

19 A crystal radio receiver

Introduction

Here's a quick project to fill in a winter's evening! It was originally designed as a piece of test gear for the *Colt* receiver, but can be successfully used by anyone as a first radio project. Another use for it would be as test gear for any audio amplifier project requiring an audio input for test purposes; this is ideal, as it does not require any power supply!

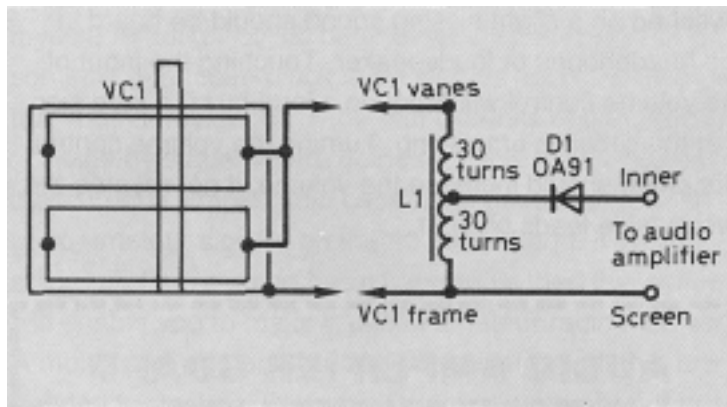
Details

The initial rough-and-ready test for the audio amplifier of the *Colt* receiver will have whetted your appetite; you will want to prove more conclusively that your amplifier works, and in a way that others in the household will appreciate. Buzzing noises are not convincing in this respect! You are going to put together a simple crystal set – the simplest type of radio that there is – and use it as a signal injector for your amplifier. In this way, you build a real medium-wave (MW) receiver which drives a loudspeaker, as an intermediate product of the construction of an 80 metre amateur band receiver!

The circuit diagram is shown in **Figure 1**. It has a 60-turn coil mounted on a small piece of paper or card wrapped round a ferrite rod. The coil has a connection made to its centre-tap (the middle turn of the coil). The tuning capacitor, VC1, is the most expensive part of the circuit but don't worry, it will be used in the final design of the receiver also! Connect the diode, D1, from the centre-tap to the input to the potentiometer of the amplifier circuit of the *Colt*. Be careful to connect the aerial to the *vanes* of VC1, and not to its *frame*, or you will experience some strange effects when you are tuning. If your amplifier is working correctly, you should be able to receive local stations on medium-waves quite well.

If you think the crystal set will be of use to you in the future as a signal injector, all you will need will be another variable capacitor! If you do not intend to use the amplifier, a small crystal earpiece will allow you to listen. Walkman-type headphones will *not* work!

Figure 1 Both sets of moving vanes are joined as shown. L1 is wound on a ferrite rod with 32 SWG wire and centre-tapped. A single winding (no tap) can be used, joining D1 to the top of the winding



Parts list

Variable capacitor

VC1 125 + 125 picofarads (pF) twin-gang

Ferrite rod

About 100 mm to 140 mm long

Diode

D1 OA91 germanium diode

Additional items

Wire 2 m of enamelled copper wire, between 23 SWG and 32 SWG

Earpiece High-impedance crystal type (only needed if you are not using the amplifier)