

Liquid rosin flux

AFTER I RETIRED, MY INTEREST IN ELECTRONICS grew tremendously. Partly because of that, I joined the RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) and volunteered to help high-school electronics students in their electronics laboratory courses. Recently, the students began to make their own printed-circuit boards for their projects, and the instructor decided that the boards should be tinned (solder plated). What the students would do was to load the board with solder and then sop it up with *Solder Wick*. There had to be a better way to tin a board than that!

One improvement would have been to use some liquid rosin solder flux. However, that was not readily available, and an order would have taken months to fill. A solution was found, though—we made our own liquid flux. It's not very hard to do, and everything you need is shown in Fig. 1.

saw the price she paid for it I decided against it. However, I did manage to get my hands on an empty fingernail-polish remover bottle. That bottle was perfect for what I wanted to use it because it came with a handy applicator brush. A little acetone was used to clean both the bottle and the brush.

The next problem was to find the rosin. A violin-repair shop was the source for that. I mashed up a bit of the rosin—a piece about as big as the end of my finger—and coaxed it into the bottle that was half-filled with acetone. It was easy to tell how much rosin to put in—it dissolves very quickly, but little chunks of rosin form at the bottom of the bottle, when you've reached the saturation point. Then, no more will dissolve.

Now I had a little bottle of liquid rosin with its own applicator brush. It's a great way to put rosin flux on printed-circuit

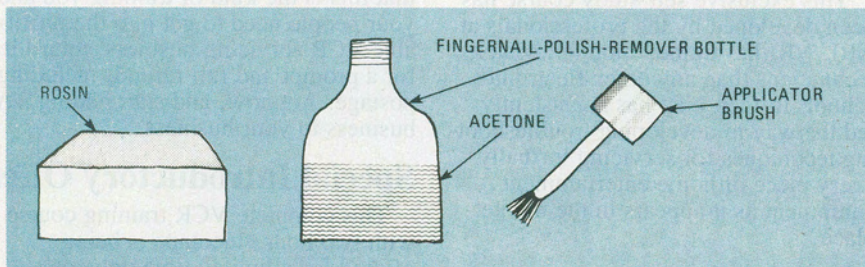


FIG. 1

I knew that the active ingredient in printed-circuit-board cleaners—acetone—dissolves rosin like crazy. So I went to raid my wife's acetone-based fingernail-polish remover—but when I

boards, to prime connections, to tin stranded wires, and so on. You can probably get by without it; but, believe me, liquid rosin can make many jobs a lot easier.—Roger F. Sheldon

