particularly attractive feature of an AM transmitter, the usual way of dealing with the TVI problem is by filtering harmonics from the output, between the final amplifier and the aerial. Filtering will also deal with another interference problem, pickup by stereo amplifiers—though a lot of this is due to poorly-designed and poorly earthed stereo equipment which would pick up anything around it!

The other major problem is frequency stability. The operating frequency of the transmitter must not stray outside the limits of the amateur bands, but even smaller changes of frequency are undesirable because they can cause the transmitter frequency to drift outside the bandwidth of a receiver. Your transmissions won't be popular if anyone who wants to hear them has to keep retuning his receiver! This isn't likely to happen with crystal control, but if you want to be able to roam over the amateur bands at will using a simple Variable-Frequency Oscillator (VFO) circuit which is not crystal controlled, frequency stability can be quite a problem. In particular, if you want to call up a station that you have been listening to, you will have to 'net' to its frequency—make your transmitter frequency approximately equal to his.

VFO Not UFO

A variable frequency oscillator is, therefore, an essential part of an AM transmitter for amateur use. Since the frequency stability of the whole transmitter is determined by the stability of the VFO, this a stage on which a lot of effort must be devoted

Circuitry is not the main problem. The traditional Colpitts oscillator circuit (Figure 2) is one which still gives excellent results, as do several other circuits, ancient and modern—but a good circuit is not the whole story. For the highest possible frequency stability, components have to be carefully constructed (eg inductors) or selected (eg capacitors) and the layout of

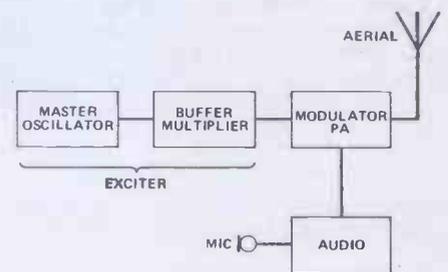
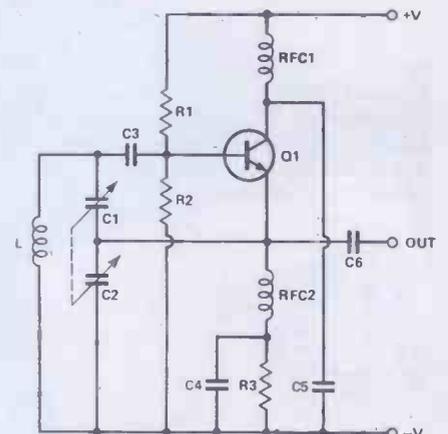


Figure 1. A simplified block diagram of an amplitude modulated (AM) transmitter.



NOTES:
RFC1,2 ARE RADIO FREQUENCY CHOKES
C1,2 ARE CENTRE TAPPED GANGED VARIABLE CAPACITORS

Figure 2. A Colpitts oscillator, suitable for use as a VFO

the circuit must be good; considerable care is needed over the location of the VFO within the transmitter.

Basically, the frequency of the VFO is set, as we've seen earlier, by the L and C values of the tuned circuit. How can these vary? To start with, any change in the dimensions of the coil will cause a change of inductance, and thus a change of frequency. A self-supporting coil is unacceptable at frequencies below VHF because they carry a lot of turns, and even normally imperceptible vibration can cause the coil to behave like a spring, causing the oscillator output to be frequency-modulated by the vibration! Coils should be tightly wound on to low-loss formers, preferably high-grade ceramics, rather than being self-supporting. If the coil is wound really tightly, the turns will not shift as the wire heats and expands; it's not a bad idea to wind the coils with warm wire, so that the coils will tighten as the wire cools! If, however, you run the VFO section in a place where the temperature can be raised by, for example, a hot valve operating near it, then expansion problems are likely. Always use air-cored, as distinct from

ferrite coils (ceramic counts as 'air', in this context) because a coil with a metal or dust core does not have a constant inductance; the permeability of the core can be very greatly affected by temperature and less obvious effects, like sharp knocks.

Capacitance is the other half of a resonant circuit. Some of the capacitance is in the form of physical components and we need to select high-quality capacitors, such as silver-mica types. In addition, though, there are 'invisible' capacitors—the capacitance across transistor terminals, for example, which will vary as the temperature and the operating voltage change, and the stray capacitance in the circuit. The amount of stray capacitance is very much affected by the circuit layout and vibration can cause any such capacitance to vary; rigid construction, with short thick connecting wires, is very desirable.

One of the bonus features of the Colpitts oscillator is that the main tuning capacitors are placed across the transistor base-emitter capacitance, so that it is possible to arrange for these capacitors to have a value much greater than the transistor capacitance. When this is done, any change in the transistor capacitance has much less effect on frequency; the transistor capacitance has been 'swamped'.

We can still find that changes of frequency occur, however, as the circuit warms up. One reason is that silver-mica capacitors have a small positive temperature coefficient. This means that the capacitance increases as the temperature of the capacitor increases, there's nothing we can do to stop it. The only measure we can take is to connect a small ceramic capacitor in parallel with each silver-mica, because ceramic capacitors have a fairly large *negative* temperature coefficient, meaning that their capacitance values will *decrease* as the temperature increases. The type of ceramic has to be carefully chosen; some have a very large variation of capacitance with voltage, which can be troublesome to the extent of preventing oscillation if all the capacitance consists of such devices. One refinement, which can be helpful, is to use a stabilised voltage supply of the VFO.

If you are transmitting CW (Continuous Wave, ie morse code) it is not a good idea to 'key' the VFO, because the interruptions can cause frequency drifting. It is sometimes useful to make the VFO frequency as low as possible, because a low frequency is easier to keep stable. Against this, there is the fact that a low frequency VFO may need many stages of multiplication following it, and any change of frequency at the VFO will be multiplied, also. There's no easy way out! Finally, one last word on mechanical rigidity. One component which is very difficult to make sufficiently rigid is the tuning capacitor. Don't count your pennies here—buy the best you can get, because a vibrating set of plates on the tuning capacitor will make all you constructional efforts quite useless. If you are buying rather than constructing, look inside the case and check the construction round the VFO is rigid. Ask around—fellow amateurs will tell you in no certain terms if a make has a good reputation or not!

Buffers And Multipliers.

Our problems aren't over yet. The VFO signal must be passed on to the next stage of the transmitter. Any circuit connected to the VFO will have resistance (so that it draws current) and capacitance (so that it affects tuning) and so will affect the frequency of the VFO. If, in addition, it drains too much power from the VFO, it can cause very large frequency changes, even to the extent of stopping the VFO from oscillating. The stage following the VFO should, ideally, be a buffer operating in Class A, with high input impedance (impedance, not just resistance) and comparatively low output impedance. A typical buffer circuit is shown in Figure 3.

The VFO normally operates on the lowest frequency band that is to be covered, so that the higher band frequencies have to be obtained by frequency multiplication. As mentioned earlier, this is accomplished by operating a low-power Class B or C stage to generate harmonics, and tuning the output of the stage to the harmonic frequency that is desired. You didn't think that these amateur band frequencies came about by accident, did you!

Multiplication implies that a separate tuned circuit is needed, operating over the whole of the required band (unless you can adjust the multiplier tuned circuit each time you alter the VFO). The most usual method is to use a variable inductor (dust cored), tuned by stray capacitance to around the middle of the band, as shown in Figure 4. The really critical tuning problem is that of the VFO.

The Power Amplifier

The combination of VFO, buffers and multipliers is often known as the 'exciter' stage, because it exists simply to generate the frequency which will be used by the power amplifier (PA), the output stage of the transmitter. The design of most AM transmitters provides for modulation of this particular stage, so that PA and modulator can be considered together.

It's here that many of you may have to move into unfamiliar territory. Though transistors can offer useful output powers, very careful construction and design is needed for really high power output. The main problem with transistors is that even a momentary overload (one cycle!) can kill a transistor; valves are very much more tolerant. Overload for a transistor can be a current overload, blowing out a junction, a voltage overload, with the same effect, or a thermal overload, causing a junction to overheat. Transistor PA circuits demand a lot of attention to efficient heatsinks and mechanical construction, as well as to derating of the transistors. Derating means that the maximum power that a transistor can handle is greatly reduced when the transistor is working near its limits of frequency, voltage or temperature. This derating can be very considerable; a transistor which is rated at 40 W in ideal conditions (the conditions that the manufacturers quote—sometimes called infinite heatsink conditions) may be capable of 10 W or less under actual operating conditions. Features such as circuit layout and careful impedance

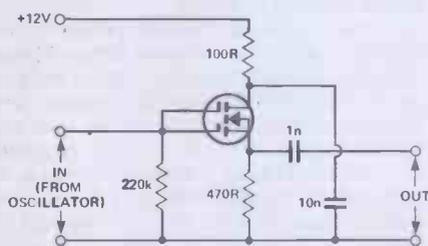


Figure 3. A buffer stage using a FET—this has very high input impedance so that it places very little load on the oscillator.

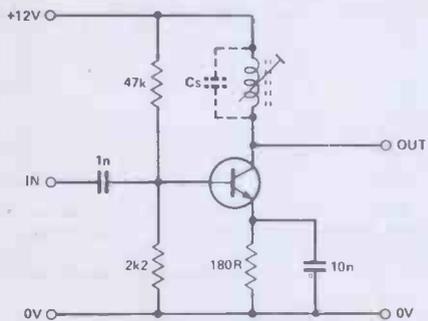


Figure 4. A frequency multiplier. The transistor bias has been arranged so that it is not quite conducting and it will square off the sine wave input, generating harmonics.

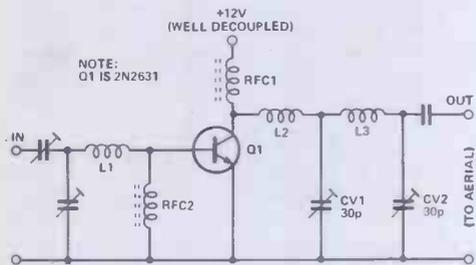


Figure 5. A simple low-power transistor PA stage operating in Class C.

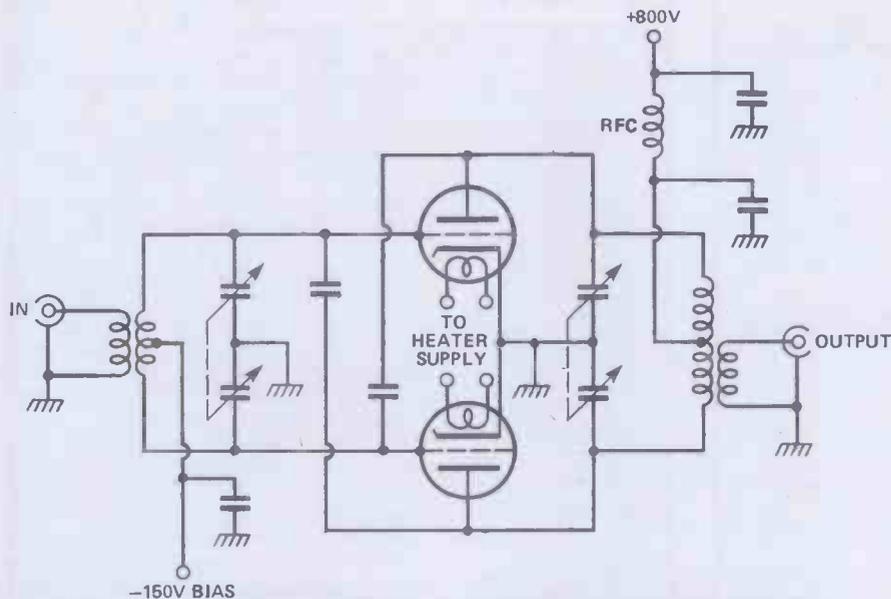


Figure 6. A high-power Class B transistor PA. The step-up and step-down auto-transformers are 4: 1 ratio and are wound on small ferrite cores, using only a few turns of wire.

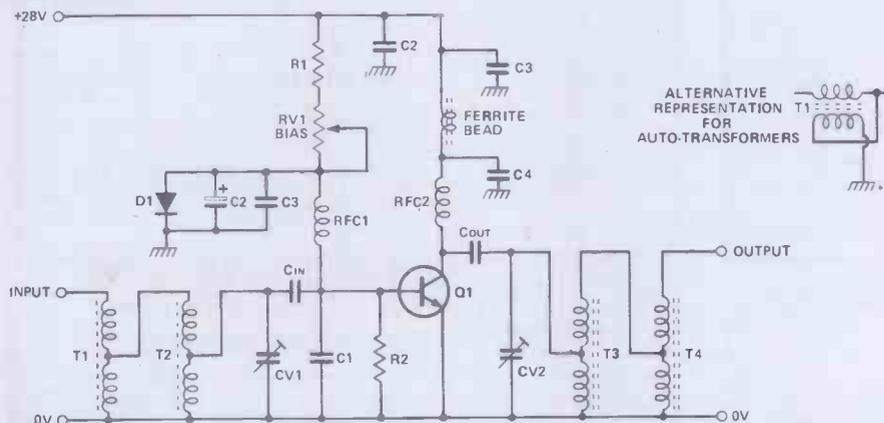


Figure 7. A push-pull valve output stage. Maximum permitted power can be easily achieved with a simpler one-valve stage.

matching of the PA to the aerial are very much more critical for transistor PA stages than they are for valve stages, because unless the RF power from the PA is all absorbed by the aerial, it will be reflected back and will cause overheating of the transistor.

Transistor Power Amplifiers

Transistors are particularly useful as power amplifiers for low powers (25 W or less) and where mobile operation is needed, since operation from a 12 V battery does not cause any design problems. The transistor type must be carefully selected because the construction of a transistor which is intended to deliver medium power output at high frequencies is quite different from the construction that serves well for audio frequencies. The US type of '2N' transistor coding gives no clue about the purpose of a transistor, whereas the European system is more informative; any transistor suitable for RF power will carry a set of code letters starting with BL, where B indicates silicon, and L means that the transistor is intended for RF uses. These letters may be followed by X, Y or Z, and then a number.

One important point of safety needs

to be stressed here: NEVER, under any circumstances, cut open a transistor of this type. One major problem in designing a PA transistor is heat dissipation; many designs make use of a remarkable material called beryllium oxide, which is a good electrical insulator but also a good conductor for heat (a combination usually said to be impossible).

Beryllium oxide, however, is one of the world's nastiest poisonous materials, especially if it's powered (as it would be if you were to saw through it). One speck of this substance in your lungs, and you should see to your last will and testament. In general, transistors which make use of beryllium oxide come with disposal instructions which specify where the defective transistor must be sent. Disregard this at your peril.

The lower the output power, the simpler the circuit, so for a few watts, circuits such as the one illustrated in Figure 5 can be used. The input is a series resonant circuit using the transistor's base-emitter capacitance as part of the series tuning capacitance. The output uses a choke load, with a filter of the type called a pi filter (from its shape, like a Greek letter pi), tuned to pass the frequency of transmission and reject harmonics—it's a

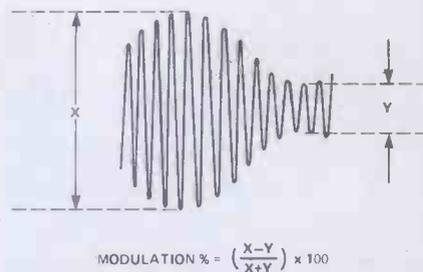


Figure 8. Calculating modulation index—this method requires the use of an oscilloscope.

low-pass filter, in fact. The pi filter also provides impedance matching between the output stage and the aerial.

Things start to get difficult when higher powers are needed. It is possible to get transistors which will operate at higher power levels in the lower frequency bands, but they are much more difficult to work with. To start off, the very large currents that flow when high-power transistors are used will call for well-stabilised and decoupled power supplies. At these current values, though, transistors have very low input and output impedances; unlike ordinary Class A preamp circuits, values of only a few ohms are common. We can't use the pi-network filter at these impedance levels, because the values of L and C that would be needed to match the low impedances would be highly impractical.

What has to be done, therefore, is to use matching transformers; wideband auto-transformers in fact, as shown in Figure 6. These step-down the signal voltage at the input and step up the current, so transforming the impedance to the correct level, and a similar device performs the opposite action at the output. The transformers are very different in construction from conventional AF, IF, or RF transformers, and usually consist of a few turns of wire with the primary and secondary wound together (bifilar winding) on a core, to ensure tight coupling. Their design and construction is one of the hardest tasks in all amateur radio so the beginner should stick to ready-made components—even with experience, you can become badly unstuck and lose a valuable transistor through mismatching, or find yourself causing disastrous interference.

Valve PA Stages

High power (150 W) PA stages using valves are so simple, by comparison with transistor high power stages, that it isn't surprising that most designers prefer valves for such purposes. There are complications, however, including the need for a comparatively high voltage power supply (350 V to 1000 V), and a heater supply which will require decoupling with low-resistance chokes and capacitors.

A typical high-power valve PA stage is shown in Figure 7. It uses a push-pull circuit of the type that can also be used for linear amplifiers for CB, in countries where this is permitted. The design is simple, and the inductors are straightforward to construct, with few really critical points of construction or of setting-up.

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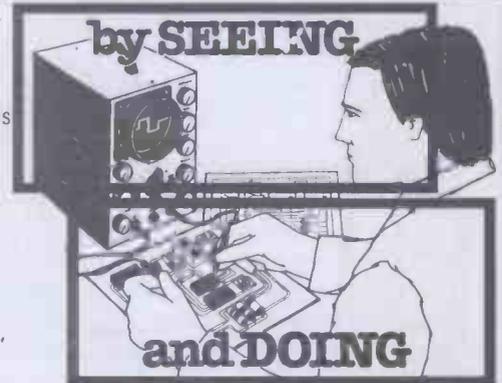
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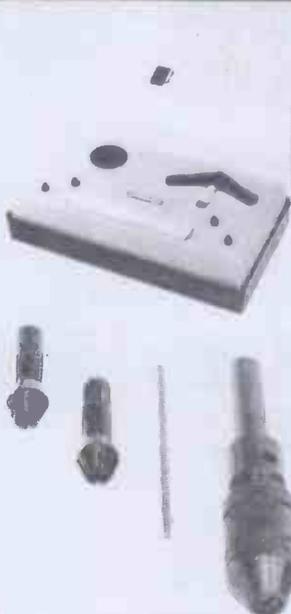
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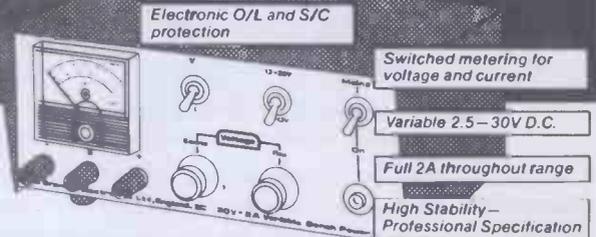
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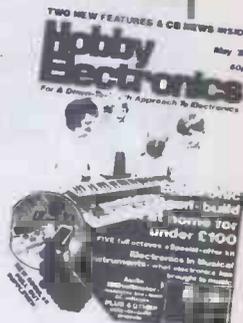
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Breadboards

A simple wide-ranging VCO design.

THOSE of you that read last month's Breadboards will have noticed we're offering a financial incentive for any designs you send, and that are printed. Each circuit (with accompanying text) will earn you the princely sum of five pounds. So, whilst we're sorting out the best ones received so far, we've done a bit of head scratching and come up with some more circuits of the home grown variety.

This is a voltage controlled oscillator (VCO) with a wide frequency range, which uses a transconductance op-amp. The other is a logical probe or two, for checking states in TTL or CMOS circuitry. Both the probe's and the VCO need very few components, apart from the ICs, so they shouldn't take long to wire up. Furthermore, all three chips contain at least two devices, leaving you something to experiment with... and we want to see the results, remember!

A voltage controlled oscillator converts a varying voltage into a varying frequency — this principle underlies the operation of modern synthesizers.

Our VCO is based around half of the LM13600, which is a relatively new IC containing two operational transconductance amplifiers. Each amplifier features a control input, linearising diodes (allowing high input levels) and a push-pull output. These eliminate the need for complicated external circuitry, in most applications and this is certainly true of our circuit. It requires only seven other components and a control voltage (here taken from RV1 in series with R4 and D3) to operate as an oscillator in the range 25-1900 Hertz.

The frequency of the output is determined by the current passing through R3 into pin 1. This can be anything from a few microamps up to a milliamp or so, though the range will be restricted by other factors such as output power and supply voltage. Our VCO required a bias current of between 100uA and 1mA, provided by the potential divider RV1, R4 and D3 — the diode ensuring a minimum control voltage of 0V7. Negative feedback is supplied by R2 to the inverting input, pin 4. This controls the gain and therefore the output level. If you want variable output then replace R2 with a 10k resistor in series with a 100k pot. The non-inverting input is connected to two level clamping diodes D1 and D2, which prevent overloading from the positive feedback through C1. The value of C1 determines the range of frequencies that can be output, so you should experiment with different capacitors, to a few hundred picofarads.

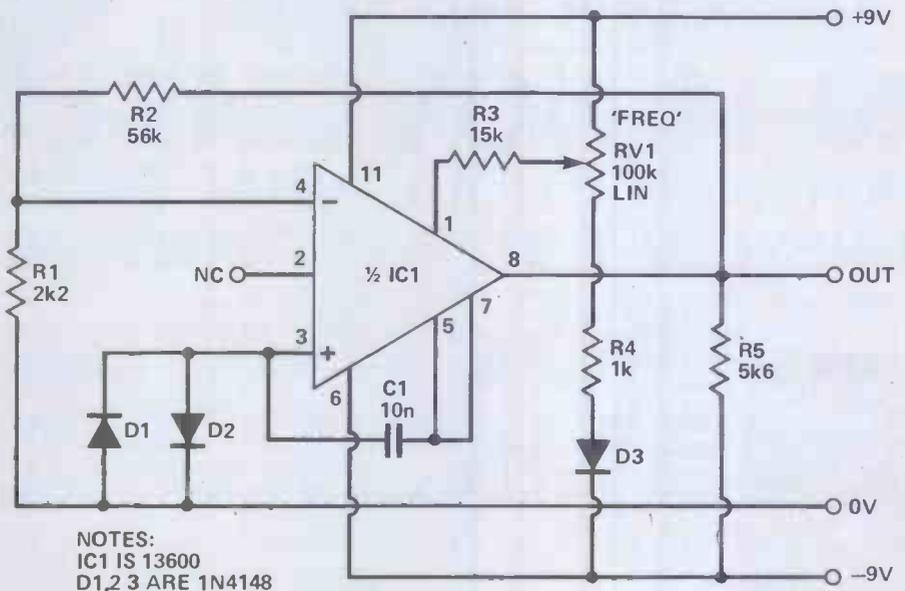


Figure 1. Circuit diagram for the VCO.

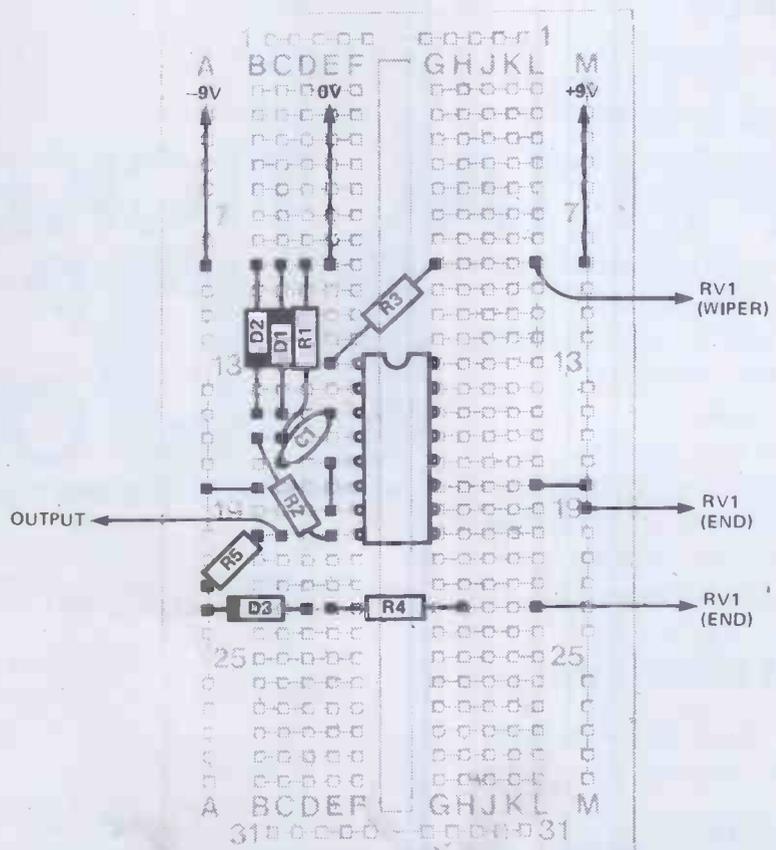
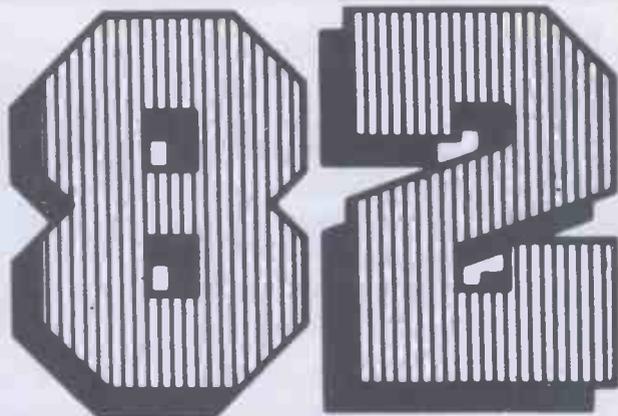
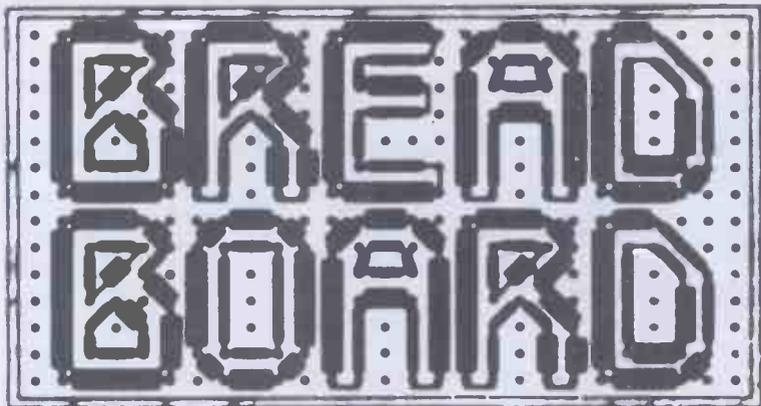


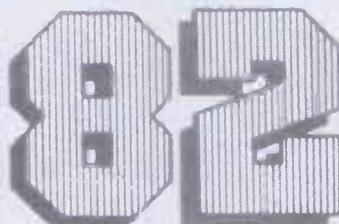
Figure 2. The breadboard layout for the Voltage Controlled Oscillator.

The 13600 can be powered from a wide variety of supplies in the range ± 2 to ± 22 volts. Current consumption in

our circuit (± 9 V) was around 6mA per rail; the output, 14 V peak-to-peak, is a flattened triangle wave.



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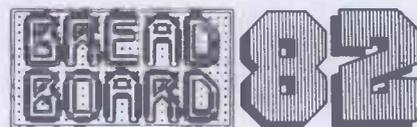
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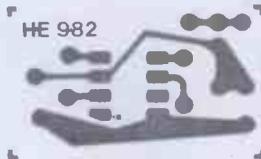


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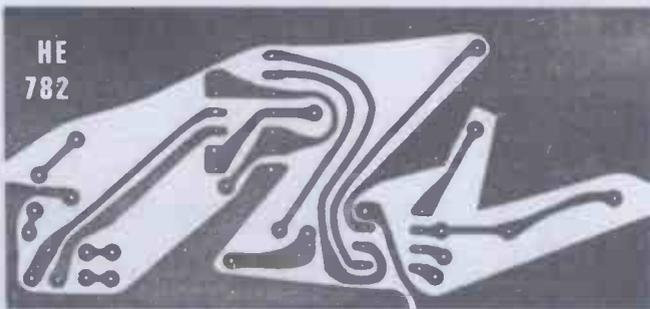


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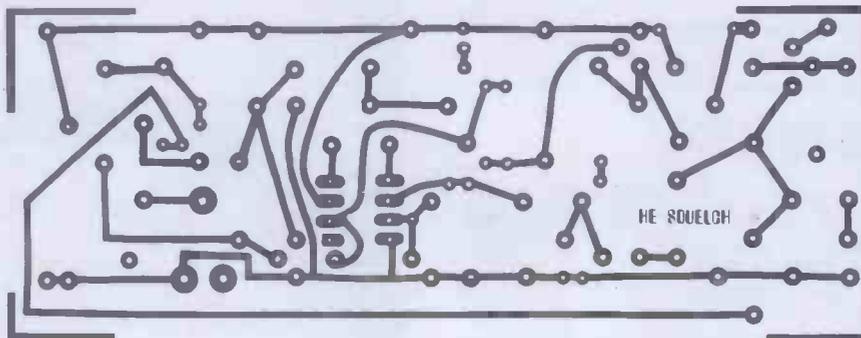
HE PCBs



Left: The foil pattern for the Negative Voltage Generator — mind you don't lose it!



The Flash Point Alarm PCB foil pattern (left) and the PCB pattern for the Squelch Unit (below). Both boards have tracks running fairly close to component pads, so make sure all the unwanted copper is etched away.





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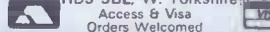
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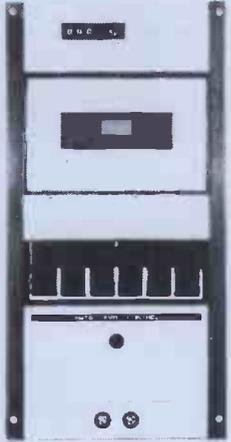


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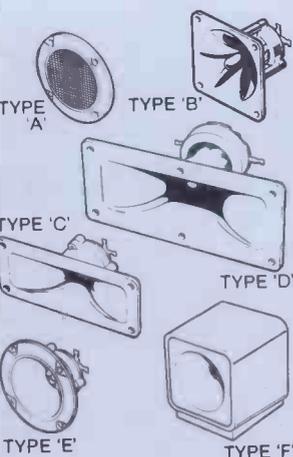
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4016 25p	7411 14p	74197 50p	74LS190 45p	Bi-Colour	Green 248p	BZY88C3V8 8p
4017 40p	7412 18p	74221 75p	74LS191 45p	Red/Green 80p	Yellow 260p	BZY88C4V7 8p
4019 35p	7413 22p	74279 40p	74LS192 45p	0-125"		BZY88C6V8 8p
4020 48p	7414 26p	74290 60p	74LS193 45p	Red 11p	3"	BZY88C8V2 8p
4021 46p	7416 18p	74298 60p	74LS194 50p	Green 12p	Red 127p	BZY88C12 8p
4022 55p	7417 22p		74LS196 35p	Yellow 12p	Green 196p	BZY88C15 8p
4023 13p	7420 15p		74LS197 50p			BC107 11p
4024 42p	7421 20p		74LS240 70p			BC107A/B 11p
4025 13p	7422 15p		74LS241 70p			BC108A/B/C 11p
4027 26p	7423 15p		74LS242 70p			BC109A/B/C 12p
4028 40p	7424 15p		74LS243 70p			BC182 9p
4029 60p	7425 20p		74LS244 70p			BC183 9p
4030 13p	7426 27p		74LS245 80p			BC184 9p
4035 66p	7427 15p		74LS247 60p			BC212 9p
4040 50p	7428 18p		74LS249 40p			BCY70 17p
4042 40p	7429 18p		74LS251 40p			BCY71 18p
4044 46p	7430 15p		74LS252 35p			BCY72 18p
4047 50p	7431 14p		74LS253 35p			BFY50 28p
4049 20p	7432 18p		74LS254 35p			BFY51 28p
4050 20p	7433 18p		74LS255 55p			BFY52 28p
4051 50p	7434 24p		74LS256 55p			TIP29/A 30p
4052 60p	7435 16p		74LS257 40p			TIP30/A 35p
4053 50p	7436 18p		74LS258 40p			TIP31/A 45p
4066 28p	7437 18p		74LS259 65p			TIP32/A 45p
4067 447p	7438 18p		74LS260 30p			TIP41/A 50p
4069 13p	7439 24p		74LS261 30p			TIP42/A 50p
4070 13p	7440 16p		74LS262 22p			2N708 24p
4071 13p	7441 15p		74LS263 60p			2N918 26p
4076 50p	7442 24p		74LS264 60p			2N2218/A 26p
4081 13p	7443 18p		74LS265 60p			2N2219/A 28p
4086 45p	7444 50p		74LS266 22p			2N2221/A 24p
4093 30p	7445 50p		74LS267 60p			2N2222/A 28p
4098 70p	7446 68p		74LS268 60p			2N2904/A 29p
4503 42p	7447 55p		74LS269 60p			2N2905A 28p
4510 52p	7448 55p		74LS270 60p			2N2906A 28p
4511 45p	7449 26p		74LS271 40p			2N2907A 28p
4512 50p	7450 15p		74LS272 14p			2N3053 28p
4516 60p	7451 15p		74LS273 14p			2N3055 46p
4518 40p	7452 15p		74LS274 14p			2N3442 130p
4520 60p	7453 13p		74LS275 14p			2N3715 57p
4528 64p	7454 15p		74LS276 14p			2N3716 65p
4539 64p	7455 50p		74LS277 14p			
4555 45p	7456 25p		74LS278 22p			
4556 45p	7457 25p		74LS279 40p			
40014 50p	7458 28p		74LS280 40p			
40085 70p	7459 50p		74LS281 34p			
40097 60p	7460 26p		74LS282 40p			
40098 60p	7461 45p		74LS283 40p			
40161 55p	7462 25p		74LS284 40p			
40163 55p	7463 25p		74LS285 34p			
40175 60p	7464 47p		74LS286 22p			
40193 60p	7465 60p		74LS287 130p			
	7466 70p		74LS288 30p			
	7467 35p		74LS289 30p			
	7468 30p		74LS290 34p			
	7469 45p		74LS291 34p			
	7470 30p		74LS292 34p			
	7471 25p		74LS293 34p			
	7472 25p		74LS294 34p			
	7473 25p		74LS295 52p			
	7474 22p		74LS296 52p			
	7475 23p		74LS297 83p			
	7476 22p		74LS298 83p			
	7477 47p		74LS299 83p			
	7478 47p		74LS300 55p			
	7479 47p		74LS301 55p			
	7480 60p		74LS302 90p			
	7481 60p		74LS303 130p			
	7482 25p		74LS304 130p			
	7483 47p		74LS305 30p			
	7484 47p		74LS306 30p			
	7485 60p		74LS307 30p			
	7486 25p		74LS308 30p			
	7487 25p		74LS309 30p			
	7488 25p		74LS310 30p			
	7489 26p		74LS311 30p			
	7490 26p		74LS312 30p			
	7491 45p		74LS313 30p			
	7492 38p		74LS314 30p			
	7493 28p		74LS315 30p			
	7494 28p		74LS316 30p			
	7495 50p		74LS317 30p			
	7496 45p		74LS318 30p			
	7497 45p		74LS319 30p			
	7498 45p		74LS320 30p			
	7499 25p		74LS321 30p			
	7500 25p		74LS322 30p			
	7501 20p		74LS323 30p			
	7502 20p		74LS324 30p			
	7503 35p		74LS325 30p			
	7504 35p		74LS326 30p			
	7505 35p		74LS327 30p			
	7506 35p		74LS328 30p			
	7507 35p		74LS329 30p			
	7508 35p		74LS330 30p			
	7509 35p		74LS331 30p			
	7510 35p		74LS332 30p			
	7511 35p		74LS333 30p			
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	7513 35p		74LS335 30p			
	7514 35p		74LS336 30p			
	7515 35p		74LS337 30p			
	7516 35p		74LS338 30p			
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	7518 35p		74LS340 30p			
	7519 35p		74LS341 30p			
	7520 35p		74LS342 30p			
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	7575 35p		74LS397 30p			
	7576 35p		74LS398 30p			</